

**Modernism for a Small Planet:  
Diminishing Global Space in the Locales of Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf**

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### Abstract

This dissertation situates literary modernism in the context of a nascent form of globalization. Before it could be fully acknowledged global encroachment was, by virtue of its novelty, repeatedly experienced as a kind of shattering or disintegration. Through an examination of three modernist novels, I argue that a general modernist preoccupation with space both expresses and occludes anxieties over a globe which suddenly seemed to be too small and too undifferentiated. Building upon recent critical work that has begun to historicize modernist understandings of space, I address the as yet under-appreciated ways in which globalism and its discontents informed all of the locales that modernist fictions variously inhabited. For Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf, the responses to global change were as diverse as the spaces through which they were inflected.

I begin by identifying a modernist predilection for spatial metaphors. This rhetorical touchstone has, from New Criticism onward, been so sedimented within critical responses to the era that modernism's interest in global space has itself frequently been diminished. In my readings of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Joyce's *Ulysses*, and Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, I argue that the signs of globalization are ubiquitous across modernism. As Conrad repeats and contests New Imperialist constructions of Africa as a vanishing space, that continent becomes the stage for his anxieties over a newly diminished globe. For Joyce, Dublin's conflicted status as both provincial capital and colonial metropolis makes that city the perfect site in which to worry over those recent world-wide developments. Finally, I argue that for Woolf, it is the domestic space which serves best to register and resist the ominous

signs of global incursion. In conclusion, I suggest that modernism's anticipatory attention to globalization makes the putative break between that earlier era and postmodernity—itself often predicated upon spatial compression—all the more difficult to maintain.



## Résumé

Cette thèse place le modernisme littéraire dans le contexte d'une forme et d'une perception naissantes de la mondialisation. En effet, avant même qu'il n'ait été pleinement reconnu comme tel, l'empiètement global fut ressenti à maintes reprises comme un type d'éclatement ou d'effritement. À travers l'examen de trois romans modernistes, je soutiens que la préoccupation générale du modernisme vis-à-vis de l'espace exprime en même temps qu'elle n'occlut les anxiétés découlant de l'appréhension d'une planète devenue soudainement trop restreinte et trop homogène. Fondée sur des oeuvres critiques récentes qui commencent à peine à historiciser les visions modernistes de l'espace, mon étude aborde les façons encore mal appréciées qu'eut la mondialisation et ses désenchantements d'illuminer les localités diverses des fictions modernistes. Pour Joseph Conrad, James Joyce et Virginia Woolf, les réactions aux changements d'ordre global furent aussi variées que les espaces aux travers desquelles ces réactions furent infléchies.

Je commence par identifier une prédilection pour les métaphores spatiales. Depuis l'avènement du *New Criticism*, cette prédilection a dominé les réactions critiques au point d'amoindrir l'intérêt moderniste pour l'espace global compris en son sens littéral. Par le biais d'analyses d'*Au coeur des ténèbres* de Conrad, d'*Ulysse* de Joyce et de *La promenade au phare* de Woolf, je démontre que les signes de la mondialisation sont omniprésents à travers le modernisme. Conrad répète et dénonce les constructions de l'impérialisme colonial vis-à-vis de l'Afrique en tant qu'espace englouti alors même que ce continent devient la scène d'anxiétés quant à un globe terrestre où l'on vit de plus en plus à l'étroit. Pour Joyce, le statut contradictoire de

Dublin en tant que capitale provinciale et métropole coloniale fait de cette ville le site idéal de réflexions portant sur ces développements contemporains d'échelle planétaire. Finalement, je prétends que pour Woolf, l'espace domestique permet idéalement de transcrire les signes inquiétants d'une incursion globale tout en résistant à celle-ci. Je propose en conclusion que la préoccupation anticipée du modernisme par rapport à la mondialisation rend la rupture putative entre cette époque et le postmodernisme (lui-même souvent axé sur l'idée d'une compression planétaire) d'autant plus difficile à entretenir.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Résumé	iv
Acknowledgements	vi
 Introduction	 1
 1. Shattered Spaces and Critical Confines: Remapping Literary Modernism	 20
 2. The Ends of the Earth: Joseph Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i> and the Strains of Global Integration	 85
 3. Diary of a Globe Trotter: Local Responses to Worldly Anxieties in James Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i>	 146
 4. A World of One Zone: Domesticating the Global in Virginia Woolf's <i>To the Lighthouse</i>	 207
 Conclusion: Negotiating the Final Frontiers of Modernism	 275
 Works Cited	 285

## INTRODUCTION

2001 is an entirely appropriate moment in which to think about space, whether in regards to James Joyce's *Ulysses* or to the no-less-epic travels of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* or Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. While we may not have mastered galactic space in quite the same way as Arthur C. Clarke and Stanley Kubrick imagined we might have by now, we are, once again, immersed in a process of reimagining and remapping the multiple and overlapping spaces in which we live. And as we are constantly reminded, it is at the global level that that process is particularly visible, as technological, cultural, and political changes, to name but just a few factors, bring the spaces of the world into closer proximity with one another. In contrast to those almost infinite spaces imagined by a postmodern generation of science fiction writers, it is now the globe itself that is being remapped—suddenly it seems—as something that is very limited in scope. The entire process thus stands as a particularly salient example of what David Harvey has called “time-space compression.” As we know, sometimes this global reorientation is seen as, at least potentially, positive; now imaginable, and even visible, in its entirety for the first time, the earth is recast as a utopic “one world” or a technologically benign “global village.” More commonly, though, the transformation is read as a profoundly negative one, as everything from the recent protests in Québec City and Genoa against increased global economic integration to the attack on the World Trade Center are held up as signs of the suddenly uncomfortably confined and proximate globe on which we all live.

Whichever way the phenomenon is read, then, its transformative capacity can be seen to stand in ironic contrast to the space that is itself under scrutiny. And, globalization is

seen to be as enormous in its scope as it is sudden in its transformative power. Thus in the last decade, Richard O'Brien and Paul Virilio have both alluded to an apocalyptic "end of geography" that is at once the cause and effect of global change.<sup>1</sup> More recently, Zygmunt Bauman has sought to account more precisely for the process in his tellingly titled book *Globalization: The Human Consequences*. Turning to what are the most familiar signs of global transformation—the internet, the elimination of international trade barriers, increased political integration—Bauman argues for a kind of epiphanic historiography that is suddenly made possible by these advances: "It suddenly seems clear that the divisions of continents and of the globe as a whole were the function of distances made once impossibly real thanks to the primitiveness of transport and the hardships of travel" (12). In contrast to what is rhetorically cast as an earlier "moment" in which the world was so large as to be impossible to traverse, contemporary technology has diminished the globe to the point where even the concept of the global seems to have itself disappeared: "With time of communication imploding and shrinking to the no-size of the instant, space and spatial markers cease to matter, at least to those whose actions can move with the speed of the electronic message" (13). As the last part of his sentence suggests, and in keeping with the political inflection of his book's subtitle, Bauman argues that increased access and ease of traversal is a matter of class and elites. Some people, that is, still can only conceive of the world as an almost infinite space, while others like "Bill Clinton, the spokesman of the most powerful elite of the present-day world, [can] recently declare that for the first time there is no difference between

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<sup>1</sup> See Virilio's article "Un monde superexposé : fin de l'histoire, ou fin de la géographie?" in *Le Monde Diplomatique* and O'Brien's book length study from 1992, *Global Financial Integration: The End of Geography*. Together Virilio and O'Brien provide broader political and economic contexts for Harvey's claim with regard to late twentieth century global compression.

domestic and foreign politics” (13). Thus, the newly diminished globe is differently experienced depending upon where upon it you happen to be—a boon to some, a curse to many more, and even a fiction to those who lack the necessary tools to access it. But regardless of how it is experienced, this newly compressed space is seen directly or obliquely to affect the lives of all of its inhabitants on a daily level.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the first use of the word “globalization” came in 1962 in an article in London’s *Sunday Times*. Thereafter it entered slowly into circulation, being invoked later the same year in *Spectator* and then again three years later in the *Economist*.<sup>2</sup> Globalization would seem, then, to arise at roughly the same point as postmodernity and just as critics began to feel confident asking themselves “What was Modernism?”<sup>3</sup> Globalization would thus seem by definition to be *after* modernism, especially when considering the relative infrequency of these early uses of the word. For it was not really until after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in the late 1980’s, coupled with various technological, political, and even environmental developments that globalization as a readily accessible concept came into vogue. The subsequent acceleration of multilateral trade agreements culminating in the formation of the World Trade Organization in 1995 merely cemented that reality.<sup>4</sup> As Bauman himself notes, even now the enormous range of connotations, characteristics, and implications attending the term “globalization” remains beyond full comprehension (1-2). But some aspects of the process are, it seems, more settled than others. In its current valence, globalization is a virtual synonym of sorts for the worldwide economic integration that

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<sup>2</sup> See the OED online at <http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/0009>.

<sup>3</sup> The question is Harry Levin’s from his 1962 essay of the same name.

<sup>4</sup> For more on the WTO and its formation, see its website at [http://www.gatt.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/inbrief\\_e/inbr00\\_e.htm](http://www.gatt.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/inbrief_e/inbr00_e.htm)



has recently come into being under the growing pressure of multinational capital and systems of exchange. Thus for Bauman and for the G8 protesters of Québec and Genoa, as indeed for many, the word “globalization” consistently carries a pejorative inflection and strongly implies a particular politics. Just as certainly, the very capacity to politicize globalization as a concept must be predicated upon its ready availability as both a lived reality and a concept. Like modernity itself, then, it is only after globalization has fully arrived that it can be thought of and thought through in any kind of systematic way. The attention that is paid to globalization by contemporary postmodern cultural theorists such as Bauman, O’Brien, Virilio, Vincent Cable, and Timothy Luke, not to mention its ubiquity in current public discourse, suggests that in 2001, globalization has become the unavoidable and “intractable fate of the world” (Bauman 1).<sup>5</sup>

But even as postmodernity makes its proprietary claim upon globalization, upon the idea of global space as a familiar, fully graspable concept, that very act of arrogation itself once again foregrounds the fact that the era in which we live is in fact “post” modern. For as sustained, thorough, and politically differentiated as the contemporary response to global compression and contraction may be, it is, in the end, belated. In this dissertation, I both build upon and complicate the claims of Bauman and others for the confluence of globalization and postmodernity. I argue that from the moment of its emergence, modernism was in fact predicated upon a newly emergent global reality whose effects and implications were every bit as complex as those to which we are ourselves currently bearing witness. Today globalization comes complete with a politics,

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<sup>5</sup> Cable’s notion of a “fissure” within a globalized contemporary culture echoes the rhetorical predilections of modernists when confronted with a similar reality. Luke, like Harvey before him, minimizes the signs of this particular genealogy as he privileges postmodernism’s putative spatial obsession over modernism’s temporal dimension.

and a complex network of processes, derivations, and trajectories; by contrast, for modernists like Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf, the process was an especially murky one. Indeed, even to speak of globalization as a process under modernist scrutiny is somewhat misleading. It would be more accurate to point to a loose set of preoccupations and representations which taken together suggest a modernist perception that the spaces of the globe were becoming both more proximate to one another, and less differentiated from one another, than they had ever been before. As a nascent, not yet fully digested territorial and epistemic shift, this prior moment of global transformation could only rarely and obliquely be experienced and represented for what in hindsight it can be observed to have been.

As the Oxford English Dictionary also points out, the word “global” itself only entered common usage in 1927, well after the novels of Conrad and Joyce, and almost exactly simultaneous with Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*. By virtue of this experiential and conceptual novelty then, modernists most often characterized global change as a transformative moment of “shattering,” disintegration, and collapse. I argue that it was through this range of tropes that modernists expressed, and frequently masked, their broadest reactions to a newly emergent shift in the spaces around them. Though the economic integration which has recently come to be seen as both the surest sign and effect of globalization was certainly not fully in place in the modernist era, the kinds of territorial and cultural assimilations which provided its necessary foundation most certainly were, at the very least, emerging. And as they sought to register and respond to a newly diminished sense of the global, Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf mapped the signs of that change onto locales much closer to home—Africa, Dublin, and Skye. Through such

various acts of displacement, these authors alternately registered, resisted, and even occasionally trumpeted, the processes of global redefinition and reorientation which were quite literally remapping the world around them.

It is in a broad and embryonic sense, then, that I invoke the term globalization in what follows. Since globalization itself was not articulated as a concept until well after modernism's putative demise, modernists themselves typically referred to broad concepts and made use of capacious terminology, such as "space" or "world," in order to indicate an "out there" that was somehow changing. The vagaries that attended their ruminations upon a world in flux are hardly surprising given the relative novelty of the phenomenon. And indeed, there is wide disparity across modernism, and even among the works of the three modernists that I examine below, over what it is that is meant by "globe," "world," and "space." Sometimes, I argue, the three words are used almost interchangeably; on the other hand, "space" and "world" are sometimes displaced signifiers, conscious or not, for the global. More specifically yet, while for Conrad and Joyce the global is very often the explicit changing "space" that is under scrutiny, for Woolf the notion of the global is far more infrequent in her fiction. This does not mean that the same nascent forms of globalization that motivate Conrad and Joyce are absent in Woolf; it simply means that her notion of the global may not have been as well defined as was theirs. Hence she tends to rely upon, and to fixate upon, a less well defined, and more capacious, concept of "space" as she worried over the ways in which the territories around her were changing. Hence, when I turn to Woolf, I attend much more to her broad anxieties over space in general rather than simply globalism more narrowly. Ironically, as Woolf wrote over a

quarter of a century after Conrad, the concept of global space was both broader and more difficult to define than it had been for him.

Indeed, as I will show, the signs of such incipient globalization are everywhere within modernism, though they are frequently displaced both rhetorically and territorially. And even as they have sought to explicate it, critics of modernism and space have often tended to repeat and reify this displacement. While Henri Lefebvre's bold claim from 1974 that modernism's emergence coincided with a "shattering" of space is perhaps the most salient of these, it is far from the only one. Confronting the complex processes of disorientation and reorientation that partly comprise the modernist context, Lefebvre turns to the same metaphor that Woolf and Joyce themselves did in representing and experiencing that protean environment. And like so many who had preceded and would follow him, Lefebvre's conception of modernist spaces is itself quite capacious, taking in much more than simply the global. Nevertheless, even as it repeats the rhetorical gestures common both to modernism and to modernist criticism, Lefebvre's argument does, in its broad focus, foreground the absolute inseparability of modernism from an experience of reconfigured space in its most general sense.

In other words, Lefebvre recognizes the centrality of the spatial transformation that is so evident in Walter Benjamin's famous modern analysis of Charles Baudelaire's *flâneur* figure. In his essay, "On some Motifs in Baudelaire," Benjamin argues that the *flâneur* is obsolete in modernist cities like the London and Berlin of his own day. Where Baudelaire's figure had "demanded elbow room and was unwilling to forgo the life of a gentleman of leisure," his modern counterpart is simply "the man of the crowd" for whom "the feverish turmoil of the city" provides little of the time or space afforded the

*flâneur* (172-3). As Benjamin goes on to explain in great complexity, this historical shift from a leisured to a frenzied urban existence is bound up with a reorganization of city space that is itself predicated upon technological, political, and economic developments particular to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western Europe. For Benjamin, then, modernity's geographic transformation was most evident on the local metropolitan level.

Notwithstanding his specifically urban sensibility, it is this general sense of transformation as it was experienced by Benjamin's modernist peers that Lefebvre and others have sought to explain. Indeed, following both Benjamin and Lefebvre, several critics have more recently reasserted the link between modernism and the reconfigured material spaces in which and through which it emerged. In his encyclopedic account of the era, Stephen Kern claims that, through its sustained "reference to a plurality of spaces," modernism "challenged the universality of a single space" (135). Building on Kern's work, I argue that, as resistant to global homogeneity as it was, modernism was anything but confident regarding its ability to challenge that perceived new reality. Following both Lefebvre and Kern, Michael North has again reasserted the absolute necessity of understanding modernism through the lens of exile, migration, and displacement, all of which implicate a new relationship to the spaces of the world, both near and far.<sup>6</sup> David Harvey, though he casts modernist interest in space as a simple foreshadowing of what was to come, also agrees with Lefebvre's more implicit linkage of modernism to a time-space compression around the time of its origin. While their focus

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<sup>6</sup> For Kern's account of the modernist period see his first chapter in particular. North's reading of 1922 as a moment of modernist cross-pollination begins with a cogent reassessment of the links between modernism, media, migration, and exile. Along the way, North attends to the ways those developments are generally predicated upon mobility and traversal across territorial boundaries and markers of all types.

on modernist space is less pointed than my own, Lefebvre, North, Kern, and Harvey collectively argue, then, for a context of territorial reconfiguration, realignment, and reimagination which was roughly synonymous with modernism's broad emergence.

The resurgent interest in modernist space is in keeping with a more general recent rereading of the connections between literature and space—or, alternatively, place—many of which I enumerate in the closing pages of the first chapter below. In his 2000 work, *Place in Literature*, Roberto Dainotto alludes to the “new epoch” inaugurated by postmodern cultural geographers such as David Harvey, Edward Soja, Derek Gregory, and Caren Kaplan (1). While Dainotto takes as his primary focus regionalism in Victorian novels, the thrust of his effort parallels mine in that he seeks to bring this recent critical work to bear upon the literary productions of an earlier era. Like Dainotto, I value these critical interventions primarily for the ways in which they help to unseat “traditional aesthetic values once mistaken as universal” (3). Rereading space as a historically contingent social category rather than as an inert locale in which and to which things simply happen is as central to my project as it is to his. While he is keen to “denaturalize” and thus historicize the shifts that obtain within these categories themselves, Dainotto never underestimates the formative role played by space, place, and location in any historical moment. In much the same vein, though in even more general terms, Stephen Kern follows Kant in arguing for that role: “[T]ime and space are particularly suitable for a general cultural history because they are comprehensive, universal and essential” (12).

These arguments for a general structural connection between culture and space must themselves be contextualized within even broader claims for the centrality of space to

basic human experience and organization. Given this breadth of scope, it is not surprising that many studies invoke space in precisely the ahistorical fashion which Dainotto refutes. For example, in his 1967 work *The Child's Conception of Space*, the psychologist Jean Piaget asserted that the “spatial relations” of “proximity, separation, and succession” were basic to perception, knowledge, and experience (8-12). At about the same time, Gaston Bachelard, in his own landmark study, *The Poetics of Space*, similarly examined how domestic architecture and space played structural roles in the human consciousness and imagination. In Bachelard's work, as in Piaget's, domestic space is an unchanging constant, and space itself is again cast as a universal category that requires very little historical explication. Indeed, the trans-historical and metaphorical overtones of Bachelard's investigation are made manifest from the very beginning: “The house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind [. . .]. It maintains him through the storms of the heavens and through those of life. It is body and soul” (7). In his foreword to its 1994 edition, John Stilgoe thus strikes exactly the right note in claiming that Bachelard's book “resonates deeply, vibrating at the edges of imagination, exploring the recesses of the psyche, the hallways of the mind. In the house, Bachelard discovers a metaphor for humanness” (vii). Stilgoe thus follows Bachelard himself in converting space into a trope, into an heuristic that is here invoked as much to demystify the structure of human consciousness as it is to contextualize it.

In contrast to Bachelard, I insist upon space as a protean and material “place” or rather range of places that are historically contingent rather than transcendent. Thus, though they are crucial to our recovery of space as something worthy of critical investigation, the

studies of Bachelard and Piaget must themselves be historicized. To that end, the geographers Arthur H. Robinson and Barbara Bartz Petchenik have sought to explain space and place as critical concepts that are especially susceptible to transcendent and universalizing language, arguing that “no matter what other characteristics objects do not share, they *always* share relative location, that is spatiality; hence the desirability of equating knowledge with space, an intellectual space” (4). Similarly, David Turnbull opens his attempt to complicate such ahistorical impulses around the issue of space by first accounting for them; he acknowledges the “apparently fundamental role of space in ordering our knowledge and our experience” (2). While my own examination of modernism and global space is predicated upon and directed towards—to recast Louis Montrose’s pithy chiasmus—the historicity of space and the spatiality of history, I continue to look to earlier works like *The Poetics of Space*, in which the general connections between the formal properties of art, architecture, space, and consciousness were first established.

If my readings of modernism’s specifically global anxieties are thus necessarily bound up with, and subsequent to, a broader survey of the spatial preoccupations within both modernism and its reception history, the terms of both these discussions are themselves at times very difficult to stabilize and to separate from one another. General words and concepts such as “space,” “place,” and “locale” obviously carry an enormous range of denotative and connotative meanings; moreover, as both synonyms and antimonies, these words frequently collapse into one another. This indeterminacy is partly due to the power and currency, noted above by Robinson and Petchenik, which “space” carries as an almost catachrestic trope for various concepts—the imagination, aesthetics,



knowledge—that are themselves frustratingly capacious. Thus it is that Turnbull’s claim for a transhistorical attraction to mapping metaphors holds equally true with regard to space. “It is difficult,” Turnbull writes, “to explain the nature of maps without resorting to map-like metaphors” (2). Both within modernist criticism and without, space is often similarly invoked as a metaphor to explain its own range of literal denotations and registers.

The slipperiness in the spatial lexicon is especially evident with regard to the ostensible antimony between space and place. Often this kind of opposition is invoked to differentiate conceptually a large, isomorphic and somewhat alienating area from an immediate environment in which, to quote Michel de Certeau, “everyday life happens” (19). In de Certeau’s assertion that “space is a lived place” (32), it is thus “place” that is the undifferentiated area that is present only as a concept, while “space” is meant to take in the specific set of cultural and physical characteristics which specifically mark a place as “here.” For Caren Kaplan, conversely, “space is [that which] is assumed to be *there*: a substance that is relatively immune to the workings of time” while “place” and “locale” implicate a “specifying gesture of difference *from* something or someone else” (147-55). Kern agrees with this latter formulation as he associates space with isomorphism and place with localization, specification, and differentiation (135). Lefebvre too invokes a similar opposition or dialectic, though for him the respective terms are now “representations of space” and “representational spaces.” “Representations of space” comprise, and are synonymous with “conceptualized space, the space of scientists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers [. . .]. This is the dominant space in any society” (39). By contrast, representational space is “space as directly *lived* through its

associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users,’ but also of some artists [. . .]. This is the dominated—and hence passively experienced—space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” (39). Together de Certeau, Lefebvre, Caplan, and Kern thus continually reproduce the same antimony, though its oppositional terms are themselves frequently reversed and exchanged with one another. This phenomenon both derives from and enhances the slipperiness that is inherent to terms such as space and place as they are invoked as metaphors to describe just about everything within contemporary society.

Far from resisting this conceptual flexibility and mobility, my dissertation embraces it. For within the modernist record itself, the capaciousness of space as both a literal and denotative term is an almost non-negotiable given. That is, it seems only natural that as modernists confronted a globe whose emergent and ongoing reconfigurations carried with them a dizzying array of conflicting implications, writers like Woolf, Joyce, and Conrad would not yet have access to a fully stabilized vocabulary with which they might compartmentalize those changes. Indeed this dissertation argues that such compartmentalization was always impossible. And if, from its necessarily belated position, postmodern spatial theory is forced to acknowledge conceptual capaciousness, imbrication, and mobility, such epistemological and terminological slipperiness was even less negotiable for the moderns themselves for whom time-space compression could only be experienced as a shattering and smashing.

As we shall see, even within modernism’s reception history, space is itself a “spacious” term, as New Critics and others sought to explicate a vast array of modernist

aesthetic characteristics through the seeming transparency of spatial metaphors. By invoking the connotative range and broad inclusiveness of space as an existential category putatively available to all, these critics both acknowledged and masked modernism's interest in the real spaces out of which it emerged, even as they amplified the imprecision of space as a category which could make sense of that interest. Any overly ambitious attempt to compartmentalize the terms through which modernists confronted a new global reality would be to efface, then, the signs of alienation and perplexity that largely comprised that experience. For the most part, that experience seems to have consisted of attempts to read changes in one space in terms of those of another. Finally, if my own study sometimes reproduces the structural properties of those above antimonies, it most frequently does so around the terms "global" and "locale." For I argue, that, as modernists reacted to changes in the broad, isomorphic, global landscape "out there," they frequently did so through worrying over the lived-in, "everyday," spaces of their more immediate locales. And as "out there" refused to stay out there, as it both invaded and inundated the "in here," it only seems natural that the categories and terms by which the global, the local, and everything in between were known would themselves become similarly interpenetrating.

If very recent work has begun to confront the intersecting frontiers of modernism by focusing renewed attention upon a range of spatial contexts, that work has itself been confined to the more familiar territories of empire, domesticity, the public sphere, the city, or interiority.<sup>7</sup> Thus, while, as in so many other contexts, space has once again

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<sup>7</sup> See for instance the introductory chapter of North's *Reading 1922*, Ian Baucom's *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity*, Chris Bongie's "Exotic Nostalgia," Rachel Bowlby's *Destination Nation*, Kathy Phillips *Virginia Woolf against Empire*, Peter Barta's *Bely, Joyce, and Dublin: Peripatetics in the City Novel*, and Vincent Cheng's *Joyce, Race, and Empire*. While all of these, not to

become an issue to modernist studies, the record there remains incomplete. No adequate study yet exists that accounts for the ways in which modernism's sense of all of its spaces, places, and locales was informed and inflected by anxieties over developments which in hindsight we can group together as signs of a still nascent and historically specific form of globalization. While my work implicates all of these spaces as sites of registration and resistance, I am, in my readings of three specific modernist novels, primarily interested in those moments where the global punctures and penetrates the local, where the "out there" is cast as the foreign element that refuses to stay foreign and differentiated. As anxiety arises in response to those incursions, it is frequently displaced onto those smaller and more immediate locales themselves where it is registered not so much as a global phenomenon but as a localized eruption or shattering. But this occlusion is never complete, as the worry that characters such as Marlow, Bloom, and Mr. Ramsay seem to manifest over localized developments always contains traces—some times less faint than at other times—of similar reflections over spaces that are not so close to home, at least not yet. Furthermore, not only are the signs of global anxiety registered in a wide array of more confined cultural places, and physical spaces, but also the investment in those smaller locales is itself widely variously inflected. At times, authors and characters find in the local mere reflections of global homogenization and diminishment; at others, more immediate environs are retrieved as sites of recalcitrance and resistance. But however it is variously worried over, impugned, or even occasionally lauded, that global encroachment is registered everywhere and anywhere in the modernist landscape is a sign of both its ubiquity and its newness.

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mention the countless analyses of Conrad and imperialism, take particular modernist spaces as their object of inquiry, together they give only passing attention to how these smaller spaces were themselves

I begin the first chapter by situating modernism within a context of changing space as that category was most broadly conceived. Alluding to a series of shared chronologies and rhetorical strategies, I argue that the repeated efforts of modernists to define their work around a shattering point of origin can substantiate a critical consensus regarding the period's spatial orientation. After attending to the ways in which writers like Conrad and D. H. Lawrence measured the disintegration of an "old world," I show how a specific reading of modernist space crystallized around early responses to the work of T. S. Eliot and James Joyce. I argue that Joseph Frank's influential claims for modernism's "spatial form" derived in part from the value which modernists themselves placed upon textual space as a means to both a revolutionary aesthetic and an interpretive heuristic. Finding some justification in early statements by Eliot, Joyce, Woolf, Pound, and Lewis, this approach quickly consigned modernist space either to the status of metaphor or to an issue of formal style. As the New Criticism then began to solidify its hold upon modernism in the years around the Second World War, these responses gathered such momentum that only rarely could the more specific signs of a globally oriented anxiety surface. Following Jeffrey Perl's recent claims, I argue that this New Critical construction has gathered such momentum that it all too frequently simplifies the complexities within modernism's interest in its surrounding spaces. As New Criticism's reign over the academy began to wane, its readings of modernist space nevertheless continued to influence a generation or more of differently minded critics like Fredric Jameson, who have condemned modernism's putative erasure of global space under the sign of form and style. In the final pages of the chapter, I take up Sanford Schwartz's call to "postmodernize modernism" as I invoke a group of cultural geographers for their

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implicated in and refracted through a reorienting and disorienting modern globe.

theorization of a new kind of link between literary artifacts and the material spaces in which they are produced. The work of these recent theorists generally informs my ensuing readings of the ways that modernist texts responded to the signs, effects, and implications of a nascent globalization.

In the second chapter, I look at Joseph Conrad's 1899 novel *Heart of Darkness*, which has been so long identified as embracing or indicting the interrelated practices of imperialism and racism. I suggest that one reason that such readings of *Heart of Darkness* often founder is that the novel itself refuses ever to separate imperialism from the globalizing processes that it helped to set in motion. As he mourned the loss of an expansive globe rife with possibilities of adventure and excitement, Conrad saw in Africa a particularly salient reminder of the realities of proximity, depletion, and diminishment. As it was being reconfigured under modernity, that continent thus stood as at once the best example of a worldwide phenomenon, and as a contained space onto which that phenomenon could be remapped. In the course of the chapter, I situate Conrad's African anxieties against a background of New Imperialist discourse that similarly, though for different reasons, also saw that continent in terms of global depletion and homogenization. Taking into account Conrad's anxieties over his own modernity, I show that what seems sometimes to be on his part a troubling endorsement of imperialism is in fact a nostalgia for a pre-modern world unmarked by the homogenizing and diminishing pressures of globalization.

In the third chapter, I examine *Ulysses*, James Joyce's novel from 1922. Given Joyce's explicit preoccupation with local geography, critics have paid little attention to his less obvious interest in the global. Responding to this oversight, I argue that the

novel itself refuses ever to separate the local from the global. In fact, Joyce insists that the signs of Dublin's increasing proximity to the rest of the world are everywhere within its urban confines; thus globalization in its early form itself constitutes a significant element in the experience of living in that city in 1904. Moreover, I claim that as a city undergoing its own series of local transformations, Joyce's Dublin is especially well positioned as a register of spatial upheaval. At once provincial center and urban metropolis, colonial outpost and national capital, Dublin forces upon its citizens a sensitivity to the symbolism and vicissitudes of geography in all its guises. I then point to numerous examples of global incursion, points at which characters confront the signs of increased territorial integration and proximity. Sometimes this recognition entails anxiety over a depletion of the world, while at others it seems barely to register. Frequently, characters respond with a displaced nostalgia, which sees them turn to the more immediate and intimate spaces around them in order to assuage anxieties over global change. I conclude the chapter with an extended reading of two characters whose reactions to globalization are, in contrast to those of their peers, neither displaced nor fearful. In particular, I find in Leopold Bloom a rare instance of an individual for whom greater global integration is an almost entirely positive phenomenon.

In the fourth chapter, I turn to Virginia Woolf's 1927 novel, *To the Lighthouse*. Set in the relatively remote locale of the Scottish Hebrides, this novel depicts the events of two separate days in the life of the Ramsay family, two days that are separated by ten years and by the events of the First World War. In the novel's middle section, entitled "Time Passes," Woolf represents the shattering effects of the war upon the Ramsays' abandoned summer home. Critics have long attended to this salient instance of global

incursion, where the events of a not so far-off world so patently transform the spaces of the local and the domestic. I argue that this section of the novel constitutes simply its most obvious registration of an anxiety shared by many of its characters. Even in a setting at such a pronounced geographic remove from the rest of the world, characters give voice to fears of global depletion and homogeneity as they witness the world's transformation from a place of adventure into a tourist site. At the same time, the characters, like many of those in Joyce's novel, turn to their immediate and intimate surroundings as the only locales in which they can resist the forces of incursion. That *To the Lighthouse* is more muted than either of the other two novels in registering that transformation suggests that at its farthest reaches nascent globalization was particularly difficult to see. Less obviously, it might imply that by the time of Woolf's novel, integration was already not nearly as new as it was for Conrad, and hence its effects had become less startling and more routinized.

In the conclusion to the dissertation, I invoke this modernist trajectory, as I point to the fact that worldwide integration is so frequently seen to be the exclusive province of postmodernity. By firmly linking globalization to postmodernism in this way, we impair our understanding of both terms. Hence, in what is one of its larger objectives, this dissertation sets out to uncouple and complicate that pairing in the interests of greater cultural and historical accuracy. Our ability to comprehend globalization in its contemporary form will be significantly enhanced by a close examination of the ways in which its initial effects were registered upon a prior generation of writers.



## CHAPTER ONE

### SHATTERED SPACES AND CRITICAL CONFINES: REMAPPING LITERARY MODERNISM

The world broke in two in 1922 or thereabouts.

—Willa Cather, *Not Under Forty* (1)

Around 1910 a certain space was shattered.

—Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (25)

Though equally pithy, these two statements from Willa Cather and Henri Lefebvre appear to disagree as much as they agree. The most obvious contrast between the two lies in the different chronologies that each offers for a similar event. But then, it seems best not to make too much of that discrepancy given that both writers plead caution regarding historical exactitude, carefully qualifying their claims with words like “around” and “thereabouts.” And anyway, as we shall see, the two dates, 1910 and 1922, are closely linked with one another by virtue of their shared prominence in the separate, but not unrelated, attempt to periodize literary modernism and its origins. It is thus a second divergence, a rhetorical one having to do with matters of precision, that is crucial here. If for Lefebvre it was simply an almost hopelessly vague and placeless “space” that seemed to be shattering in 1910, Cather was slightly more specific as she saw “the world” itself, twelve years further on, as a site of rupture and disintegration. In this dissertation, I argue that if literary modernism and readings of it are frequently worried over shattering spaces in general, much of that anxiety is in fact globally oriented. Just as frequently, however, the signs of that anxiety are difficult to read. The move from Cather’s more particular “world” to Lefebvre’s more amorphous “space” is one that is repeated throughout both modernism and modernist criticism. I begin my study with this initial

chapter, then, which shows how fears surrounding globalism are both communicated and concealed through the even more capacious, and thus perhaps less fraught, conceptual category of space.

In their shared rhetoric of both precision and occlusion, these two analysts of modernism are far from unique; from almost the moment at which modernism emerged as any kind of recognizable literary period, its interest in the global has frequently been territorially reoriented and rhetorically displaced. While most often, it is simply “space” as an amorphous concept that acts as the repository of this more specific set of anxieties, deflection does not always entail imprecision. Indeed, when taken in its entirety, Lefebvre’s claim is remarkably exact. And as it appeared in 1974, almost forty years after Cather’s own reminiscence, it was also historically astute and methodologically prescient. Looking back from that vantage, Lefebvre investigated a particular “moment” in time, a moment which for him marked a profound epistemological shift within the history of “Western thought”:

[A]round 1910 a certain space was shattered. It was the space of common sense, of knowledge (*savoir*), of social practice, of political power, a space thitherto enshrined in everyday discourse, just as in abstract thought, as the environment of and channel for communication [. . .]. Euclidean and perspectivist space have disappeared as systems of reference, along with other former "commonplaces" such as town, history, paternity, the tonal system in music, traditional morality, and so forth. This was a truly crucial moment. (25)

Breathtaking in both their scope and their implications, Lefebvre’s claims remain crucial to a sustained reading of global spaces and their cultural mediation in the early twentieth

century. Lefebvre's rhetorical strategy, which sees him transform the initial "around 1910" into a definitive "truly crucial moment," is symptomatic of many readings of modernism and space. The identification of one particular moment as the point at which a "certain space was shattered" constitutes self-conscious hyperbole, aimed at drawing attention to the truly revolutionary nature of such a shift in sensibility. But beyond its rhetorical effects, Lefebvre's identification of "around 1910" as a period of spatial reconception and remapping serves as the departure point for my dissertation, in that, again, such an event would seem to fall within the initial stages of literary modernism as it is commonly periodized.

That is, while Lefebvre saw 1910 as a convenient marker at which to situate an epistemic shift centered on changes in the world's "spaces," modernism has consistently been pegged, by both its practitioners and its critics, to a similar chronology. Perhaps the most famous of such attempts remains Virginia Woolf's claim from 1923 in which she also relied upon the rhetoric of hyperbole in order to locate a very similar point of origin for modernism. In "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," Woolf declared that "[o]n or about December 1910 human character changed, [. . .] all human relations shifted—those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change, there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics and literature" (*Essays* 3:385). In the aftermath of the First World War, in a cultural context which had witnessed the consequent remapping of the world's spaces, and in the face of ongoing revolutions in aesthetic representation that had perhaps reached their zenith the previous year with the publication of Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Joyce's *Ulysses*, Woolf attempted to locate a point of origin which would help her readers to

chart the course and significance of all those upheavals.<sup>1</sup> The extent of Lefebvre's indebtedness to Woolf here is unclear, but what does seem obvious is that both critics locate a transformational event somewhere in the vicinity of 1910.<sup>2</sup>

If Woolf's claim for that year aligns her chronology with that of Lefebvre, the rhetorical stress that it puts upon precision echoes similar efforts within the language of many of her fellow modernists. Many shared her desire to conceive of modernism as a kind of historical fracture. Surveying the assertions of both modernist authors and their early critics, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane identify many such "audacious attempts to discern a moment of transition." Bradbury and McFarlane claim that, cumulatively, these attempts reflect a kind of "apocalyptic ferment" (51) on the part of modernists and their contemporaries. For example, in his 1923 novel *Kangaroo*, D. H. Lawrence identified another specific moment of historical rupture, claiming that "it was in 1915 the old world ended" (123). To Henry Adams, the year 1900 signified nothing less than "a revolution" (383), whose shattering force had made itself felt upon the author in almost visceral terms: "[H]e found himself lying in the Gallery of Machines at the Great Exposition of 1900, his historical neck broken by the sudden irruption of forces totally new" (382). With their insistence upon expressing historical change through a

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<sup>1</sup> Bradbury notes that Woolf's selection of December 1910 was motivated in part by her having then seen the Post-Impressionist exhibition in London, a collection whose proleptic and revolutionary nature would have been, in the hindsight afforded to Woolf, undeniable. Of course, there were doubtless other reasons for Woolf's choice of this date; historical markers such as the death of Edward VII also helped to make the choice a compelling one. Indeed, the importance of the dynastic succession to Woolf's chronology is made clear in her nomenclature for her own period; in contrast to the pre-1910 Edwardians, Woolf sees herself and her fellow English novelists as "Georgians." As Astradur Eysteinnsson points out, "Modernism" as a term to designate a literary period which Woolf herself names as "Georgian" was not yet in use (1-2).

<sup>2</sup> Certainly, given the rhetorical, syntactic, and substantive similarity of the two claims by Woolf and Lefebvre, one must consider the question of influence—the degree to which Lefebvre had Woolf in mind when he made his much later claim in 1974. The question is perhaps ultimately unanswerable since Lefebvre makes no reference to Woolf in regards to this assertion and scant mention of her in his entire volume. Ultimately, the line of influence is largely unimportant. Consciously or not, Lefebvre situates his "moment" at or very close to points of origin which modernists had earlier claimed as their own.

confirmed rhetoric of shattering, rupture, and disintegration, Adams and Lawrence thus obliquely link Lefebvre's claim for a broadly based spatial reorganization to the arrival of modernism itself. And, even more obliquely, in echoing Cather's claim that it was an old "world" that had shattered, they suggest that that reorganization was somehow global in scale.

Not all of modernism's claims regarding its own arrival line up so explicitly with Lefebvre's rhetoric. But a general attraction to his language of rupture and suddenness persists, thus further suggesting a link between modernism and spatial reconfiguration. From the vantage point of 1934, when he published a collection of essays entitled "Make it New," Ezra Pound saw the year 1912 as "the *stil'nuovo* or the awakening" ("Date Line" 11).<sup>3</sup> And in 1918, Pound had chosen the even more precise date of "spring or early summer of 1912" as the starting point in his brief chronicle of Imagism which he tellingly titled "A Retrospect" (3). If we were to accept the subsequent tendency to see Imagism as "the first English modernist movement" (Clearfield 82), Pound's date would then assume a greater significance within the larger effort to historicize modernism.<sup>4</sup>

Also looking back with the hindsight afforded by more than two decades, T. S. Eliot, in a 1940 draft of a proposed lecture entitled "The Last Twenty-Five Years of English

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<sup>3</sup> Of course, the title of Pound's collection, "Make it New," more famously appears in the roughly simultaneous Canto 53 as part of a Poundian translation from the Chinese: "Tching prayed on the fountain and / wrote MAKE IT NEW / on his bath tub / Day by day make it new" (265). The now ubiquitous imperative—so ubiquitous in fact that its source is rarely cited—is itself frequently invoked as evidence of modernism's claims for its own revolutionary nature. Such claims are often misguided, however, both because they imply that the phrase entails a wholesale rejection of the old and because its relatively late appearance within Pound's corpus places it well beyond any commonly accepted "point of origin" for either modernism or Imagism.

<sup>4</sup> Imagism has hardly been the sole movement associated with the "arrival" of modernism. Indeed, other movements such as Wyndham Lewis's "Vorticism" and F.T. Marinetti's "Futurism" offer compelling evidence for competing chronologies in the attempt to historicize modernism. Lewis's manifesto for Vorticism appeared in the first issue of *Blast* in June of 1914, while Marinetti published the Futurist program in February of 1909. The fact that the manifesto as a kind of rhetorical genre is typically

Poetry,” offered his own take on modern poetry’s beginnings. Eliot framed the argument in terms of influence and rupture: “The kind of verse which began to be written about 1910 or so made the same break with tradition that we find in that of Wordsworth or Coleridge” (388).<sup>5</sup> Six years later, Eliot made a very similar claim while offering a slightly revised chronology for Anglo-American modernism: “I do not think that it is too sweeping to say, that there was no poet, in either country, who could have been of use to a beginner in 1908” (388).<sup>6</sup> While this later claim may indeed be “sweeping,” Eliot had, in his 1921 essay, “The Metaphysical Poets,” provided some of the contextualization to justify his reading of contemporary literary history. A properly modern poetry, he argued, arose out of a historically specific “dissociation of sensibility” that was itself derived from and responsive to the modern condition: “[P]oets in our civilization, as it appears at present, must be *difficult*. Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity [. . .] must produce various and complex results” (*Prose* 65).<sup>7</sup> For Eliot, as for Woolf, something new about “human character” and its environment had necessitated a break from past tradition, and when he felt obliged by the demands of literary history, Eliot settled upon 1910 as a convenient marker for that break.

Given that the modernists themselves went to such efforts to see the alleged origins of the era as kind of rupture, it is not surprising that their later readers would attempt to do

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associated with notions of “shattering” and “momentousness” lends resonance to either of these two dates as further possible points of origin for modernism “as a whole.”

<sup>5</sup> John Berryman later concurred with this assessment based on his reading of Eliot’s own poetry. Of the third line of Eliot’s “Prufrock,” a poem begun in “1910 or so,” Berryman claims, “With this line, modern poetry begins” (270).

<sup>6</sup> Both of Eliot’s remarks can be found in the Christopher Ricks edition of Eliot’s manuscripts, *Inventions of the March Hare*. The second citation comes from an essay which Eliot originally published in *Poetry* (Chicago) in September of 1946.

<sup>7</sup> Eliot’s valorization of Donne and the “metaphysical” poets was due to their proficiency in “amalgamating disparate experience” (*Prose* 64). Interestingly, as evidenced by Donne’s cartographic conceits, among the “disparate” experiences common to both Donne and Eliot was a shift in the way in which global space was conceptualized and territorialized.

the same. As much, if not more than any other period, this one has been beset by subsequent attempts to assign to it an identifiable moment at which everything which came before can be said to have been smashed apart. In his essay from 1962, “What Was Modernism?” Harry Levin argued that 1922, the year in which Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, and Woolf’s *Jacob’s Room* all appeared, stood as a kind of “*annus mirabilis*” for modernism (317). Much more recently, Michael North has convincingly elaborated an argument for reading 1922 as “signifying a definitive break in literary history” (3).<sup>8</sup> In 1965, Cyril Connolly, while initially reluctant to assign a chronologically precise origin to such a variegated movement, in the end argues for 1880, as “the point where the Enlightenment’s critical intelligence had combined with Romanticism’s exploring sensibility to stimulate the work of the first generation of truly modern writers” (4). In their survey of modernist literature across international lines, Bradbury and McFarlane also chose 1880 as a point of departure.<sup>9</sup> Richard Ellmann responded directly to Woolf, not to criticize her notion of rupture, but merely to challenge her particular selection: “I should suggest that 1900 is both more convenient and more accurate than Virginia Woolf’s 1910” (190). In direct contrast, Peter Stansky’s recent book, which makes its point in its title, *On or About December 1910*, takes Woolf’s claim

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<sup>8</sup> To substantiate his highly nuanced claim, North returns to the publication record cited by Levin and to the now familiar claims of rupture made by modernists themselves.

<sup>9</sup> In the introductory essay to their study of modernism, Bradbury and McFarlane offer up a competing claim which is remarkable for its mathematical inflections: “What is striking about this development in the Germanic Modern—and to place it somewhere about the year 1890 would not be far wrong—is that, because the moment was so self-conscious and articulate, it is particularly well-documented and therefore accessible to investigation, like some *dy* by *dx* of a much larger configuration of change within which is contained the larger meaning of modernism” (40). Here, the authors’ identification of a temporal and spatial point of origin for modernism—Germany in 1890—then allows them to plot its subsequent trajectory as an arithmetic function. Again, the identification of a particular “spot of time” is therefore seen to be the key to plotting modernism’s spatial dimension. Later in the essay, Bradbury and McFarlane postulate yet another chronology which nevertheless reinforces this idea of rupture and transformation: “One reason why the post-war period has seemed so crucial is that the war itself can be recognized as the apocalyptic moment of transition into the new” (51).

largely at face value, invoking her chronology as its primary “principle of organization or point of departure” (3). For Stansky, as perhaps for Woolf, “England in 1910 entered the story of [. . .] modernism” (1).<sup>10</sup>

To some extent, this cumulative effort to periodize on the part of both the modernists and their critics is symptomatic of any literary movement’s efforts towards self-definition and self-legitimation. As broad variations on Pound’s “make it new,” they bear witness to what Astradur Eysteinsson calls the modernist “dialectical opposition to what is not functionally ‘modern,’ namely ‘tradition’” (8). Thus the point is not to emphasize the relative merits of one date over another. Not only does each chronology have its own validity, but also such overzealous efforts at selection inevitably founder when confronted with the realities of historical development and transition. What is striking here is that both the chronological claims themselves and the rhetoric of transformation in which they are framed are so similar to those of Lefebvre. That is, whichever version of modernist origins one accepts, it is difficult not to place Lefebvre’s claim for a “truly crucial moment” at which a “certain space was shattered,” in some sort of relation with it—indeed, as either synchronous or nearly synchronous with it. It is also hard not to notice that Lefebvre, like the modernists before him, sought to emphasize the feeling of rupture and transformation through an undoubtedly self-conscious rhetoric of hyperbole that identified a year, a month, a season as the point at which “everything changed.” Such a claim would obviously not stand up under close historical interrogation, but what seems to be the point here is that the scale of the transformation was such that it felt as if it had occurred “overnight.” These convergences thus provide the initial point of

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<sup>10</sup> For further recent readings on the significance of 1910, see Thomas Harrison’s *1910, The Emancipation of Dissonance* and Robin Walz’s *Pulp Surrealism*.



departure for this dissertation for they suggest that modernism is linked to the kinds of wide-scale shifts in spatial paradigms that Lefebvre has catalogued. They reveal that Woolf's change in "human character" and Eliot's cultural "complexity" might well have something to do with a shattering of the world's spaces. And, as my later readings of the novels of Woolf, Joyce, and Conrad will show, that shattering is, like "space" itself, a rhetorical touchstone useful for its expression and occlusion of a more specifically global set of anxieties.

Of course the connection between Lefebvre's epistemic shift and modernism's putative date of birth is not the only ground on which to make a case for a renewed reading of the era's generally spatial dimension. Many readers, occupying a wide range of critical positions, have noted that modernists were preoccupied with "space," however it is defined. The first sustained examination of the issue came from Joseph Frank in his essay from 1946, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature." But Frank's landmark essay had its origins in another much earlier work, namely Wilhelm Worringer's 1908 *Abstraction and Empathy*. There, Worringer had seen in contemporary visual art a return to "abstraction." For Worringer, the impulse for abstraction in its turn betrayed a changed and vexed relation to space: "Suppression of representation of space was dictated by the urge to abstraction through the mere fact that it is precisely space which links things to one another, which imparts to them their relativity in the world-picture" (22). As Eliot was to note, in a world where those relations are no longer clear, the representation of space along traditional lines becomes in some ways "suppressed" and redirected. In the history of the visual arts, Worringer claimed to find a recurrent and specific reaction to such changed relations: "The simple line and its development in purely geometrical

regularity was bound to offer the greatest possibility of happiness to the man disquieted by the obscurity and entanglement of phenomena” (20).

Writing four decades later, Frank then sought to explicate and contextualize Worringer’s observations in light of the ensuing developments in both visual and literary modernism. In the plastic arts, Frank noted, abstraction, with its “suppression of space,” is always characterized by an emphasis on “linear-geometric patterns, on the disappearance of modeling and the attempt to capture the illusion of space, on the dominance of the plane in all types of plastic art” (58). Frank then goes on to link this development to a specifically modern context in terms that are very close to those of Eliot: “If there is one theme that dominates the history of modern culture since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it is precisely that of insecurity, instability, the feeling of loss of control over the meaning and purpose of time amidst the continuing triumphs of science and technics” (58). Finally then, Frank suggests that modernist literature reacted to the contemporary “entanglement of phenomena” through recourse to spatial form, an abstraction of a different order, but still an aesthetic abstraction that stood as a response to now shattered notions of “relativity”:

The significance of spatial form in modern literature now becomes clear; it is the exact complement in literature, on the level of aesthetic form, to the developments that have taken place in the plastic arts[. . .]. [I]f the plastic arts from the Renaissance onward attempted to compete with literature by perfecting the means of narrative representation, then contemporary literature is now striving to rival the spatial apprehension of the plastic arts in a moment in time. (60-1)

As the title of his essay indicates, to Frank, modernism's interest in space was confined to aesthetics: "Aesthetic form in modern poetry, then, is based on a space-logic that demands a complete reorientation in the reader's attitude toward language[. . .].

[M]odern poetry asks its readers to suspend the process of individual reference temporarily until the entire pattern of internal references can be apprehended as a unity" (15). In place of a process of perception centered on sequence, modernist texts such as *Ulysses*, *The Waste Land* and Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* substituted one that was based on simultaneity, very often manifested as a collage-like juxtaposition in textual space.<sup>11</sup>

Even more importantly, Frank claimed that this turn to spatial form for its emphasis on simultaneity over temporality derived from what he saw as the central preoccupation of modernism: "Modern literature has been engaged in transmuting the time world of history into the timeless world of myth. And it is this timeless world of myth, forming the content of so much of modern literature, that finds its appropriate aesthetic expression in spatial form" (64). Thus for Frank, as for Worringer before him, the modernist use of aesthetic space, or "spatial form," is a refutation of history meant in favour of the "cyclical" and "infinite" properties of myth; spatial form offered the modernists a means of coping with, or rather escaping from the oppressive and "obscure" time-world around them.<sup>12</sup> By dispensing with notions of historical time as a causal narrative, textual juxtaposition reorders the "actions and event of a particular time as the bodying forth of

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<sup>11</sup> For a reading of Eliot's poetry as analogous to contemporary developments in collage in the visual arts, see Andrew Clearfield; for similar work on Joyce, see Archie Loss's reading of the "Aeolus" chapter of *Ulysses*.

<sup>12</sup> Cary Nelson's opening remarks in his 1973 study, *The Incarnate Word: Literature as Verbal Space*, reveal the extent to which Frank's ahistorical reading of literature's "spatial dimension" had subsequently taken hold: "Pure spatiality is a condition toward which literature aspires, but which it never achieves. The desire to overcome time competes with the temporal succession of words" (3). What for Worringer was once a historical contingency—the desire to overcome time—has now become a universal ideal to which all art aspires.

eternal prototypes” (63-4 sic). Or, put slightly differently, when confronted with the “time world of history” and its shattered spaces, modernist literature responds ahistorically with a “spatial form” whose closed-relational synchronic system acts as a kind of an aesthetic antidote to the larger cultural context of shapelessness in which it appears. Thus, as is clear from his indebtedness to Worringer, Frank saw “spatial form” as a self-sufficient or “non-representational” abstraction which had the aim and effect of evacuating history from modernist fiction and replacing it with the “timeless world of myth.”

But, if Worringer and Frank were among the first to remark on space and spatial form in modernism, they have since been joined by many others. In his definitive study *The Pound Era*, Hugh Kenner makes a strong case for modernism’s sustained interest in spatial structures, claiming that our very terminology as literary critics has derived from the modernist fascination with literary form as a kind of metaphoric space:

We say that a novel has structure, being more like a building than a statement; we talk of surfaces and depths and insight which suggests peering into a window, and outlook which suggests gazing out of one [. . .]. It was Henry James himself who gave us [. . .] the concretion to which all these terms attach themselves, when in the preface to his *Portrait of a Lady* (that painterly title), he spoke of The House of Fiction [. . .]. Space, with its talk of structures, was whelming verbal art. (27)

Like Frank before him, Kenner sees modernist space largely as an issue of aesthetics, claiming that James, as a representative modernist, underlined the inherently spatial nature of literary production and interpretation.<sup>13</sup> Following Kenner’s claims, Sharon

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<sup>13</sup> In 1988, Reingard Nethersole extended the scope of Kenner’s claims, arguing that literary criticism within the twentieth century follows a trajectory from “temporality to spatiality.” Nethersole sees the

Spencer argues that modernism's changed relations to its surrounding spaces are what motivate her analysis of what she called the period's "architectonic novels." In the introduction to her study, Spencer writes: "[T]he novels that are examined in the following pages are [. . .] responses, adjustments to the new theories of the nature of reality that arose from the speculations of modern science. Especially vital for the ideas underlying this study are changes in the manner of regarding time and space that have taken place since Einstein published his famous theory" (xvii).

Similarly, Stephen Kern's invaluable survey, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918*, catalogues a "series of sweeping changes in technology and culture" which he claims "created distinctive new modes of thinking about time and space" which then manifested themselves throughout culture in such diverse forms as the "invention of the telephone and the stream-of-consciousness novel" (1-2). Fredric Jameson goes one step further than Kern, asserting that modernism's newly defined sense of space is one of its two defining characteristics: "[T]he concept of style with some new account of the experience of space both together now mark the emergence of the modern as such, and the place from which a whole bewilderingly varied sets of modernisms begins to flourish" (54). In much the same vein, Peter Barta argues that the modernist "self-conscious text experimented with its potential, questioning the validity of temporal causal development" (310). Barta links this "self-consciousness," arguably the central feature of what Jameson calls modernist "style," to a changed experience of space: "The exploitation of the new possibilities afforded by spatial narrative constituted an obvious

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ostensible post-structuralist rejection of time as a "metaphysical conceptuality" that necessitates the substitution of "another referent." Thus, he argues, within contemporary theory, "spatial indicators are being privileged in order to bring about a reversal of such concepts as temporality, logocentrism, and anthropocentrism" (63). In the end, however, Nethersole returns us to Frank's much earlier argument in his

alternative. Spatially-structured texts offered the possibility of a new literary account of the energy and motion and also the confusion and disorientation which, according to many people, comprised the modern metropolis" (310).<sup>14</sup>

Randall Stevenson's more recent survey, *Modernist Fiction: An Introduction*, concurs with the claims of Jameson and Barta. Stevenson also asserts that a changed relationship to space played a constitutive role in the development of modernism. But this argument bears a strong resemblance to claims made by Frank almost half a century earlier in that Stevenson attributes a diagnostic and compensatory function to an always inwardly focussed modernist representation of space: "Deprived of external space, finding the mirror of nature broken, modernist vision had little choice but to turn to inner space as a dimension in which to console and make significant the self" (80). Carrying resonances of Joyce's "cracked lookingglass of a mirror," Stevenson's claim for the formative role of space within the modernist sensibility also rhymes with a much earlier assertion in 1954 by C. S. Lewis, who, when called upon to explain modernism's revolutionary aspect, did so through recourse to a spatial metaphor:

I do not think that any previous age produced work which was, in its own time, as shatteringly and bewilderingly new as that of the Cubists, the Dadaists, the Surrealists, and Picasso has been in ours. And I am quite sure this is true [. . .] of poetry [. . .]. I do not see how anyone can doubt that modern poetry is not only a

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assertion that this theoretical turn to space as a referential and relational system has entailed a "retreat from historicity" (63). Again, then, history and "spatiality" are seen as mutually exclusive terms.

<sup>14</sup> Barta's comments are found in the proceedings of the XIIth annual conference of the Comparative Literature Association held in Munich in 1988. The conference took "Literature and Space" as its central topic and included several participants who spoke, though necessarily only briefly, on modernist spaces in particular. See, for instance, the papers of Joseph Brennan, Sanehide Kodama, Gurbhagat Singh, and Jola Skulj. Of note is also Diane Leonard's paper, if only for its opening claim that "in modernist literature, spatiality has assumed a new prominence" (172). Leonard's conference paper attests to the beginnings of a renewed interest in modernist spaces.

greater novelty than any other ‘new poetry’ but new in a new way, almost in a new dimension (10).<sup>15</sup>

Lewis’s claims are directed toward simply explaining the feelings of newness associated with modernism. But it seems significant that he would make that claim by way of a spatial metaphor.

This dissertation claims that Lewis’s metaphor is entirely an apt one simply because one of the factors that had accounted for modern literature’s revolutionary feel, was, in Jameson’s words, a “new experience of space.” As Stevenson and Lewis, like so many modernists before them, turn to a language of rupture and transformation, they strengthen the link between their more familiar account of modernism’s radical otherness with Lefebvre’s less well-known claim for a roughly simultaneous shattering of space. But long before the remarks of these critics, many modernists themselves had already noted the ways in which the world around them seemed to be disintegrating and the literature they were producing appeared to have gained a “new dimension.”

At the very least it seemed to many modernists as if the world’s existing dimensions had been drastically reorganized. Under Lefebvre’s reading, a metamorphosis in the mapping of the world’s spaces partly accounts for Woolf’s feeling that “human character” has undergone a change so sudden and radical that it might be located within a particular month. But long before Woolf made her intentionally exaggerated claim, Joseph Conrad, in his 1899 novella *Heart of Darkness*, had framed an argument for just such a metamorphosis within a more believable historical narrative. For Conrad, while

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<sup>15</sup> These comments are drawn from Lewis’s inaugural lecture as Medieval and Renaissance Chair at Cambridge, as they were later published in *They Asked for a Paper* in 1962. Lewis’s dependence upon spatial metaphors to describe history and rupture is recurrent throughout his lecture, though it is most

the remapping of the world did not occur in one year, one season, or one month, the process could in fact be measured over the first two decades or so in the life of Marlow, the novel's narrator. Marlow's recollection of the early years of his life draws our attention to the lasting impression which the systematic redrawing of the world's spaces has had upon a modern sensibility:

Now when I was little chap, I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time, there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look like that) I would put my finger on it and say, When I grow up I will go there. [. . .] I have been in some of them and ... well, we won't talk about that. But there was one yet—the biggest, the most blank, so to speak—that I had a hankering after. (66-7)

Here Marlow recalls an early fascination with maps that would in many ways become a central preoccupation of modernism itself. But immediately after delivering this retrospective description of his early, childish and naïve relationship to maps, Marlow then informs his listener that by the time he had reached adulthood, a major transformation had taken place: “True, by this time, it was not a blank space any more. It had got filled since my boyhood with rivers and lakes and names. It had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery—a white patch for a boy to dream gloriously over. It had become a place of darkness” (67). Like Lefebvre and Lewis, Marlow here describes a figurative kind of shattering whereby one kind of space has been replaced by another. And for Marlow, this shift indeed stands as a “truly crucial moment,” a marker of the loss

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pronounced in his use of the word “frontier” to connote moments of transition, or rather of transformation, from one literary epoch into another.



of innocence, childhood and mystery. Marlow's feelings of loss are in large part the registration of a corresponding transformation in the way in which the spaces of the world are plotted. And, as *Heart of Darkness* unfolds, it will become clear that this transformation manifests itself at the narrative level, in the very way in which Marlow tells his story.

Appearing almost a quarter of a century after *Heart of Darkness*, D. H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo* offered its own retrospective on the recent remapping of the world's spaces, and it characterized that process in broadly similar terms. Like Conrad's Marlow, Lawrence's Richard Somers laments the loss of a pristine, idealized space, but for Somers that space is not pre-colonial Africa but rather pre-war London. Looking back from a post-war context in which the spaces of both Europe and its colonies had been radically remapped, Somers remarks upon the collapse of World War I London as both a unified city space and as an imperial center, twin phenomena which had triggered his decision to flee the confines of the imperial metropolis for the spacious Australian periphery: "It was in 1915 the old world ended. In the winter of 1915-1916 the spirit of old London collapsed, the city, in some way, perished, perished from being a heart of the world, and became a vortex of broken passions, lusts, hopes, fears, and horrors. The integrity of London collapsed" (253). Through Somers, Lawrence draws upon images of wartime destruction and disintegration to emphasize the unmitigated loss of a moral center, of a now idealized "integrity" which can seemingly never be recaptured. And, as for Marlow before him, for Somers that loss is characterized and manifested in terms of spatial reconfiguration, though here such reconfiguration occurs on both the local and global levels. Somers's earlier recollections of the threat posed to the city's structural

integrity by German zeppelin attacks neatly analogize the pressure that has been brought to bear upon the city as imperial metropolis by the emergent realities of post-war decolonization. And, for Somers as for Lawrence, the decline of London's imperial stature as "heart of the world" serves as an all too painful geopolitical corollary to the simultaneous loss of an integral and infallible moral compass.

The similar reflections of Marlow and Somers here serve as the fictional echoes of what many of the modernists were noticing and remarking upon, namely that the spaces around them were undergoing rapid and widespread alteration. For instance, in his 1927 work *Time and Western Man*, Wyndham Lewis responded to the temporal theory of Henri Bergson with an emphatic and revelatory declaration: "To the trance of music, with its obsession of *Time*, with its emotional urgency and visceral agitation, we prefer what Bergson calls 'obsession of Space'" (428). It is in regard to what are still two of the most canonical works from the period, Eliot's *The Waste Land* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*, that the signs of that obsession surfaced most explicitly. In both their design and their early reception history, both works emphasized spatial relations at the seeming expense of the temporal, highlighting once again modernity's attentiveness to space, whether textual or otherwise. It is thus perhaps not surprising that these two modernist works have, more than any others, been most closely associated with the now necessary interpretive maps which could make sense of their riotous textual space.

For Henry James, Victorian novels, with their obsession with chronological narratives, were "loose, baggy, monsters" (45). According to James, Pound, and Eliot, in the modern age such an "obsession with time" simply would not do. What was needed in its place was a whole new form, which Eliot himself claimed to have found in *Ulysses*. In

“*Ulysses*, Order, and Myth,” Eliot championed that novel even though he was unsure that it could still be called by that name: “I am not begging the question in calling *Ulysses* a ‘novel’[. . .]. If it is not a novel, that is simply because the novel is a form which will no longer serve; it is because the novel, instead of being a form, was simply the expression of an age which had not sufficiently lost all form to feel the need of something stricter” (*Prose* 177). For Eliot, the modernist novel’s “rage for order,” the precision with which it orders and regulates its formal components, arises directly out of the “complexity” which comprises contemporary society:

Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him. They will not be imitators, any more than the scientist who uses the discoveries of an Einstein in pursuing his own, independent, further investigations. It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history. (*Prose* 177)

In this influential reading of Joyce, we can clearly see the roots of Frank’s reading of spatial form and its rejection of history in favor of myth. Eliot here lays the groundwork for reading *Ulysses* through a spatial paradigm; for him the “manipulat[ion of] a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity” (*Prose* 177) stands as Joyce’s chief accomplishment. Like Frank after him, Eliot implies that the novel re-reads history as simultaneity, as a synchronic aesthetic “complex” of parallels rather than as a diachronic, linear progression. Or, in helping us to read the relationship between past and present in spatial terms, the novel also changes the shape of—or rather provides a shape to—what Eliot saw as an anarchic cultural landscape. The implications of Joyce’s contribution remain largely limited here to the realm of aesthetics; the tightly formal

relational and synchronic system of *Ulysses* is seen as an aesthetic counterpart to, rather than as a participant within, the larger cultural context of shapelessness in which it appeared.

Indeed, in “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” Eliot brought this same spatial logic to bear upon a reading of literary history at large:

[W]hat happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new [. . .] work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted. (*Prose* 38)

History, for Eliot, had to be conceptualized not only diachronically in a temporal plot line, but also, as the architectural metaphor makes clear, synchronically in a system whose parts are linked not through a linear chronology, but through their spatial relations with one another.<sup>16</sup> For Eliot this conceptual framework is central to understanding the phenomenology of the modern reading experience. Confronting a poem like *The Waste Land* the reader experiences literary history as a simultaneity of sorts—there the Thames is populated both by the nymphs of Spenser’s *Prothalamion* and by the tawdrier “city directors” of Eliot’s modern era (“The Waste Land” 180). Within the textual space of

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<sup>16</sup> In the Futurist manifesto, written a full ten years before Eliot’s essay, Marinetti had betrayed a similar obsession. The eighth line of the manifesto includes the breathtaking claim that “Time and Space died yesterday.” But the line opens with a telling metaphor which indicates that even at such an apocalyptic moment, time must still be understood in terms of space: “We are on the headland of centuries.” In conventional terms, the geographic setting of the headland is the vehicle for a metaphor meant to capture the Futurist experience of being at the end of time. But the geographic vista onto which our view from the

Eliot's poem, historical difference is erased, or at least radically reconfigured; indeed the coexistence of the two sets of figures—one drawn from literary history and one from contemporary culture—serves as a nice physicalization of Eliot's theory of a spatialized literary history. The nymphs and the city directors are linked together in geographic space, just as the histories from which they are drawn are linked together through their coexistence in the same textual space.

In three of his most influential works, then, Eliot enacts a kind of spatialization of literary history, through its juxtaposition both on the page and within the same physical setting. While a linear conception of history is crucial to the allusive patterns that are central to the ironic effect of Eliot's poem, it is the spatial proximity of those allusions, not their chronological difference, which both motivates and analogizes their textual proximity. And this emphasis upon a spatial aesthetic produced an entirely appropriate set of reactions within the poem's earliest readers. In her 1924 essay "Character in Fiction," Woolf details a particularly heightened response to Eliot's poem:

As I sun myself upon the intense and ravishing beauty of one of his lines, and reflect that I must make a dizzy and dangerous leap to the next, and so on from line to line, like an acrobat flying precariously from bar to bar, I cry out, I confess for the old decorums, and envy the indolence of my ancestors who, instead of spinning madly through mid-air, dreamt quietly in the shade with a book. (*Essays* 3:435)<sup>17</sup>

For Woolf, the most apt and compelling metaphor to describe her reading experience is a spatial one. Through the trope of an acrobat making a series of perilous leaps, Woolf

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headland opens remains frustratingly absent here. Marinetti's manifesto is cited in full in the opening pages of Zbigniew Folejewski's *Futurism and its Place in the Development of Modern Poetry*.

<sup>17</sup> "Character in Fiction" is a revision of Woolf's earlier essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown." The latter version retains her earlier remarks on the transformative significance of 1910.

describes herself as quite literally lost in space, as completely removed from the safety nets of past conventions and free-falling among a dizzying array of juxtaposed allusions.<sup>18</sup> What is alarming to Woolf, is that in its pervasive allusiveness, Eliot's poem forgoes the predictable literary chronology that was so disparaged by Henry James. Dispensing with that "decorum," Eliot substitutes a model very much like the one he proposes in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," where literary artifacts, and the cultures from which they are drawn, exist side by side in a simultaneity, constantly altering and modifying one another.

If Woolf disliked the poem, Pound notoriously loved it, especially as its final version reflected many of his own editorial suggestions. But Pound's reaction was not entirely dissimilar to Woolf's; it too carried an obliquely spatial inflection. Pound's approbation of the poem stemmed in large part from exactly that same feeling of simultaneity which Woolf had disparaged. For in its de-emphasis of narrative, *The Waste Land* came remarkably close, considering its length, to filling the bill of Pound's "Image" as "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" ("A Retrospect" 4). For Pound, the phrase "instant of time" denotes both time as it is represented within the poem and time as it is experienced phenomenologically by the reader in the act of apprehending the poem. Of course, Pound himself had helped to ensure Woolf's dizzying reading experience in his job as the poem's editor. For that process had consisted largely in the removal of the explicit syntactical and semantic links between successive lines, and had thus foregrounded the crucial role that spatial relations, in terms of both textuality and setting, played in the phenomenology of the image.

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<sup>18</sup> To her rather disparaging remarks, Woolf adds this qualification: "I think that Mr. Eliot has written some of the loveliest single lines in modern poetry." For Woolf, it is not the content of the lines themselves

For Pound, the rapid juxtaposition of poetic lines in a montage like process effected a composite simultaneity which was the more successful to the degree it freed itself from Woolf's "decorums" of the past: "It is the presentation of such a 'complex' instantaneously which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art" (4). Here Woolf's feeling of being lost in space and the slightly melancholic tone of Lefebvre's "shattering" of space is recast by Pound in a much more positive valence. In a rather humorous vein, Pound expressed his disdain for the syntactic and semantic conventions of most nineteenth-century poetry in his marginalia that accompanied his editorial annotations of *The Waste Land*. "Too penty," he writes alongside one of the original version's extended narrative asides; "too tum-pum" beside another (11).<sup>19</sup> For Pound, explicit linkages had no place within the poem; they were to be eschewed in favour of the Imagist mode of juxtaposition which would allow for the presentation of a "complex" in an instant of time. Not only does such a complex have its foundation in a spatial aesthetic—in its reliance on, and foregrounding of, textual simultaneity at the expense of chronological narrative progression, but also, at least according to Pound, it allows the reader to apprehend both the poem and its cultural contexts within a new relational paradigm. If, for Woolf, this "freedom from space limits" was at times bewildering and even terrifying, for Pound it was an entirely worthwhile freedom.

For these two noteworthy early readers, then, the design of *The Waste Land* and the experience of reading it were registered in similar terms. If for Woolf the radical spatial

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but rather the relationship among them that is both new and bewildering.

aesthetic of Eliot's poetry occasioned a feeling of "spinning through mid-air," for Pound, as for Lewis and Eliot himself, the temporal simultaneity and spatial juxtaposition inherent to both Pound's Imagism and Eliot's "mythic method" had an intensely liberating effect. No longer bound by the demands of linear narrative in either prose or poetry, modernist writers could substitute what Eliot saw as a more "difficult" aesthetic, albeit one whose relational logic of juxtaposition and internal dialogism offered a highly relevant and deeply therapeutic response to the chaos of the contemporary world.

Whether it was invoked as a sign of an unwanted disorientation or of a liberating expansion, space and one's place in it were key concepts in understanding the poem. Just as certainly, the invocation of space came largely in the service of an assessment of the poem's aesthetics—its degree of departure from decorum or, conversely, its adherence to a newly formulated set of literary guidelines. For both Woolf and Pound, space was both, in its fictional and textual guises, one of the poem's central aesthetic principles and a particularly compelling metaphor by which to measure the experience of reading the poem. As they sought, in the service of literary criticism, to express feelings of novelty and bewilderment in the service of literary criticism, they drew upon the experience of spatial reorientation and disorientation.

Given both the cogency and authority of these two early readings, it is hardly surprising that as its place within the modernist canon became more entrenched, Eliot's poem continued to be read in these terms. In the years following Woolf and Pound, numerous other analysts of the poem explained its strange newness by attending to its spatial aesthetic. For example, in a 1934 essay on Eliot's poetry, I. A. Richards claims

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<sup>19</sup> The reference here is to the facsimile version of the poem as published in 1971, with Valerie Eliot as editor.



that “[a]llusion in Mr. Eliot’s hands is a technical device for compression. *The Waste Land* is the equivalent in content to an epic. Without this device twelve books would have been needed” (290). Here the poem is praised for its spatial economy, for its ability to contain and compress within its limited borders the breathtaking scope that had been traditionally associated with the epic. Cleanth Brooks subsequently invoked the poem’s spatial dimension through an architectural metaphor that was meant to explicate his own interpretive enterprise. He described his intention to outline “an explicit intellectual account of the various symbols and a logical account of their relationships” as “no more than a scaffolding to be got out of the way before we contemplate the poem itself as a poem” (136). Though it may well be cumbersome, Brooks warns that “without the use of such a scaffolding,” many readers “will be prevented from getting at the poem at all” (“The Waste Land,” 137). For Brooks, the poem is comparable to a formidable, almost perilous, architectural structure which most readers can only approach by way of an analytical scaffolding erected around its margins.

Like the many mapping metaphors with which the experience of reading both Eliot’s poem and Joyce’s novel would come to be associated, Brooks’s scaffolding trope suggests that many early readers of *The Waste Land* should apprehend the poem in visual and spatial terms. As Herbert Howarth later claimed, the tendency to “see” the poem in this way came in part from Pound, whose contribution to the poem’s visual and spatial aesthetic was paramount. Howarth points out while Pound was drastically editing Eliot’s poem, he also published a review of Cocteau’s *Poesies 1917-1920*, in which he wrote, “The life of a village is narrative; you have not been there three weeks before you know that in the revolution et cetera, and when M. le Comte et cetera, and so forth. In a

city the visual impressions succeed each other, overlap, overcross, they are ‘cinematographic’” (235). For Pound, then, the montage-like jump-cuts in Eliot’s poem as he himself reconceived it broke away from an uncomplicated linear narrative that was well suited to a pre-urbanized period. Howarth, like Pound before him, highlights the poem’s modernity, and its manipulation of textual space, through an analogy to the newly emergent cinematic medium. Like painting itself, with which Worringer and Frank had identified the spatial abstraction to which all modern art aspired, cinema and montage emphasized juxtaposition in space as much as they did linearity in time. If Lefebvre was to insist that the era witnessed a radical reconfiguration of its spaces, the signs that Eliot’s poem participated in that process were still most accessible by way of analogous developments in other spatially-oriented media. Of course the comparisons of *The Waste Land*, and indeed many other modernist works, to cinema and montage are not surprising given that the era witnessed the emergence of a sophisticated and already experimental cinematic medium.<sup>20</sup> Critics up to the present day have continued to cite the ways in which modernist literature sought to mobilize the techniques so brilliantly employed by modernist filmmakers such as Sergei Eisenstein. And like Howarth, they have often invoked that analogy in order to foreground a kind of modernist self-reflexiveness that is bent upon complicating received notions of textual space and linear narrative.<sup>21</sup>

One year after Howarth’s study, Steven Foster provides a further and even more telling analogy for the experience of reading Eliot’s poem. Foster begins by discussing

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<sup>20</sup> Notable here too is John Dos Passos’s *U.S.A.* trilogy which appeared in the first half of the 1930s and which was manifestly self-aware of the connections it bore to film and montage, as it jumped back and forth among traditional narrative passages, digressive narrative asides interspersed throughout under the words “Camera Eye,” and a succession of one-line phrases under the title “Newsreel.” Dos Passos, like Joyce and Eliot before him, was clearly keen on expressing both the linkages and the disparities between literary representation and its cinematic counterpart.

*The Waste Land's* particularly subjective and inwardly focussed temporal logic, before moving on to examine the ways in which the poem, and the process of reading the poem, enact a similarly subjective set of spatial relations: "Basically what is demonstrated is a mind working with a *personal* history in a relativistic manner [. . .]. This nonmeasurable Einsteinian 'I-time' signifies a new stylistic approach which is disconcerting but which informs the poem throughout" (87). Like Woolf, Foster finds the disruptive sequence of the poem "disconcerting," and echoing Eliot's reading of Joyce, he explicitly invokes Einstein as a measure of the degree to which he sees the poem as revolutionizing traditional temporal logic. Foster then turns to the poem's similar transformation of the individual's sense of space, by way of an allusion to a novel by Thomas Carlyle: "'To clap on your felt, and, simply by wishing that you were Anywhere, straightway to be There!'" (87). Building upon such earlier fantasies of freedom from "space-limits," Foster then invokes a particularly modern metaphor to stress the revolutionary and proleptic powers of the poem: "This instant teleportation between disparate events [. . .] results from an arbitrary treatment of time and space by an individual exertion of free will which denies causative laws" (88). Foster's metaphor may be space-age through and through, but it shares much with those of earlier readers of *The Waste Land*. For him, the poem's manipulation of space, and, for that matter, time, is a matter of stylistics. That is, the poem subjects both time and space to the "personal history" of first writer, and then reader. Here, under Foster's analysis, *The Waste Land* does not so much engage with or even really respond to the kinds of contextual reconfigurations of space of which Lefebvre speaks so much as it draws space into itself, subjecting it to its own set of

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<sup>21</sup> In addition to Clearfield's book, see Margaret Dickie's *On The Modernist Long-Poem*, and Maud Ellmann's *The Poetics of Impersonality*.

aesthetic laws. Like so many of the poem's earlier and authoritative readers, then, Foster turns any interest the poem might have in any kind of exterior contextual space into an issue of aesthetic interiority. The fragmenting, disintegrating "old worlds" of Lawrence and Cather have, it seems, receded into virtual invisibility.

If Eliot's reading of *Ulysses* was key to understanding his own aesthetic, it also served to authorize many later readings of Joyce's novel itself. As Pound had done for Eliot, so Eliot would do for Joyce. Eliot's allusion to Einstein in "Ulysses, Order, and Myth" indicates that he saw a clear analogy between how he and his contemporaries were reconceiving and reorganizing aesthetic space and broader, if theoretical, reconfigurations of physical spaces elsewhere. Einstein's dismantling of accepted orthodoxies in spatial-temporal mechanics could be seen as comparable in both its aims and its effects to the efforts of contemporary writers to substitute a synchronic aesthetic for the previously virtually hegemonic diachronic model. But if Eliot's allusion to Einstein signaled a connection between a modernist spatial aesthetic and a wider context of changing spatial relations, that connection remained rather unemphasized. For the most part, the essay argued for aesthetics as a kind of therapeutic antidote to, and escape from, the complexities and anarchy of contemporary life. And, partly due to Pound and Eliot's influence, coupled with Stephen Dedalus's oft-quoted view of "history as a nightmare from which I am trying to awake," Joyce's novel was often read in exactly these terms. Despite its very obvious and obsessive focus on the time-world of 1904 Dublin, many of the novel's early critics attended to its drive to replace what Eliot saw as the "anarchy of contemporary history" with a mythic pattern drawn from the Homeric

antecedent.<sup>22</sup> And since the textual component of the novel's spatial aesthetic surfaces primarily through the juxtaposition of mythic and modern parallels, an implicit logic asserts itself: the novel's ahistoricism is a direct product of a spatial aesthetic that is itself invoked in the service of sustaining and strengthening the Homeric parallel.

Undoubtedly, some of the inspiration for reading *Ulysses* in this way came from Joyce himself. In his early *James Joyce and the Making Of Ulysses*, Frank Budgen recalled a conversation with Joyce which would implicitly set the tone for much of what followed, both in Budgen's own work and that of others: "'I am now writing a book,' said Joyce, 'based on the wanderings of Ulysses. The Odyssey, that is to say, serves me as a ground plan. Only my time is recent time and all my hero's wanderings take no more than eighteen hours'" (10). In some ways, Joyce's remarks can be taken to authorize a kind of ahistorical reading of the novel for its heavy reliance on allusion. Real historical time and duration pales in comparison to the virtual timelessness of myth, whose component parts make up a template onto which real historical events are plotted. Based on the force of such comments and on the obviously thoroughgoing obsession of the novel with its Homeric antecedent, Budgen and those who followed him responded to the confusion of early readers by positioning their analyses of *Ulysses* as reader's guides. Each chapter of the novel could best be explicated through the careful documentation of its correspondence to a counterpart in *The Odyssey*. Stuart Gilbert provided the first, and still one of the most useful of these guides in his 1929 work, *James Joyce's Ulysses: A Study*. In the opening pages of his study, Gilbert set out a painstakingly systematic chart of correspondences which would allow the presumably bewildered reader to map Joyce's

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<sup>22</sup> For the most cogent and influential of these, see Budgen, Blamires, and Thornton.

novel onto Homer's epic. Most notably, the chart included "episode names" for all the chapters, the use of which was to become so widespread that they commonly came to be ascribed to Joyce himself.<sup>23</sup> By recasting the chapters of the novel as separate "episodes,"—therefore attributing a somewhat digressive quality to them—and by identifying them through their Homeric parallels, Gilbert implicitly interrupts the temporal flow of both the novel itself and the experience of reading it.

Of course, Gilbert was just the first of many to foreground this particular relational component and to treat the novel as a space to be mapped. The title alone of Harry Blamires's *The New Bloomsday Book: A Guide through Ulysses* positions the novel as unfamiliar territory to be mapped for the benefit of the disconcerted traveler, and positions itself as the trusty legend or compass which will demystify much of that territory. Weldon Thornton's 1968 *Allusions in Ulysses* and Don Gifford's 1988 *Ulysses Annotated* see themselves as performing similar functions. Indeed, Gifford's inclusion of a map at the beginning of his annotations for each chapter acknowledges the centrality of spatial consciousness to both the novel and to the experience of reading it. It also serves as a nice analogy for the purpose of Gifford's own project. What links all of these studies together is their shared belief in the necessity of reorienting the interpretive axis along which novels like *Ulysses* and poems like *The Waste Land* are read—navigation takes place along more broadly relational, than narrowly linear lines. Even Wolfgang Iser, who criticizes Eliot's "mythic" method of interpretation, falls back upon a guide-book reading of the novel which owes much to its spatial configuration. Iser claims that the novel's

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<sup>23</sup> This is not to suggest that Joyce did not in fact write the novel with these direct correspondences in the forefront of his mind. Indeed, in the preface to his work, Gilbert reveals the extent to which Joyce was complicit in his nomenclature: "[I]t should be mentioned that in the course of writing this Study I read it out to Joyce, chapter by chapter, and that, though he allowed me the greatest latitude in the presentation of

myriad Homeric parallels perform a “precise function” in that they “provid[e] a background, made recognizable by allusions and references which will thus provide a sufficient amount of familiarity” to the reader (192). Under such proscriptions, to understand the novel as exhibiting a linear progression is far less important than the mapping of each separate episode onto its mythic counterpart. Reading the novel almost literally alongside its mythic counterpart, like reading it through the lens of a map of Dublin in 1904, encourages the reader to see far more of the novel’s digressive, episodic, and montage-like qualities at the expense of its literary continuity. Moreover, to see the text as continually juxtaposing itself with that mythic intertext is to see its concern with space, and manipulation of space, in purely formal and self-referential terms.

That is, Gilbert’s methodology and others like it suggest that readers’ comprehension of the novel is best fostered not through a foregrounding of the novel’s temporal “plot”—the connections between one chapter and the next—but through a spatial remapping of the novel onto another place in literary history. In his preface, Gilbert sets out what is at stake in his study as he seeks to shatter a particular approach to reading the novel:

Moreover, in those early days most readers and many eminent critics regarded *Ulysses* as a violently romantic work, an uncontrolled outpouring of the subconscious mind, powerful but formless. Thus it was necessary to emphasize the “classical” and formal elements, the carefully planned lay-out of the book, and the minute attention given by its author to detail, each phrase, indeed each word, being assigned its place with *pointilliste* precision. (ix)

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the facts and indeed encouraged me to treat the subject on whatever lines were most congenial to me, it contains nothing [. . .] to which he did not give his full approbation” (viii).

That Gilbert defers to a metaphor drawn from contemporary painting is telling; for him, Joyce's work exhibits a relational system of meaning which can be best comprehended through its resemblance to a particularly spatially oriented school of painting. To see Joyce as a literary architect who painstakingly planned the "lay-out" of the novel, the blueprints for which Gilbert will now provide, is to give the author his due for the ways in which, as Eliot similarly claimed, he had replaced one system of representation with another. To see the novel as "romantic" is to ascribe too much significance to a kind of narrative teleology and to disregard the novel's attentiveness to the myriad connections between all of its parts, connections which can be best understood through visual and architectural metaphors and through literary-historical "maps." Like a well-planned modernist edifice, *Ulysses* displays a keen awareness of "place," not so much in its intricate reproduction of 1904 Dublin, but in its sophisticated self-awareness of how all of its episodic chambers relate to one another. That Gilbert stresses the novel's "formal elements" by way of these particular metaphors anticipates the general way in which the modernist interest in space and spatial configurations would soon be read as almost exclusively yoked to issues of form and aesthetics, as distinct from those of history and contemporary culture.

What is clear, then, is that early criticism of these two still highly canonical modernist works frequently resorted to metaphors drawn from spatial and visual modes of presentation—pointillism, architecture, cinematography—in order to explain its subject. Under those readings, the real geographic locales of *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* were virtually suppressed. Eliot's London and Joyce's Dublin are subordinated both to a textual geography which sees a metaphoric reconfiguration of the world's spaces—where



Ithaca is remapped alongside Ireland—and to those mythic places themselves. Spatial compression would seem to be solely a matter of aesthetic economy and experimentation. Within these early readings of Eliot and Joyce, the only signs of any external change lay in the recurrent power of space—as a capacious concept that was itself undergoing redefinition—to explain what it was that was new about their work. If the world’s spaces were becoming more proximate to one another, they seemed to be doing so only within specific modernist texts and only then in the service of artifice, craft, and irony.

In their explicatory mission, though, these early readings of modernism occasionally inhabited spaces that were less accessible and frequented than the familiar locales of James’s “house of fiction” or Brooks’s scaffolding. In doing so, they also alluded to a more specific set of anxieties that motivated the expression and occlusion of space within modernist poems and novels. R. P. Blackmur was like Brooks a major proponent and practitioner of the New Criticism that would lay such a strong claim upon modernism. In his 1933 essay, “Masks of Ezra Pound,” Blackmur invoked a specifically geographic space in order to emphasize modernism’s complexity and to domesticate its foreign elements.<sup>24</sup> Space was for Blackmur, as it was for Brooks, an especially efficacious heuristic for the theorization of modernist aesthetics. Reading Pound’s *Cantos*, Blackmur used a mixed geographical metaphor in order to mitigate the effects of the poem’s alien and even hostile landscape:

In the *Cantos* the reader who is not, at least at first, selective, will be lost, and will mistake, in this packed archipelago, every backwash for a thoroughfare, each turn of the tide for the set of an ocean current. It is the mistake of assuming that

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<sup>24</sup> Blackmur’s essay originally appeared in 1933 in *Hound and Horn*. It was subsequently republished in his 1957 volume *Form & Value in Modern Poetry*, to which the present citation refers.

the Cantos make a good part of an ordinary, complex, logically and emotionally arrayed long poem, having as a purpose the increasing realization of a theme.

The Cantos are not complex, they are complicated; they are not arrayed by logic or driven by pursuing emotion, they are connected because they follow one another, are set side by side. (92)

Like so many before him Blackmur uses a spatial metaphor in order to debunk readings of a modernist text which would stress its narrative, chronological and diachronic elements. But if the cartographic and structural metaphors of Gilbert and Brooks seem, by virtue of their domestication, hardly to be metaphors at all, the power of Blackmur's analogy is predicated upon its novelty and strangeness. He imagines his reader lost in the exotic, bewildering spaces of a foreign archipelago, yearning for the clarity and familiarity of the thoroughfare of the modern metropolis. His familiar attempt to explain the startling novelty of modernism's "side by side" relational aesthetics by way of a series of geographically interconnected metaphors indicates the currency and cogency of a particular geographic imagination in which exotic and domestic locales overlap and shade into one another. Faced with a bewildering textual landscape, Blackmur conjures up a world in which distant archipelagos are becoming modern thoroughfares, perhaps a not entirely difficult imaginative task. At the same time though, that transformation is cast as a purely illusory one, equivalent to the naïve reader's fervent desire for domestication and familiarity. Blackmur imagines his reader, then, as an explorer of a world that is in the process of change, compression, and homogenization, though that process is, as yet, far from complete. As he invokes a locale that is both exotic and on the verge of becoming more familiar and more navigable, Blackmur thus provides a fleeting

glimpse of what may partly motivate the more general preoccupation with space on the part of both modernist writers and modernist criticism.

But for Blackmur as for most others, the geographic register remains primarily the vehicle for aesthetic metaphors; geographic space and its compression merely provide a means, albeit an especially cogent one, to talk about the vagaries of modernist representational space. Blackmur's attention ultimately rests, that is, upon the poem's internal aesthetic geography. Spatial metaphors are just that—figurative devices that, somewhat ironically, familiarize and domesticate the unfamiliar. Blackmur's example also shows that depictions of modernist space as self-sufficient, self-interested, and self-reflexive are not limited to readings of Eliot and Joyce. Those two authoritative figures may well have helped foster readings in which modernist space was composed wholly of aesthetic and textual locales. And their early readers, many of whom carried similarly impeccable modernist credentials, often substantiated this view. In their own work and in their reaction to that of their contemporaries, Eliot, Pound, Joyce, and Woolf themselves invoked space as a familiarizing metaphor that would make sense of the complexity of their project. But if, in some instances, modernists initiated the process wherein space was displaced onto matters of aesthetics and textuality, it was the New Critics who solidified that position in the decades covering modernism's critical reception and codification.

The issue of New Criticism's generally strong hold on modernism is one which Jeffrey Perl takes up quite forcefully in an essay in Hugh Witemeyer's recent anthology *The Future of Modernism*. Looking back on the last three decades of modernist scholarship, which has had to view its object of study through the lens of New Criticism,

Perl asserts that “a small but tenacious miracle of postmodern criticism has been its capacity for not noticing: not noticing that the New Critical view of modernism was simply that, a view” (38). The long-standing tendency both to accept the New Critical version of modernism as fact and to view New Criticism as the critical manifestation and continuation of modernist aesthetics was initially self-generated: “The New Critics portrayed themselves as friends of the aesthetics and critical theory established by Eliot, Joyce, and Pound” (33). As they positioned themselves as the standard-bearers for a specific kind of modernism, New Critics revised, even constructed, a version of it that would conform to their own views of a self-sufficient aesthetic. Because of these strong inflections then, this “New Critical Modernism” said much more about the views of its advocates than it did about the texts that were under an ostensibly objective analysis. Thus, if modernism’s interest in space was itself often displaced onto metaphors of rupture and onto issues of aesthetic appreciation, New Criticism seized upon the rich figurative potential of space and adapted it as a vehicle to explain its own aesthetic and interpretive proclivities. As it did this, it was almost always, notwithstanding Blackmur’s notable exception, able to mask the signs of its operation and to present its architectural model of composition and interpretation as an entirely transparent product of modernism itself.

Sizing up such practices, Perl argues that any attempt to view modernism for what it in fact was, or even for what it itself claimed to be, must begin by removing it from the grasp of New Criticism for one crucial reason: “the New Critical reading of modernism was impossibly wrong” (34). One of the central ways in which it was so wrong had to do with the way it read the relationship between modernism and history. Perl claims that

those canonical modernist works—*The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*—are actually not amenable to such a view and thus seriously undermine the New Criticism's vaunted contiguities with its authorizing precursor. Ironically, "in poems that became New Critical anthology pieces, Eliot portrayed as diseased or immature the kind of mind that views the work of art as independent of society, history, audience and author" (35). New Critical readings of Joyce's fictions are just as disingenuous for the way they gloss over Joyce's own realization that "ascribing to art a status independent of history and psychology left one's lifework in the hands of mere nine-to-noon pupils" (44). For Perl, then, the New Critical reading of modernism as disengaged from history is, intentionally or not, misguided.

Looking beyond interpretations of individual modernist poems and novels, Perl's cogent reading of New Critical appropriation bears directly upon the specific question of the critical reception of the modernist interest in space. Sometimes, modernists did seem to authorize moves like Blackmur's, where far-off spaces became submerged and assimilated into metaphors for difficulty. Woolf's use of a spatial trope to explain the reading process with regard to Eliot's poetry was merely one of the first in a long line of similar responses which relegated any interest in material space to the margins of modernism. Despite these gestures, however, modernist writers did not always consign space into an hermetically sealed aesthetic compartment as those who followed them often claimed that they did. In fact, in his discussion of modern complexity and anarchy, Eliot anticipated Lefebvre as he read Joyce's reorganization of aesthetic space in the context of a reconfigured material landscape. Woolf too realized that modernism was itself produced out of a fundamental change in human nature, a change that surfaced as

much in modern “religion, politics, and nature” as it did in art. It was this change which partly accounted for her feeling that she was tumbling in space. As I will demonstrate in the following chapters, modernism’s interest in space, aesthetic or otherwise, is predicated upon those signs of global reconfiguration and disintegration, of which Cather, Lefebvre, and Conrad all took notice. Like many of their peers, such as Einstein, Bergson, and Emile Durkheim, modernist writers could not but notice how the spaces around them were being redefined. The signs of a specific set of anxieties regarding that redefinition are ubiquitous across the fiction of Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf. But in keeping with what Perl has seen as its general strategies of misappropriation, New Criticism only rarely hinted at the specific material contexts that motivated the spatial metaphors upon which it belatedly placed so much emphasis.

Given New Criticism’s much-noted and much-maligned stress upon text over context, it is hardly surprising that its proponents, such as Richards, Brooks, Blackmur, and W. K. Wimsatt, would see modernist space in almost entirely aesthetic and metaphoric terms. As in their more focussed readings of individual modernist poems, New Critics and their fellow travelers often invoked space as a way of explaining every part of the aesthetic experience, from conception to interpretation. They thus built upon and solidified the modernists’ own not-insignificant steps in this direction. In *Practical Criticism*, I. A. Richards stressed the importance of apprehending the “sounds” of poetic form as he imagined an instrument which would transcribe those sounds into a visual language:

[W]e imagine ourselves reciting verses into the ear of an instrument designed to record (by curves drawn on squared paper) all the physical characters of the sequences of sounds emitted, their strength, their pitch, durations, and any other

features we choose to examine[. . .]. The shape of our curves will give us a transcription of all the physical rhythms of the verses. Now the view objected to would lead us to conclude that verses which are good poetry would show *some* particularity in their curves, that verses which are bad could not show. (217)

Richards imagines the physicalization of verse into shapes and spaces as an invaluable aid to aesthetic comprehension, contemplation, and judgment. Anxious to correct slipshod and inconsistent reading practices, he shows little concern for what lies beyond the boundaries of the text itself. For him, the domestication of an alien landscape, a process only imaginable in a mechanical and technological modern age, is hardly a case for concern, at least insofar as the exotic geography under need of survey remains aesthetically delimited.

In his famous work from 1947, *The Well Wrought Urn*, Brooks amplified many of Richards's views on aesthetic space. The implication throughout the aptly named study is that poetry is itself a well-wrought urn, a self-contained physical object and container of empty space. When taken to its extreme, such a view would conceivably relegate poetry to the status of the figures on Keats's Grecian urn: forever frozen in time and detached from history. While Brooks resists such a disengaged view of poetry, he does not refrain from consistently deploying spatial metaphors in order to characterize poetry's putative "structural" self-sufficiency. As he initiates his study, Brooks writes, "The poet must work by analogies, but the metaphors do not lie in the same plane or fit neatly edge to edge. There is a continual tilting of the planes; necessary overlappings, discrepancies, contradictions" (9-10). The geometric metaphor here works to Brooks's particular advantage as he seeks to explain the "language of paradox" that is essential to all poetry,

that which makes it unique and unavailable for paraphrase. Rather ironically, poetry derives its specific integrity from the ways in which, in the terms of his own metaphor, it has no viable integrity as a corresponding structure in space. In other words, if poetry is a building, it is a special kind of building, subject to its own laws and internal logic.

Brooks subsequently reverts to a more familiar usage of this particular spatial metaphor, declaring that “the essential structure of a poem (as distinguished from the rational or logical structure of the ‘statement’ which we abstract from it) resembles that of architecture or painting: it is a pattern of resolved stresses” (203). Here the metrical properties of the poem become its trusses and support beams, though again Brooks insists that poetry is set apart from the kinds of rational and logical properties we expect from everyday utterances. Again, then, it is a poem’s frequent departures from established rhythms, its “discrepancies” and “contradictions” which lend it its architectural integrity. Like Richards before him, Brooks invokes a spatial and structural metaphor not in order to link poetry to the external world but rather to illustrate its fundamental uniqueness and privileged detachment from its material contexts. Under this view, works of literature quite literally make their own space, fashioning it according to their own specific structural properties and proclivities. Given this metaphoric self-sufficiency, it is hardly surprising that modernism’s general interest in the physical spaces in which it was produced, transmitted, and received was only infrequently noted.

This same emphasis upon space as an interpretive and generic heuristic is clearly at play in the work of another leading New Critic, W. K. Wimsatt. Like Richards, Brooks, and Blackmur, Wimsatt sees space as an especially efficacious metaphor for explaining literature’s uniqueness. In an essay from 1947 entitled “Verbal Style,” which he would



later anthologize as part of his famous collection “The Verbal Icon,” Wimsatt developed an intricate theory of the relationship of style to meaning which could account for the unique ways in which literature at once represents the world and achieves its unparaphrased effect:

The following series of constructions is designed to squeeze a relational stylistic meaning into a tight compass and hence to show it in its leanest and most simply definable form. Or what may be shown is the vanishing point of this kind of meaning and its intrinsically verbal character, the fact that despite its abstractness it grows only out of the soil of words. (203)

Here, Wimsatt turns poetry and poetic meaning into living things. And as he does so, he casts the act of interpretation as a cartographic, geographic one, likening the analytic process to that of the surveyor of land who “squeezes” the terrain under his scrutiny into a “tight compass.” Reminiscent of John Donne’s famous metaphysical conceit, which, centuries earlier, had registered the preoccupations of a newly emergent geographic imagination, Wimsatt’s own metaphor again reveals the New Critical tendency to turn to spatial modes of cognition when attempting to explicate a range of aesthetic practices. Wimsatt sees what he calls literature’s “verbal style” as emanating from its “relational” means of representation. In order to explicate the centrality of that relational paradigm, he turns to the now familiar tropes of architecture and painting for their shared emphasis upon a spatially oriented aesthetic. But again, Wimsatt’s metaphors surface in the service of an argument designed to explain the unique qualities of literary representation, to unpack what he calls “the purest examples of stylistic meaning” (203). For Wimsatt, that purity depends upon firm lines of demarcation which set literature and literary style apart

not only from the material world, but also from other modes of communication and aesthetic practice. That is, his recurrent use of spatial metaphors always remains a means to an end—a carefully considered technique to enshrine literature as a sanctified and venerated object of worship, a saintly relic that is by definition beyond the reach of more vulgar material concerns.

What links all of these New Critical analyses together, then, is their shared recourse to a spatial terminology when faced with the task of explaining the complexities of both poetry and its interpretation. Sometimes, they turned to specific modernist poems in order to make their claims, though often it was more simply poetry in general whose effects and properties could be so efficaciously explicated through spatial metaphors. But in the end, given the linkages between New Criticism and modernism, which Perl has so ably identified, it did not really matter if readers like Brooks and Wimsatt did not focus solely on the poetry of Yeats, Pound, and Eliot. As Perl recounts, Wimsatt unabashedly linked his own critical practices to those of Eliot even when he was faced with striking evidence to the contrary.<sup>25</sup> Backed by this kind of general presumptiveness and appropriation, the New Critical interest in space as a heuristic for the related topics of complexity, interpretation, and novelty would become identified as a modernist interest as well, and would even be seen to emanate from the modernists themselves. Through this association, modernism's interest in space was itself seen to be largely inwardly directed, and as necessarily excluding any interest in a cultural context in which spatial paradigms of all sorts were experiencing similar shifts in apprehension. As we have seen with regard to modernism's own early readings of itself, this identification on the part of

New Critics and their readers alike is sometimes apt. For Eliot, Pound, Woolf and others, space was at times, certainly, solely a matter of aesthetics. Still, if under Kenner's reading, Henry James had supplied the architectural metaphor, it was the central practitioners of New Criticism—Richards, Brooks, Blackmur, and Wimsatt—who really made the metaphor their own, who repeatedly pointed to its efficacy in explaining the ways in which literature was different not only from the material world, but also from the other means of representation to which it was repeatedly compared and contrasted. Under these readings, even the possibility that modernism might be interested in any other kind of space—let alone the kind of exotic and vanishing locales alluded to by Blackmur—surfaced only very rarely.

If New Critics and their supporters tended to line up with Frank and Worringer in delimiting the modernist interest in space as purely a matter of self-sufficient aesthetics and abstraction, subsequent critics began to challenge or at least complicate these claims. For this later generation of critics, writing in the wake of post-structuralist and post-modernist revisionism, the aim is to “demystify” modernism's spatial aesthetic in order to unmask what Fredric Jameson calls the “political unconscious” that motivates it. Jameson writes:

One of the more commonly held stereotypes about the modern has of course in general been that of its apolitical character, its turn inward and away from the social materials associated with realism [. . .] and, not least, its aestheticism and its ideological commitment to the supreme value of a now autonomous Art as such.

None of these characterizations strikes me as adequate or persuasive any longer;

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<sup>25</sup> Perl relates Wimsatt's reaction to Eliot's own attempts to dissociate himself from what he called the “lemon-squeezer school of criticism,” and its isolationist tendencies. Anxious to preserve the line of

they are part of the baggage of an older modernist ideology which any contemporary theory of the modern will wish to scrutinize and dismantle. ("Modernism and Imperialism," 45)

For too long, Jameson asserts, modernism has been taken at face value, its claims for autonomy taken as self-evident rather than as an elaborate ideology constructed both by modernists themselves and the critics who followed in their wake.

It is not surprising, then, that Jameson and others pursuing the same general project turn to the issue of space and spatial representation in modernism; earlier critics like Richards, Brooks, and Frank had invoked spatial metaphors and emphasized spatial form in order to argue for and justify modernist art as autonomous and disinterested. Under critical scrutiny, what Jameson sees as modernism's self-professed claims for spatial form as a purely aesthetic and "apolitical" form of representation break down. Instead spatial forms and metaphors, along with those claims of disinterestedness, are in fact seen as the marker, or "symptom," of all sorts of political refusals on the part of modernism. That is, New Critics had seen the modernist aestheticization of space as the guarantor of a poem or novel's completeness in that, as Eliot had proclaimed, the aesthetic ordering of literary and textual space compensates for the disordering of contextual space under pressures of modernization. In response to what is then seen as a sympathetic reading of modernism, Jameson and others argue that modernism's interest in spatial language and forms instead constitutes a consciously willed, and thus false, autonomy rooted in an inability to engage with changes in the way the world's spaces were being remapped and reconceived. While I share Jameson's desire to get behind what impels the recurrent modernist insistence upon a spatial heuristic, I do not read the frequent displacement

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descent, Wimsatt retorted that Eliot "has not had the right or power to subvert his own image." (Perl 34).

from material to metaphor, from compression to shattering as a political refusal. Instead, I see those tropes, at least before their appropriation and blanket application under the New Criticism, as an inevitable part of modernism's response to an entirely new global phenomenon. If Conrad, Joyce and Woolf frequently gave voice to anxieties regarding global change and encroachment, they were certainly not always immune from otherwise inflecting and displacing those anxieties onto other sorts of spaces, aesthetic or otherwise.

Nevertheless, the view that modernism's putative withdrawal into a spatial aesthetic is politically suspect, even unconscionable, has, since the waning of New Criticism, itself become somewhat ascendant. In this regard, Frank Kermode was especially vocal in his direct response to Joseph Frank's famous essay. For Kermode, the critique of a self-sufficient modernist aesthetics of space had much to do with a necessary rereading of the links between modernism and fascism. In his 1967 *The Sense of an Ending*, Kermode introduced a now well-rehearsed indictment of modernist aesthetics in general, and spatial form in particular, for their apparent links to a fascist ideology:

It appears, in fact, that modernist radicalism in art—the breaking down of pseudo-traditions, the making new on [sic] a true understanding of the nature of the elements of art—this radicalism involves the creation of fictions which may be dangerous in the dispositions they breed towards the world. There is for instance, the fantasy of an elect which will end the hegemony of bourgeois or of *Massenmensch*, which will end democracy and all the “Bergsonian” attitudes to time or human psychology, all the mess which makes up a commonplace modern view of reality. Instead of these there is to be order as the modernist artist understands it: rigid, out of flux, the spatial order of the modern critic, or the closed

authoritarian society; such a society, we were told in 1940, as would persist, all inferior races, all *Untermenschen*, excluded for a thousand years. (110-1)

Kermode does not so much disagree with the fact of modernism's spatial aesthetic; rather he simply reads that aesthetic, and its even more damning claims for autonomy and disinterestedness, as politically suspect. What is seen as a rage for order, manifested in the manipulation of aesthetic space in an ostensibly closed textual system of signification, is in fact revealed to be politically programmatic, dangerous for its attempts to remake the world in its own image. Indeed, ultimately for Kermode the modernist spatial aesthetic is not disinterested, self-sufficient, or even complacent. Instead it serves as a prescriptive analogy for the totalitarian state with its careful surveillance and manipulation of all social spaces.

In his own partial response to Joseph Frank, Robert Weimann, in *Structure and Society in Literary History* (1976), levels similar charges against modernist spatial form at least as Frank had formulated it. For Weimann, the Poundian image was a kind of "metaphor that was thought of as providing a freedom from time limits," a metaphor which was "a very modernist one, very much in line with related attempts in contemporary art and literature" (205). Like many of the New Critics who preceded him, Weimann invokes contemporary developments in visual art to point to the ways in which modern poetry's insistence upon spatial form removes it from time and history. But for Weimann, this move towards cultural disengagement is politically self-aware: "The work of the modernist writers that Frank 'hoped to apprehend [. . .] spatially, in a moment of time, rather than as a sequence' was historically close to a group of early modern poets who called themselves Imagists and whose practice and theory of poetry reflected new

and problematic social bearings” (206). Faced then with the many bewildering changes noted by Eliot, Woolf, Lefebvre, and others, the modernist poet retreats into an ahistorical, atemporal aesthetic unity:

One way to escape the degradation of a commercialized world was to relinquish, much more radically than the romantics had done, not only the mimetic function of literature, but also the romantic principle of expression, and to achieve, even outside the mimetic *and* affective dimension of poetry, some spatial or symbolic correlative of poetic awareness and craftsmanship. (207)

The key word here is escape; modernists, it is claimed, make use of craftsmanship not in order to engage with the world but to escape it, and this retreat from history finds its apogee in the use of spatial form.

But Weimann’s reading of modernism is most notable for its almost uncritical acceptance of Frank’s own reading of Imagism as a movement that emphasized space to the absolute exclusion of time and history. Indeed, throughout his analysis, Weimann makes little attempt to distinguish between the primary material of modernists themselves and the work of New Critics like Brooks and Frank. He groups both modernism and its later readers together under the heading “The Spatial Pattern of Modernism,” and begins that section with the following statement: “It is in this regard that the modernist approach to Shakespeare’s imagery, which developed in the late twenties and thirties and culminated in the era of New Criticism, is most vulnerable” (203). Clearly interested in criticism more than literature, Weimann then sets up an uncritical continuum that begins with the emergence of modernism and “culminates” in New Criticism. Thus, Weimann’s critique of the modernist interest in space as born out of an urge to escape history is

derived from an indiscriminating equation of one particular way of reading modernism with what modernism itself actually claimed to be. Given this critical assimilation of modernism to Frank's ahistorical claims for spatial form, it is not surprising that Weimann should find within modernism a reprehensible effort to retreat from a radically remapped socio-historical context. For if modernism, to use Weimann's own cartographic metaphor, was itself undeniably uncomfortable with its "new and problematic social bearings," New Criticism worked hard to suppress even the signs of that discomfort, remapping anxieties over global, exotic spaces onto claims for aesthetic self-sufficiency.

In his highly influential 1981 study, *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson reformulates and expands Weimann's critique of modernist "escapism" by way of a Marxist reading of history and culture which seeks to explicate "the *ideology of form*, that is, the symbolic messages transmitted to us by the coexistence of various sign systems which are themselves traces or anticipations of modes of production" (76). For Jameson, literature, as part of the cultural superstructure, necessarily bears the signs of the economic mode of production out of which it was produced, and it is the job of the critic to unmask the underlying material realities which, unbeknownst to the author, motivate and inform the production of "literary artifacts":

Ideology is not something which informs or invests symbolic production; rather the aesthetic act is itself ideological, and the production of aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right, with the function of inventing imaginary or formal "solutions" to unresolvable contradictions. (79)



In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century those “contradictions” take the form of a series of widespread social transformations and reorganizations that, for Jameson, are themselves produced by the shift into a now fully developed industrial capitalism.

Jameson’s enumeration of those transformation bears some general resemblance to Lefebvre’s account of a radically reorganized social space. The “citizen of the modern *Gesellschaft*,” Jameson asserts, is confronted with

the corrosive and tradition-annihilating effects of the spread of money and market economy, [. . .] with the great fantasms of various nationalisms, [. . .] with the homogenization and psychic constriction of the rise of the industrial city and its “masses,” the sudden appearance of the great transnational forces of communism and fascism. (80)

With his emphasis on a constricted and shrinking world, Jameson, like Lefebvre, suggests that the historical and economic transformation experienced by modernists had much to do with a significant remapping and reconceiving of global space. But, for Jameson, modern novels, like almost all literature, are “unconscious” of these contradictions and transformations, and thus any engagement with space must be seen as aestheticizing, as offering only compensatory and illusory solutions to those contradictions.

In an essay from 1990, entitled “Modernism and Imperialism,” Jameson turns to E. M. Forster’s novel *Howards End*, and specifically to its representation of space, in order to illustrate his more general claims of modernism’s refusals and denials of history. Under this reading, Forster’s particular manipulation of space and spatial metaphors reveals a thorough-going refusal to engage with colonial space. The absent colonial space is seen

as an unknowable and unrepresentable entity which occasions a kind of “meaning loss” for modernists:

[C]olonialism means that a significant structural segment of the economic system as a whole is now located elsewhere, beyond the metropolis, outside of the daily life and existential experience of the home country, in colonies over the water whose own life experience and life world [. . .] remain unknown and unimaginable for the subjects of immediate power, whatever social class they may belong to. Such spatial disjunction has as its immediate consequence the inability to grasp the way the system functions as a whole. (51)

Here, the issue is not so much repression as it is absence; a missing space undermines any ability to imaginatively map the world. The signs of this disjunction surface, according to Jameson, in a modernist obsession with space and spatial tropes. “One’s simplest thought,” Jameson tells us, when “faced with this problem of a global space that like the fourth dimension somehow constitutively escapes you, is no doubt to make a map: nor is *Ulysses* by any means the first, let alone the only, literary work of the imperialist period that stakes its bet on the properties of maps” (52). Far from denying a modernist interested in far-flung spaces, Jameson, as noted above, argues that a generally new “experience of space” together with a self-conscious drive to stylize “mark the emergence of the modern as such” (54). But for Jameson, it is precisely this concept of style, more precisely an aesthetic style, which goes hand in hand with the modernist repression of an absent space. Once again spatial tropes stand as the markers of elision and denial in the absence of a cartographic solution: “cartography is not the solution, but rather the problem, at least in its epistemological form as social cognitive mapping on the

global scale. The map, if there is to be one, must somehow emerge from the demands and constraints of the spatial perceptions of the individual” (52). As such, any such map will be necessarily incomplete and will require the superimposition of a layer of modernist style—in order to provide the façade of completeness.

Jameson claims to locate this strategy in a particular moment in *Howard's End* where Forster uses a metaphor to describe a rail-side highway. For Jameson, Forster's trope, “the Great North Road [. . .] suggestive of infinity,” is the only outward sign of the novel's repression of colonial space, the formal device that bears the faint signs of political suppression:

[S]ince representation, and cognitive mapping as such, is governed by an “intention totality,” those limits must also be drawn back into the system, which marks them by an image, the image of the Great North Road as infinity: a new spatial language, therefore—modernist “style”—now becomes the marker and the substitute [. . .] of the unrepresentable totality. (58)

Spatial metaphor and spatial “style” are seen to operate as mere compensation for an unrepresentable global whole; they stand as mere traces of a refusal to engage with the disconcerting reconfigurations of far-flung spaces that attend modern imperialism and colonialism. Modernist style, modernist experimentation, and more specifically, modernist spatial aesthetics are therefore the formal manifestation of a refusal to engage with material history and the changing globe. Of course, it seems unimportant to Jameson that *Howard's End* never once claims to be about that material history, nor is it ever made clear exactly how “infinity” necessarily stands in for an unrepresentable imperial space. Nevertheless, Jameson goes so far as to pathologize modernism's

putative erasure of imperial geography. Making the distinction between the novel's alleged denial of class conflict at home and colonial oppression abroad, he notes, "This internal subsumption is sharply to be distinguished from the exclusion of an external or colonized people (whose absence is not even designated): the distinction would correspond roughly to that which obtains in Freud between repression (neurosis) and foreclosure (psychosis)" (59). Modernism is thus seen as both psychotic in its willful denial of reality and amputated in the geographic incompleteness produced by imperialist geopolitics. Fittingly then, the contemporary modernist critic must assume the role of both physician and therapist in diagnosing modernism's acts of repression and foreclosure: "The traces of imperialism can therefore be detected in Western modernism, and indeed are constitutive of it; but we must not look for them in the obvious places, in content or in representation [. . .]. [T]hey will be detected spatially, as formal symptoms, within the structure of First World modernist texts themselves" (64).

For Jameson, then, formal experimentation and aesthetic style are further symptoms of modernism's diseased state. They are the self-prescribed antidote—or perhaps antidepressants—meant to compensate for an inability and a failure to fully map a world of exploitation and inequality. While I agree with Jameson's general reading of modernism's preoccupation with global geography and its vicissitudes, in what follows I argue that modernism's anxieties over global space were of a decidedly different order. Far from denying the presence of far-flung spaces, writers like Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf registered an awareness that the extreme reaches of the globe were no longer so extreme or untrammelled. If modernists occasionally displaced that awareness onto tropes of shattering and disintegration, if they themselves sometimes saw space as a heuristic for

interpretation and difficulty, those strategies, if in fact they can be called that, were far more the product of novelty and disorientation than they were the signs of any kind of political denial.

But in reading these formal “symptoms” as traces of a modernist refusal to engage with a reconfigured global geography, Jameson is not alone. Indeed, as his work informs that of Patrick Brantlinger and Patrick McGee, the pathological language with which he diagnoses modernism resurfaces there. In the epilogue to his 1988 work *Rule of Darkness* Brantlinger revisits familiar terrain as he reads Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* for its emphasis on aestheticism. For Brantlinger, the novel’s obsession with its own style turns the book into a self-reflexive analogy for various fetishes and objects of veneration in the narrative itself. The story’s “contouring” and manipulation of its aesthetic spaces for their own sake constitute, again, a denial of history, and in the process almost transform the text into a self-sufficient physical object worthy of worship:

[The novel’s] evasion, and the ambiguities it generates, reflect the patterns of reification underlying both commodity fetishism and literary modernism—the deliberate ambiguity and refusal of moral and political judgment at the heart of an impressionism and a will-to-style that seem to be ends in themselves, producing finely crafted artifacts and stories with contours smoothed, polished, like carefully sculpted bits of ivory—art itself as the ultimate commodity, object of a rarified aesthetic worship and consumption. (264)

Like Jameson, Brantlinger argues that modernism’s ubiquitous fixation on style positions this particular novel as a physical entity in its own right, rarified from material reality.

*Heart of Darkness* does not critique an imperialist reordering of space, or even

adequately represent it; instead the novel offers itself up as an analogy to that space and the physical objects—like ivory—which help justify its occupation.

The novel thus remaps imperial space as aesthetic space, and reconstitutes physical artifacts as “textual” commodities in ways that justify and even solidify a particularly virulent way of dividing up the world’s spaces. Like Jameson before him, Brantlinger pathologizes modernism for its ideological complacency and complicity labeling it as “schizophrenic” (267). Here again, modernism’s putative inability and refusal to engage critically with the wholesale remapping of the world that is entailed by imperialism is the disease or the “psychosis” whose symptoms are manifested on the level of style. In his diagnostic role the politically astute critic points to the novel’s points of contacts with the physical and spatial realities of imperialism as signs of incompleteness and disease. Modernist representation must by necessity hide the signs of those ideological contradictions and fissures which are the root causes of its pathologies.

In his 1988 study of Joyce’s *Ulysses*, McGee recasts this diagnosis of modernist space in purely textual terms. McGee argues for the necessity of reading what he variously calls the “eccentric text,” the “margins,” the heretofore “unexplored regions” of Joyce’s novel. He very quickly identifies the eccentric and the marginal with a very specific kind of aesthetic space:

In reading the eccentric, we are confronted with the paperspace, a space that expands and divides beyond the limits of the book, that includes the history of its criticism, its reception, its social context and so on. The paperspace is the space of history, the process of time within the book, the gaps that emerge only retrospectively through the elaborations of historical subjects who experience the

text as radically other. (182-3)

Under McGee's formulation, aesthetic space is once again indicted for its claims of self-sufficiency, though in a very different way. "Paperspace," a concept which McGee only cryptically elucidates, is that which compensates for the actual insufficiency of the textual space itself. McGee's claim that it is the work of the critic to fill in the "paperspace" of the novel with the signs of history and time suggests that within the actual space of the novel there is no room for these things. Once again, then the modern novel's geography is solely metaphoric, and it is the job of the critic to attempt to restore a historical wholeness to the project.

But McGee's conception of the novel's spaces as insufficient to the demands of history is largely a beast of his own making. In examining the "Circe" episode of *Ulysses*, he writes:

Upon entering this episode, the reader enters a different fictive or imaginary space, which functions in relation to the whole book as its unconscious, the condition of its writing [. . .]. Style in this space corresponds to the technique of writing as hallucination—in other words, a groundless, objectless writing. The words themselves function as autonomous objects that may enter into this or that configuration or partial representation in paperspace. (186)

It is McGee himself who posits "autonomy" for the spaces of *Ulysses*, who sees the novel's engagement with space on merely an aesthetic, or "imaginary" level. Again "style" is seen as that which lends this aesthetic space the autonomy, the "groundless" quality that removes it from the outside world. Given this charge of an overly stylized,

culturally detached textual space, it is not surprising that McGee should return us to a language of diagnosis and pathology: “Joyce’s work is not simply reducible to Joyce the subject [. . .]. The secondary revision mediating between Joyce the subject and his symbolic production, makes *Ulysses* more than a symptom of a private, reified conscious” (190). McGee, like both Jameson and Brantlinger, sees the novel’s allegedly stylized manipulation of aesthetic space as the manifestation, the symptom, of a larger cultural disease, namely a refusal to confront socio-historical context. And again, space becomes the specific means to escape history and historical change, rather than to engage in a context in which the real spaces of the world, both near and far, were being restyled.

Thus, in the last two decades or so, critics have seen modernism’s interest in space as a sign of its willful evacuation of history and historical context. While New Critics had formulated and then championed a reading of modernist manipulation of space as an issue wholly of aesthetics, these later critics saw this process as disingenuous at best, and ideologically complicit at worst. For Kermode, Weimann, Jameson, Brantlinger, and McGee, modernism’s spatial “play” is escapist, a symptom of its inability to engage with the contradictions and pressures of socio-historical reality. But as Perl has indeed argued, and as Weimann’s reading makes manifest, this reading of spatial form is not only not different in kind from the very similar pronouncements of the New Critics, but also is often derived from an uncritical assimilation of modernism into New Criticism. That is, both the New Critics and their more politically committed respondents make very similar claims for the autonomy of modernist aesthetic space. Whereas Brooks and Richards see this as an unproblematic affirmation of the unity and the self-sufficiency of the art object,



their counterparts on the left read stylized and aestheticized space as the signs of an amputated, incomplete, and diseased modernism.

As Perl has pointed out, the problem with such an approach stems from the fact that New Criticism as a critical methodology does not and cannot provide a transparent “take” on modernism; like any critical approach, it necessarily invests the interpretive process with its own beliefs, biases and ideology.<sup>26</sup> Making matters more complicated is the New Critical belief that it has no ideology; the idea that New Criticism can offer an unmediated “close” reading of the literary text was, at least initially, self-generated. Voicing a widely shared belief, John Crowe Ransom asserted that the “first law of criticism is that it shall be objective, shall cite the nature of the object itself” (19). Unfettered of all contingencies, New Criticism is thus granted the power to unlock the true “nature” of the art object. Moreover, as Frank Lentricchia points out, this faith in New Critical objectivity has persisted to the present day, where its “ideological effect” has long since “passed into the realm of common sense” (323). With their ideological underpinnings hidden from view, New Critical accounts of modernism are often taken for the thing itself. They offer themselves up as the “obvious” or “transparent” way to read modernist texts, and, by extension, those texts’ interests in space and spatial form. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that even critics, such as Weimann, whose own political and ideological interests stand in stark contrast to those of Brooks and Frank, should conflate rather uncritically modernist spaces with their New Critical constructions.

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<sup>26</sup> For a cogent analysis of New Criticism’s ideological underpinnings, see Frank Lentricchia’s “In Place of an Afterword.” Lentricchia claims that the “ideological effect of the New Criticism in the United States is to sustain, under conditions of mass higher education, the romantic cult of genius,” a practice which fits nicely with the New Critic’s “isolationist assumptions” (324). For further comment on New Criticism as a theoretical construct, see Edward Said’s “Opponents, Audiences, Constituencies and Community,” especially 138-9, and Perl’s “Passing the Time: Modernism versus New Criticism.”

This conflation, with all of its attendant implications, raises the issue of how to go about uncoupling modernism from the assimilating readings which have been superimposed upon it. Given the need to return to modernism's own sense of the changing and encroaching spaces around it, Perl's appeal to such a delinking is especially compelling. For if, as we have seen, modernism did sometimes confuse or variously inflect its interest in shattering spaces, the New Critics and those who would ironically take their word on the subject as final further confined modernist space to the status of a metaphor, one that is doubly displaced by virtue of its aesthetic, interiorized register. The claims made by textual and material critics alike that modernist space was an aestheticizing heuristic most often originate in the early work of readers like Frank, Brooks, Blackmur, and Wimsatt. And these claims run counter to the awareness that writers like Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf manifested regarding a newly emergent global reality. Though their shared attention to a spatial aesthetic comprised part of that awareness, the very nature of their anxieties over an encroaching and homogenizing global space precluded even the possibility of absolute aesthetic containment.

The liberation of modernism from New Critical and post-New Critical accounts of spatial form and spatial language requires, then, the substitution of another critical paradigm, one which can take into account modernism's complex response to the ways in which the larger spaces of their world were changing and becoming in fact less large. Heeding Sanford Schwartz's recent call to "postmodernize modernism" (25), I will read the work of Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf in light of the general claims made by a loosely affiliated group of contemporary cultural geographers. Like Schwartz, I am ever mindful of the necessary distinctions that still hold between modernism and postmodernism. In

what follows, then, I suggest that globalization could not be named as such by modernism, nor of course could it even be experienced as the ubiquitous and “intractable” fact that, following Bauman, it has become for contemporary society. Precisely because of its novelty, global encroachment could almost always only be felt as a kind of shattering, as something whose causes and effects might be seen to originate elsewhere. Hence, my invocation of these cultural geographers remains broad, so as not to assimilate modernism to yet another anachronistic set of interpretive practices. I agree with Schwartz, who, in registering his dissatisfaction with a too rigid policing of the boundary between modernism and postmodernism, points “not to the dissolution but, rather, to the complication of the original distinction” (25).

In contrast to theories of postmodernism which “have been sustained by the conception of modernism that came to the fore in the decade after World War II” (25), Schwartz seeks to mobilize contemporary theories of the postmodern in order to nuance and complicate our understanding of modernism. He argues that such a process had already begun, in 1998, to yield profitable results: “[T]he postmodernizing project has provoked a significant reconsideration of modernism [. . .]. [T]he entanglement with the postmodern is slowly decoupling modernism from mid-century New Criticism [. . .] and initiated new inquiries into its cultural, social, and political affiliations” (25). In exactly this way, the work of contemporary cultural geographers provides a more compelling alternative to those confining readings by Jameson and like-minded critics that are themselves authorized by an outmoded idea of modernist space. These cultural theorists of place and space, such as Caren Kaplan, Derek Gregory, David Harvey, and Edward Soja, take their own cue from Lefebvre’s 1974 study, *The Production of Space*. In

establishing links between multiple forms of aesthetic production—architecture, literature, painting, film—they seek to account for what Gregory calls “the complexity and contingency of human spatiality” within contemporary culture (6). For these self-proclaimed “cultural geographers,” space is not something inert and unmediated, but rather it is “constructed and produced” by culture, an ideological overlay that is mapped onto, and becomes virtually indistinguishable from, material space itself. Based on this idea of what Smith calls the “infusion of physical extent with social intent” (112), cultural productions and the spaces from which they emanate can then be seen to be mutually constitutive. This “socialization” of space permits a critical rethinking of global space within the modernist period as a cultural phenomenon which not only influences literary works, but which can itself be imaginatively remapped, reshaped, and resisted by those works. Following the lead of this group of theorists, we can then reexamine modernist novels in a way that reads their spatiality as a potential sign of social critique rather than as inherently apolitical or escapist.

Despite its cogency, however, the work of these cultural geographers is hampered by a significant limitation that Schwartz has himself noted. For while their insights inform the following readings of modernist fiction, their most productive and sustained observations are almost entirely confined to the postmodern context. For instance, though Harvey begins his reading of aesthetic production with the helpful assertion that “the various movements that brought modernism to its apogee had to work out a new logic in the conception of space and motion” (107), he then reinscribes a familiar and reductive division between modernism and postmodernism that largely negates a modernist interest in space: “[T]he organization of space has become the primary aesthetic problem of mid

twentieth-century culture as the problem of time (in Bergson, Proust, and Joyce) was the primary aesthetic problem of the first decades of this century" (111). Here, Harvey merely rearticulates a fairly commonplace reading of modernism as fixated on time at the expense of space.<sup>27</sup> Soja too makes a very similar claim in the service of a more highly advanced argument about what he calls the "instrumentality of space":

The key argument I wish to establish in this admittedly broad and sweeping depiction of modernization and modernism is not only that spatiality was subordinated in critical social theory but that the instrumentality of space was increasingly lost from view in political and practical discourse. During the extended *fin de siècle*, the politics and ideology embedded in the social construction of human geographies [. . .] seemed to become either invisible or increasingly mystified, left, right, and centre. (34)

Somewhat ironically, Soja's claims here go a long way towards explaining the practices of modernism's critics, although, as we shall see, they do little justice to the modernists themselves. While the New Critics and their later readers did much to obscure the modernist interest in historicizing space in all its dimensions, such efforts at "mystification" can not prevent us from kinds of sustained interest that I demonstrate below. In a similar vein, Gregory claims that while modernism supports an "equation between rationality and space," postmodernism throws that equation "into much more complete disarray" (139). For both Harvey and Gregory, modernism remains largely uninterested in the changing spaces through which it emerged, while postmodernism

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<sup>27</sup> For the most obvious of these, see Ricardo Quinones's ironically titled *Mapping Literary Modernism* and Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending*.

constructs its spatial context, acting as a significant component in Smith's "social intent" that infuses material space.

Certainly, this fairly rigid attempt at periodization does not diminish the methodological importance of cultural geography for my own work. The effort is curious, however, given these critics' recurrent reliance upon the theories of Lefebvre, who had earlier argued that the modernist period was itself undeniably preoccupied with, and implicated in, a culture of spatial upheaval. Because of this periodized bias, Stephen Kern's reading of modernist space in *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* stands virtually alone in offering a corrective to the narrowly compartmentalized view of modernism. Elsewhere I have noted Kern's claim that "sweeping changes in technology and culture" within the early modernist period created distinctive new modes of thinking about and experiencing time and space." Kern's sensitivity to the scope of those changes leads him to a clear conclusion: "The result was a transformation of the dimensions of life and thought" (2). But because Kern situates his project as largely an encyclopedic one which will "survey significant changes in the experience of time and space," concerns of aesthetic production and representation lie outside his immediate interest. He makes no effort "to explain why the telephone was invented or why the stream-of-consciousness novel began to appear" (2). Thus, while he qualifies any naïve compartmentalizing of time and space, modernism and postmodernism, and thereby supplements the work of Harvey and Gregory, the basic methodological presuppositions of his work allow for an all too easy equation between technological and aesthetic innovation. In what follows, I will necessarily emphasize a more attentive reading of

modernism that takes into account its registration of, resistance to, and even occasional celebration of global incursion and homogenization.

With the notable exception of Kern's important book, then, the work of these recent postmodern critics justifies Schwartz's claim that "[f]or the most part the theorizing of the postmodern has cast a dark spell over its predecessor. The propensity to conceptualize the modern/postmodern relationship in terms of stark antithesis has consigned the former to a conservative ghetto and relegated its more heterodox elements to the latter" (17). For Schwartz, the main culprits in this ghettoizing process are early postmodern critics like Harry Levin, Ihab Hassan, Susan Sontag, and Andreas Huyssen.<sup>28</sup> But his comments also serve to summarize nicely the work of critics like Harvey and Gregory, for whom the modernist interest in space remains either conservative or non-existent. However, this does not mean that their work carries no value for reading modernism's spatial focus. Following Schwartz's own lead, we need not condemn the work of postmodern critics like Harvey and Gregory for its often problematic attempts at periodization. As Schwartz argues, postmodern cultural analyses are often integral to an attempt to free modernism from the kinds of New Critical and post-New Critical accounts which have dominated our understanding of modernist space. While cultural geography sometimes participates in exactly the kind of "ghettoizing" of modernism which Schwartz rightfully condemns, it can reinvigorate a reading of modernism's engagement

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<sup>28</sup> Schwartz ably summarizes the history of the modernism/postmodernism divide. For the most salient examples of that divide as it is constructed by theorists of the postmodern, see Levin, Hassan, Sontag, and Huyssen, and especially Hutcheon for its all too typical dismissal of modernism's political content. As Schwartz explains, "theorists of postmodern literature often begin by acknowledging the complexity of the modern/postmodern practice of employing traditional antimonies to define the difference between them." These distinctions, he argues, were at least initially produced out of a "rebellion against the ostensibly conservative and purist standards of midcentury modernism" (11). It is worth noting of course that by mid-century, modernism and theories of the modern had, at least within the academy, become largely the province of New Criticism, a much more likely target for postmodern charges of "conservatism."

with its global context. Its implicit debunking of the various constructions and superimpositions which intervening generations have placed upon the modernist landscape allows for a general recovery of modernist geography. Thus equipped, we can now begin to imagine how Conrad and Joyce, measuring the implications of global change within such fraught terrain as colonial Africa and provincial Dublin, followed Woolf in enacting what Leslie Hankins has recently called a “reinvigorated spatial critique of culture” (21).

Thus the many examples of what Soja calls an “explicitly geographical” consciousness within contemporary culture guide much of what follows. Indeed the efforts of cultural geographers to rejuvenate geographic discourse through “deconstructing maps, landscapes, and space, and also images of location, position, and geometry” (Kaplan 144) not only facilitates a more nuanced reading of modernism and globalization, but also aligns contemporary interdisciplinary practices with many of the central preoccupations of modernists themselves. In the same vein, James Duncan and David Ley's call for a “theorization of a situated geographic imagination” (1) provides a neat parallel to the broadly similar aims of writers like Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf. In the individual readings of the fictions which follow, I will demonstrate that these early twentieth-century writers were already situating themselves in a changing geographic context. The work of contemporary cultural geography thus helps generally to reveal that modernism's interest in space went well beyond issues of aesthetics or political refusal. In *Heart of Darkness*, *Ulysses*, and *To the Lighthouse*, the responses to perceptions of global encroachment and homogenization are frequently politically attuned. And taken



together those responses are as expansive as the terrain which the three novels individually and collectively remap.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE ENDS OF THE EARTH: JOSEPH CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS* AND THE STRAINS OF GLOBAL INTEGRATION

For the first time the world is completely divided up, so that in the future only redivision is possible.

—V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Latest Stage of Capitalism* (90)

I feel quite convinced that we should all be united on the proposition that Africa is not, after all, big enough for us.

—Cecil Rhodes, *Political Life and Speeches* (643)

Were we to let go our hold on the bottom, we would be absolutely in the air—in space.

—Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (107)

In the course of his journey to what he calls “the ends of the earth,” Conrad’s Marlow experiences several disquieting moments like the one to which he gives voice here, moments in which the ground seems to disappear from beneath his feet. And his experiences of spatial disorientation are such that he frequently feels the need to express them through tropes which are, as it happens, even more ungrounded. “Going up that river was like travelling back in time” (97), he tells us on one occasion, and on another he asks his audience, “how can you imagine what particular region of first ages a man’s untrammelled feet may take him into by way of solitude” (115). Marlow’s efforts here are undeniably hyperbolic; he chooses to express the mundane experience of feeling lost amid unfamiliar surroundings through the fantastic metaphor of time travel. Well before he arrives at his destination, the eponymous “heart of darkness” that is Mr. Kurtz’s Inner Station, he imagines that place to be equally fantastic. As he puts it, “I felt as though, instead of going to the centre of a continent, I were about to set off for the centre of the earth” (73). After he has spent three months at the less remote Central Station halfway

up the Congo River, Marlow still holds onto this feeling of novelty and continues to express it in spatial terms. A second attempt to imagine the inner regions of Africa is even more fantastic than the first: “What was in there? I could see a little ivory coming out from there, and I had heard Kurtz was in there [. . .]. Yet somehow it didn’t bring any image with it [. . .]. I believed in it in the same way one of you might believe there are inhabitants in the planet Mars” (89). It seems as if Marlow’s time in Africa has instilled in him a proclivity for geographic expansiveness; if at first the incredible strangeness of African locales could be expressed through an earth-bound metaphor, three months later, only a bizarre extra-terrestrial locale can capture just how unfamiliar his new surroundings feel to him.

Like the many readers of modernism who follow him, Marlow often alludes to these experiences for their metaphoric, symptomatic significance; feelings of disorientation in space are undoubtedly meant to signal broader, less tangible experiences of loss and confusion. Hence his frequent references to his difficulty in navigating the bewildering upper reaches of the Congo and in avoiding the various snags along the way are less important as plot devices than as signs for the reader of his increasing moral unease and indecision as he nears Kurtz. Still, coming on the heels of Marlow’s exposure to a foreign and bewildering locale, the recurrent choice of these types of metaphor suggests that space is something more than just a merely convenient or capacious trope.

In his inclination for geographical expansion, Marlow stands in stark contrast to Conrad himself, for whom the modern world was a space that was not in fact growing but diminishing. By the end of his life especially, he was like Lenin and Cecil Rhodes before him, aware that the unsurveyed portions of the globe were rapidly vanishing. In his

preface to his friend Richard Curle's 1922 travel book *Into the East*, Conrad damns Curle with faint praise, attributing his relative lack of imagination to a troubling condition of the modern world:

He is very modern, for he is fashioned by the conditions of the explored earth in which the latitudes and longitudes having been recorded once for all have become things of no importance, in the sense that they can no longer appeal to the spirit of adventure, inflame no imagination, lead no one up to the very gates of mortal danger. (209)

Curle's putative failures as a writer are thus not really his own, since such a now homogenized world does not allow for any thrills of exploration, real or imagined. Looking around him, Conrad bemoans the fact that "many people encompass the globe," and wonders what kinds of adventure remain "on this earth girt about with cables, with an atmosphere made restless by the waves of ether, lighted by that sun of the twentieth century under which there is nothing new left now, and but very little of what may still be obscure" (88).<sup>1</sup> The problem, Conrad seems to say, is that the "sun of the twentieth century" is relentlessly homogenizing. Developments in technology and communication have literally bound the world more tightly together and have become so commonplace as to be hardly noticeable. Hence, through the metaphor of an uncompromising, ubiquitous sun that shines everywhere with equal intensity, Conrad depicts as entirely naturalized those developments that are in the process of reducing everything on earth to an undifferentiated sameness. David Simpson argues that it is precisely this anxiety which lies behind many of Conrad's fictions and which Conrad himself unwittingly

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<sup>1</sup> Conrad's preface to Curle's book is reprinted as an essay simply called "Travel" and collected in his *Last Essays*.

reproduces: “Conrad has reduced all the potentially dialectical elements in the antithesis of primitive and civilized societies, whereby each might function as an image of what the other is not, to a state of monotonous, undifferentiated oneness” (119).

Of course, Conrad himself deflects this criticism as he locates homogenization not within the patterns of his own fictions, but rather in the work of a younger generation of writers such as Curle. In his reading of Conrad’s preface, Chris Bongie quite correctly sees Conrad’s rather “condescending tone” as precluding the possibility of any such self-awareness. But even in those “inferior” fictions, such homogeneity and monotony should be seen not as somehow the fault of the writer but rather as the result of a lack of raw material in a now spatially depleted world. Still, Bongie draws our attention to the insistent way that Conrad, when confronting the reality of an uninspiring modern existence, “considers himself to be something rather less than ‘very modern’” (268). Thus, his criticism of Curle constitutes an act of projection, as it reveals that for Conrad the modern crisis is much more immediately experienced than he lets on:

Conrad’s portrait of Curle is first and foremost a piece of displaced autobiography. Shunted off onto the generation of writers that has followed in his tracks is a problem that from the beginning ‘fashions’ his own work as a writer: namely the problem of a truly *global* modernity. Everywhere and in everything, this modernity necessarily cancels out whatever might once have differed from it. (269)

Conrad’s reading of Curle is thus a sign of his consciousness of his own belatedness as a resident in a world whose “latitudes and longitudes [have] been recorded once for all.”

In his own recent reading of Conrad and geography, Christopher GoGwilt concurs with Bongie as he identifies the implications that living in such a newly globalized world had for Conrad and his contemporaries.

[T]he predicament of uprootedness and disorientation that is the central dilemma of Conrad's major characters is a predicament of the age, the pain of dislocation imposed by imperialism as well as the apprehension of a new consciousness of cultural identity. It suggests also the articulation of a sense of community which might be seen as the inverse of the transformation from colonial state to national state—the emergence of a global, international, or cosmopolitan “Western” identity profoundly marked by a sense of lost cultural affiliation. (127)

For both Bongie and GoGwilt, then, Conrad's fiction is profoundly marked by a newly global sense of geopolitics, geography, and displacement. The modern sensibility that Conrad so disparages is therefore synonymous with feelings of loss. At the end of his life, as he surveys a world that has been rapidly transformed and domesticated by the trappings of modern technology, Conrad no longer sees any possibility for novelty or difference.

In this chapter, I take up the recent work of Bongie and GoGwilt in order to situate Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* as part of a more general modernist response to the pressures of nascent globalization. I will show how Conrad's global anxieties inform and complicate his response to contemporary New Imperialist constructions of the African continent which were themselves predicated on notions of compression and proximity. My work differs from that of Bongie and GoGwilt both in its sustained attention to *Heart of Darkness* itself and in the relative weight it places on globalization as a guiding

context, rather than a simple effect, of Conrad's more local anxieties. Conrad's late-in-life emphasis upon the signs of a diminishing globe invites us to reread *Heart of Darkness* for its earlier, more implicit, registration of those same developments.

Virtually since the novel's publication, critics have argued for two antithetical positions: Conrad either supports or condemns imperialism and racism.<sup>2</sup> By reading *Heart of Darkness* within the broader context of Conrad's manifest response to globalization, my work can provide an alternative to these rather severe positions. I see Conrad's much maligned nostalgia and his much lauded political indictments as part of a larger set of emerging anxieties having to do with a rapidly contracting globe in which the structures of imperialism would themselves no longer hold.

By contrast, in Bongie's reading, Conrad's nostalgia for an unenlightened world must be seen within the very particular context of British Victorian liberalism, which recast the

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<sup>2</sup> Of course the critical debate over Conrad's supposed racism and complicity with the causes of imperialism and colonialism is not in need of much rehearsal here. The most widely circulated condemnations of Conrad are undoubtedly those of Chinua Achebe, who labeled Conrad a "bloody racist" (788), and Said, who argues that "Achebe's well-known criticism of Conrad does not go far enough" (*Culture and Imperialism* 200). These arguments were obliquely anticipated by Conrad's pro-imperialist contemporaries such as the anonymous author of a 1902 review of the novel who anxiously argued that "[i]t must not be supposed that Mr. Conrad makes attack upon colonisation, expansion, even upon Imperialism" (169). Conrad has also always had his defenders; in 1902, Edward Garnett saw the novel as subverting Western "creed[s] and conceptions of life" by presenting a "page torn from the life of the Dark Continent—a page which has been hitherto carefully blurred and kept away from European eyes" (164). The polarized nature of the two reviews is still present within contemporary criticism of the novel. For instance David Carroll's argument that "Conrad's Africa is the 'dark continent' of the European imagination, an extreme stereotype to the full" (3), and Benita Parry's concurrence that Conrad's fiction "gravitates back to established practice, registering the view of two incompatible orders in a manichean universe" (23), simply articulate more sophisticatedly—though from a morally opposed position—the claims of the novel's early anonymous reviewer. Achebe and Said similarly concur as does Brantlinger who, as above, claims that the novel's "evasions and ambiguities" constitute a modernist "will-to-style" that is coterminous with both commodity reification and imperialism (264). On the other side, Garnett's claims for the novel's exposure of imperialist assumptions also have their modern equivalent. Goonetilleke asserts that "it would be hard to imagine a more damning indictment of imperialism" than that enacted by the novella (21), while Ezekiel Mphahlele argues that Conrad belongs to a select group of "outstanding white novelists who portray competently characters belonging to cultural groups outside their own" (125). Andrea White aligns herself quite self-consciously with Garnett's early review, stating that the novella "exposed the machinery behind the apparent naturalness and inevitability of the imperial endeavour and made visible the conqueror's face hidden behind the mask of a civilizing mission's protestations of benevolence" (198). The

relationship of empire to colony as one of “enlightened paternalism” (273). This way of thinking about imperial bonds had, by Conrad’s time, partially obscured an earlier belief that the colonies should be governed as an “enlightened and paternal despotism” (271).<sup>3</sup> In other words, what Bongie calls Conrad’s “exotic nostalgia” is as much a localized response to a rhetorical shift within British political discourse, as it is a reaction to anything really new about the world itself. For GoGwilt’s purposes, Conrad’s anxieties are derived from a more territorially expansive phenomenon:

My concern is the transformation in the nature of cultural hegemony at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century: the shift from a European to a Western identity [. . . in which] the political sense of the term ‘the West’ became not only the dominant but also a dominating term, enforcing a connection between a variety of archaic, local, and cross-cultural meanings. (1-2)

I thus share GoGwilt’s interest in charting Conrad’s response to what is now a less localized sense of identity and place, though I want to suggest that in the context of a globally conscious modernism, and in light of Conrad’s own expressed set of specific anxieties, even the “West” was a porous space whose locales offered little relief from the homogenizing sun of the twentieth century.

For GoGwilt as for Bongie, the focus is largely upon a context of shifting rhetoric and political terminology, rather than upon the larger set of developments and responses which gave rise to that shift. Given this imperative, GoGwilt attends to, even as he repeats, a familiar trope which would have held great resonance for Conrad:

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reviews of both Garnett and the anonymous writer are reprinted in the appendices of Goontelleke’s 1995 edition of *Heart of Darkness*.

<sup>3</sup> That is, following Bongie, the shift to “enlightened paternalism” maintains the rhetorical force of infantilizing the colony while masking the contradictions between “despotism” and Victorian liberalism.



Conrad's work is informed not so much by the attempt to rescue some lost European political tradition, but rather by a recognition of an absence of European political identity. This recognition makes his work stand witness to an immense splitting of traditions. Conrad's work reveals a double-mapping of Europe and Empire, whereby a newly European idea of the West—borrowed from the terms of Russian debates—distorts the worldwide shattering of cultural traditions at the turn of the century by an attempt to reconstitute historical discontinuity as the continuity of "Western history." (3)

GoGwilt's remarks are invaluable here for the way they link Conrad's anxieties both to Lefebvre's notion of a more broadly shattered space and to modernism's favoured means of self-identification. That Conrad's response is in fact a kind of remapping of global territory again reveals that "shattering" was often modernist shorthand for an emergent reconfiguration of the world's spaces. And in seeing Conrad's response as one of recognition and self-awareness rather than simply one of nostalgia, GoGwilt distinguishes Conrad's response from the kinds of crude examples of global remapping to which he was frequently witness.

But it is here that I mark my second departure from GoGwilt's argument. For GoGwilt, Conrad attempts to distort the effects of a shattered globe and even to "reconstitute" a world whose loss is experienced as "historical discontinuity." While I too see Conrad as motivated by loss, I do not think that his response to "rupture" is necessarily so univocal or reactionary as GoGwilt makes it out to be. As he briefly reads *Heart of Darkness*, GoGwilt claims to find one of the central and more localized sources of this tendency towards a shoring up of fragments. In this particular novel, he argues,

Conrad's self-professed obsession with maps "betray[s] complicity in the problems of imperialist representation" (113). GoGwilt goes on to expand somewhat on what exactly he means here by complicity. Far from critical of imperialism's effects, Conrad's novel presents a "formulaic narrative itinerary that suggests a happy resolution to the problems of geographic dislocation" (115). This resolution is the sign of an author who is "resigned to the racism of official history that was being sensitized in the discipline of geography" (126). While he alerts us, then, to Conrad's critical interest in shifting global geography and the dislocations which it entails, GoGwilt's reading is more localized, in both its rhetorical and territorial configurations, than my own. And because he casts Conrad's response to those developments as programmatic, GoGwilt does not adequately address its complexities and ambiguities. In contrast, I argue that Conrad's response to imperialism and its excesses must be seen in the context of what is an undoubtedly nostalgic, but not necessarily a reactionary, response to globalization.

Like myself, Bongie and GoGwilt are indebted to what remains one of the most seminal readings of Conrad and space. In the last chapter of *The Political Unconscious*, Fredric Jameson examines what he tellingly calls "Romance and Reification: Plot Construction and Ideological Closure in Joseph Conrad." Though Jameson is primarily concerned here with *Lord Jim* and *Nostromo*, his remarks bear significantly on my own readings of *Heart of Darkness*. For Jameson, *Lord Jim*, and indeed, most of Conrad's fictions with the possible exception of *Nostromo*, are formally and thematically preoccupied with representations of "containment and totality" (211). Following his own call to attend to the "ideology of form," Jameson argues that Conrad's fiction reveals "a strategic fault line in the emergence of contemporary narrative [. . .]. In Conrad, we

can sense the emergence not merely of what will be contemporary modernism [. . .] but also, still tangibly juxtaposed with it, of what will variously be called popular culture or mass culture, the commercialized cultural discourse of what, in late capitalism, is often described as media society” (206). It is in relation to their traversal of two modes of production—high and late capitalism—that Conrad’s narratives enact, as their most notable ideological and symbolic acts, closure and containment. Jameson argues that *Lord Jim* in particular opens up the radical narrative possibilities associated with high modernism, only to recontain them within the much more reactionary genre of “romance [. . .] as the prototype of the various ‘degraded’ subgenres into which mass culture will be articulated” (207). The romance/adventure tale thus serves as the formal generic container which effaces “emergent modernist discourse,” acting as both anachronistic throwback and anticipation of the degraded genres of “late-capitalism” (207).

The larger claims of Jameson’s study are well beyond the scope of my present reading of Conrad. What concerns me here is Jameson’s claim for the centrality of geography within *Lord Jim*’s reactionary economy. As it makes its transition into an adventure story in which all radical narrative possibilities are nullified, Jameson argues that the novel turns to a “geographical strategy of containment” (211). This strategy is particularly predicated upon an aestheticized and dehistoricized representation of the sea: “The privileged place of the strategy of containment in Conrad is the sea” (210). Jameson goes so far as to name Conrad’s sea as a “non-place”: “[T]he non-place of the sea is also the space of the degraded language of romance and daydream, of narrative commodity, of the sheer distraction of light literature” (213).<sup>4</sup> Any recognition of the sea as “a place of

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<sup>4</sup> It is this concept of Conrad’s narrative as fetishized commodity which Brantlinger takes up in his reading of *Heart of Darkness* noted above.

work and the very element by which an imperial capitalism draws its scattered beachheads and outposts together” is carefully “managed and displaced” by the “two great containment strategies of the day [. . .] existential metaphysics [. . .] and melodrama” (215-6).

In other words, as an instance of what, in *Orientalism*, Edward Said calls an “imaginative geography” (50), the sea allows for an aestheticized erasure of labour and history, so that both class conflict and imperial injustice are remapped as the fully sanitized and individuated generic conventions of the melodramatic adventure yarn. Jameson sees Jim’s “choice of the sea as both space and vocation” as particularly advantageous in this regard: “Jim’s method for living this geography, harmonized by ideological blindness, is an uncommon one: choosing a vocation such that he can step completely outside all three class terrains and see them all equally, from over a great distance, as so much picturesque landscape” (211). I will argue that Jameson’s reading of this kind of strategic use of geography is much more the province of New Imperialism than of Conrad himself.<sup>5</sup> But for Jameson, Conrad’s sea turns narrative possibility into generic cliché and converts something called “historical necessity” into mere metaphysical melodrama, a place where adventure stories are set and where individual struggles against adversity are encoded as natural. According to Jameson, then, Conrad is firmly embedded in an imperial context by virtue of a geographical imagination, where far-off spaces serve as homogenizing backdrops and inert receptacles that erase political realities.

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<sup>5</sup> As detailed below, New Imperialism denotes a period of renewed and rapid colonial acquisition that began with the 1878 Berlin conference and concluded at the start of the First World War.

In *Orientalism*, Said claims that these kinds of imaginative acts that “tak[e] a fixed, more or less total geographical position towards a wide variety of social, linguistic, political, and historical realities” (50) are the means through which the Orient has been historically constructed by Europe and the West. By “Orientalism,” Said means to signify “the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period” (3). Said’s reading of Orientalist geography bears generally upon my own ensuing reading of the similar strategies of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century efforts to manage and produce Africa as a particularly troubling region of the globe. Said’s claims for the theatrical resonances and effects of Orientalism substantiate my reading of Conrad’s Africa as a kind of stage upon which the implications and effects of an emergent globalization were registered and resisted:

Our initial description of Orientalism as a learned field now acquires a new concreteness. A field is often an enclosed space. The idea of representation is a theatrical one: the Orient is the stage on which the whole East is confined [. . .]. On this stage will appear figures whose role it is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate. The Orient then seems to be, not an unlimited extension beyond the familiar European world, but rather a closed field, a theatrical stage affixed to Europe. (63)

In contrast to Jameson I will argue that it was not so much Conrad as it was his New Imperialist contemporaries who, within a context of global proximity and depletion, sought to enclose and confine Africa. While at times Conrad himself deployed Africa as a

theatrical backdrop where he could indulge his anxieties over the modern world, he did not, as Jameson claims, wilfully reduce that space to the kind of homogeneous geography imagined by so many of his peers. I agree with Jameson's and GoGwilt's shared refusal to detach Conrad altogether from the contexts of imperialism; his frequent nostalgia for the "old empire" would alone preclude such an attempt.

In my reading of *Heart of Darkness*, however, I want to retrieve Conrad's image of an Africa that registers a transformation of a global order. Of course, with their shared desire for proximity of markets and unfettered access to the far reaches of the globe, imperialism and globalization are intricately related phenomena. But Conrad's comments in 1922 force us to see that his anxiety about proximity and homogeneity takes in larger spaces than simply one continent or even something as capacious as empire. Indeed, Conrad would show that globalization frequently spells the end of "old empire" in the way that it accelerates the processes of transmission and exchange, which that prior set of imperial practices had itself encouraged, to the point where the economic and territorial structures of colonialism will no longer hold. For Conrad, the African continent, as a transitional space, shows all too well the troubling signs of "time-space compression" whose effects he was noticing all around him.

For as Bongie has noted, Conrad's attempt to locate himself as pre-modern, and thus as someone immune to the effects of contraction and compression, rings rather hollow. As many have noted, Conrad frequently defined himself as modern, notwithstanding the visible anxieties over modernity that are evident in his portrait of Curle. In 1902, the same year in which *Heart of Darkness* was first published as part of a larger collection of stories, Conrad wrote to his patron and friend Edward Garnett, "I am *modern* and I would

rather recall Wagner the musician and Rodin the Sculptor who both had to starve a little in their day [...]. They too have arrived. They had to suffer for being ‘new’” (*Letters* II, 418). Conrad figures himself as modern, a condition from which he, like Curle, suffers, though here suffering is cast in a decidedly romantic light as the province of the under-appreciated, rather than the imaginatively impoverished, artist. Such acts of self-promotion undoubtedly prompted Conrad’s early biographer Frederick Karl to declare him to be “our representative modern man and artist” (*Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives*, xiv). In response to this sweeping claim, Owen Knowles offers a mild corrective, stating that “Conrad’s example is a strange and resonant variation on a type, built as his life was upon the imputation of betrayal, linguistic dislocation, shifting cosmopolitan influences, and the consequent search for supporting social and intellectual traditions” (9). But in so pointing to Conrad’s well-documented diverse and cosmopolitan experiences—as the trilingual, tricultural, Polish émigré and highly successful English novelist, Knowles attributes to him “the marginal man’s relative sense of cultures and cultural identity [which] may also lead to a richly composite individual, who by his very ability to cross boundaries, enjoys the best of several worlds” (4).

This ability, what one might call a peculiarly modern brand of Keatsian negative capability, is predicated upon geographic exile and linguistic mobility and would indeed firmly position Conrad as modern under Raymond Williams’s terms: “It is a very striking feature of many Modernist and avant-garde movements that [. . .] so many of their members were immigrants into these [metropolitan] centres, where in some new ways all were strangers” (77). In his recent study of modernism, North concurs with Williams, stating that modernism is grounded in “a shared experience of restless travel so relentless

that citizenship ceases to have any meaning, as does the difference between home and abroad” (12). For North, “global migration was a disparate social formation with a number of distinct parts [. . . whose] movements can account for a great deal of what was distinctive in the literature of 1922” (13). And despite his relatively early arrival, Conrad is specifically for North one among those who were a part of this new “culture of mobility.”

Taken together, then, the claims of Knowles, Williams, and North reveal that far from being pre-modern, Conrad, in his guises as world traveler and trilingual writer, was in fact produced by a modern world “girt about with cables.” The very source of his anxieties—that the world was becoming less mysterious by virtue of the ease with which its spaces were traversed—is precisely what enabled his literary career and what positioned it as distinctly modern. As GoGwilt’s use of words like “pain” and “dislocation” make clear, Conrad expressly lamented the emergent strains of hybridity and mobility which were made possible by a shrunken globe and which fashioned his literary oeuvre. Knowles points to comments by both Conrad’s wife, Jessie, and his frequent collaborator, Ford Madox Ford, that refute any notion that Conrad “as man or writer enjoyed any easy trans-cultural rites of passage” (3). In *Joseph Conrad as I Knew Him*, Jessie wrote that her husband’s ability to “pass” for many nationalities left him feeling like “a foreigner in England” (124). Sometimes, Conrad despaired over his belated modernity specifically as it turned upon the irreversible changes in the mapping and apportioning of global space which had transpired in his lifetime. In an 1885 letter to a friend, for example, he regretfully noted the Liberal victory in the recent general election, lamenting that “all that is respectable, venerable, and holy, [. . .] the great British



empire” had now gone “over the edge” (*Letters* I, 16). White persuasively interprets this comment not as simple nostalgia for empire qua empire, but rather as anticipatory dread regarding the arrival of the New Imperialism with its fixation on territorial acquisition and subjugation: “[I]t was the old empire Conrad regretted going off the edge in 1885, a fact to be regretted in the face of its successor” (183). Nadjer’s reading of Conrad’s fiction as populated by new style colonialists who are “deranged drunkards or hopeless cranks” confirms this regret for an earlier, less “foolish” and “abstract” way of doing things (Nadjer 99).<sup>6</sup> And in pointing out how Conrad’s “scepticism about ‘the imperial mission’ can be related to the fac[t] that he was born into a Poland which [. . .] had vanished from the map of Europe” (48), Cedric Watts alerts us to the fact that the disappearance of space had profoundly personal resonance and consequences for Conrad. The very real regret Conrad felt over the annihilation of these old spaces may in part lie behind a remark he made to Edward Garnett in 1911: “I feel as if I had somehow smashed myself” (*Letters* IV, 407). This remark recalls others of the same sort such as Henry Adams’s on having had his “his historical neck broken by the sudden irruption of forces totally new” (382), and Lefebvre and Woolf’s regarding the almost apocalyptic significance of 1910.<sup>7</sup> In any event, as he surveyed the new world order, Conrad directed

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<sup>6</sup> It is this sense of dread and doom which motivates what Hillis Miller calls the “apocalyptic” strains in Conrad generally (32). Kenneth Graham has pointed out that general readings of “Conrad’s pessimism” are not at all new, and are most often elaborated through Conrad’s allegiance to Schopenhauer (Graham 206). Graham concurs with Miller, and along the way makes another claim for Conrad’s modern “representativeness.” Of *Heart of Darkness* Graham writes, “another of its features that might have gone to constitute an early Modernist manifesto is its pronounced current in the direction of an apocalypse” (214).

<sup>7</sup> In his reading of Conrad’s apocalyptic obsession, Graham notes the connection to Woolf’s remarks on the significance of 1910. Graham also picks up on the rhetoric of dissolution and fragmentation in his reading of a shared sensibility between Conrad and Henry James, claiming that “they transmitted to their contemporaries the experience of being between two worlds: the American and the Polish expatriate, now confronting with comparable intelligence and feeling and formal experimentation, in their new modern age, its broken bowl and its heart of darkness” (209). The allusion to the Jamesian image of the broken golden bowl as a touchstone for the “age” is of course nothing new to readings of modernism.

his most consistent criticism to the less locally sensitized, more globally applied, forms of colonialism that he saw around him.

The signs of Conrad's anxieties regarding a globalized modernity are most evident in his favoured choice of locales. Much of his early fiction is set in Pacific archipelagos that are reminiscent of R. P. Blackmur's musings, while 1904's "Nostromo" is set in Central America and *Heart of Darkness* itself of course takes place in the centre of "darkest Africa." In what Eric Hobsbawm has identified as this new "much more densely populated world" (Hobsbawm 14) such spaces held, for Conrad's Western eye, the last possibilities for adventure and discovery. Of course Conrad's much noted penchant for situating his fictions in colonial spaces in the midst of transformation is, in very well-rehearsed arguments, commonly taken for a sign of his obvious interest in exploring the workings of imperialism specifically and human psychology generally. I argue, however, that in the context of globalization, these locales gain added prominence, and take on additional implications. As liminal spaces in the process of change, they register Conrad's unease not only with imperialist folly, but also with the pressures of global encroachment and homogenizing of which he was becoming so acutely aware.

As it happens, Marlow's imaginative expansion of African geography which sees him remap Kurtz's Inner Station as first the centre of the earth and then Mars, is as unreflective of his own recent experience as a citizen of the modern world as it is of Conrad's. For the Africa to which Marlow, and before him Conrad, traveled was one which had only recently been divided up and parceled out by the imperatives of New Imperialism. Given this transformation, it is worth revisiting Marlow's reflections on his

changing image of Africa and the globe as registering something more than simply the loss of childhood innocence:

Now when I was a little chap, I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia and lose myself in the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look like that) I would put my finger on it and say, When I grow up I will go there. The North Pole was one of those places, I remember. Well, I haven't been there yet, and shall not try now. I have been in some of them, and ...well we won't talk about that. But there was one—the biggest, the most blank so to speak—that I had a hankering after. (66-7)

That remaining “one” is of course Africa, but it is crucial to Marlow's point that Africa is not the only of the world's “blank spaces” to have disappeared. It is simply the biggest among many. Just as distressing is the fact that other regions, some more remote than others, are no longer worth visiting, their allure of adventure having been replaced with a more banal, guide-book kind of “glamour.” This oft-quoted excerpt from *Heart of Darkness* thus foregrounds what is too often missed in discussions of Conrad's Africa, namely that the disappearance of Africa takes place in a context of a less localized phenomenon of global encroachment and homogenization.

In *The Age of Empire*, E. J. Hobsbawm emphasizes imperialism's larger context, and the source for some of its motivation. In contrast to the world of the previous century, he tells us, “the world of the 1880s was now genuinely global. Almost all parts of it were now known and more or less adequately or approximately mapped” (13). As Harvey and

Kern's separate accounts have shown, the spaces of the world were becoming in 1880 and beyond more and more proximate to one another.<sup>8</sup> Hobsbawm concurs with this general view, as he locates the effects of recent developments in technology as particularly visible in those very locations worried over by Conrad: "Railway and steamship had made intercontinental or transcontinental travel a matter of weeks rather than months, except in the large-land masses of Africa, continental Asia, and parts of the interior of South America, and would soon make it a matter of days" (13-4). It is within the no-longer-blank spaces of Marlow's map, then, that the signs of global contraction and depletion are most obvious.

Indeed, Hobsbawm notes one particularly telling manifestation of these fears; almost overnight, it seemed, the exploration of the far-flung spaces of the now diminished globe "no longer consisted of 'discovery' but of a form of athletic endeavor, often with strong elements of personal and national competition." As examples of this phenomenon, Hobsbawm cites "expeditions such as Peary's to the North Pole and Amundsen's and Scott's to the South Pole which neither had [nor were] intended to have the slightest practical consequence" (13). Like the "conquest" of Africa, the exploration of the polar regions seems to be a particularly worried-over phenomenon for Marlow, as indeed it will be for Woolf's Mr. Ramsay. Their reinscription as places within which a fully modern brand of athletic endeavour exercises and advertises itself are for Marlow, as they are for Hobsbawm, a particularly telling sign of global depletion.

It is in this context of global depletion that imperialism made itself over as "New." And Hobsbawm points out what exactly it was that was new about New Imperialism:

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<sup>8</sup> See Kern's first chapter and Harvey p260-83 for an impressive documentation of many of the developments which composed this general effect.

[This] period is obviously the era of a new type of empire, the colonial. The economic and military supremacy of the capitalist countries had long been beyond serious challenge, but no systematic attempt to translate it into formal conquest, annexation, and administration had been made between the end of the eighteenth and the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Between 1880 and 1914 it was made, and most of the world outside Europe and the Americas was formally partitioned into territories under the formal rule or informal political domination of one or another of a handful of [European] states. (57)

Hobsbawm's own rhetoric of partition and domination echoes the earlier anxieties of people as diverse as Conrad, Lenin, and Rhodes for whom the signs of global depletion were particularly evident in the charged locales of empire. As Andrea White claims, neither the New Imperialism nor its seemingly urgent imperatives went unnoticed by Conrad's peers: "To contemporary analyses of what was soon called new imperialism [. . .] this almost total partition of the world into territories under the formal rule or informal political domination of a few countries seemed a new phase in the general pattern of national and international development" (183). White's view of the period is confirmed in Benjamin Kidd's 1898 *The Control of the Tropics* in which the author lauded the "partition of Africa amongst the European powers which forms one of the most remarkable signs of the times at the end of the nineteenth century" (98). White herself ably contextualizes this perception against a more expansive, though contracting, backdrop; the span of years from 1880-1914, she tells us, was "a period during which colonial conquests accelerated greatly and worldwide," and which saw the "colonial powers seeking claims on ever-dwindling space, especially in the tropics [...]. During

this period, then, access to and control of the tropics, particularly, became a compelling issue of public discussion and European rivalry” (182).

Like many of his contemporaries, then, Marlow saw a remapped, virtually homogenized, Africa as the primary site upon which to stage his anxieties regarding global change. As the space which had witnessed what Conrad called “the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience and geographical exploration” (“Geography” 17), Africa was an especially amenable and susceptible locale for the accelerating and contracting demands of globalization. If then, Lefebvre and others have frequently looked to 1910 in order to identify a moment at which a “certain space was shattered,” for Conrad, that “moment” can be said to have occurred a full generation earlier. Preoccupied as he was, in both his seafaring and his literary careers, with the far-flung colonial spaces presided over by imperial Europe, Conrad could not help noticing the dramatic ways in which those spaces in particular were being rapidly remapped in the first decades of his life. The first Berlin Conference from which a systematic New Imperialism emerged was convened in 1878 just as “Conrad first made contact with the British Marine Service [where he] would soon come to seek an identity and vocation” (Knowles 8). As Hobsbawm has shown, both that gathering and its successor, the Berlin-Congo conference of 1884-5, were directed toward nothing more nor less than the wholesale division of the “blank spaces” of Africa and the Pacific—Conrad’s two favoured choices for the settings of his fictions—amongst the prevailing European powers (159). And at the end of his career, twenty years after *Heart of Darkness*, it is still a changed Africa which best captures Conrad’s sense of indignation. In his preface to Curle’s book in 1922, Conrad revisits the transformation he had detailed

in Marlow's narrative. While an earlier generation of "infinitely curious and profoundly inspired men" like David Livingstone, Mungo Park, and Henry Stanley had stirred the imagination with their journeys through "darkest Africa," now the days of "heroic travel" are behind us, and those exotic settings, having been emptied of their "black soul of mystery" soon will be "bristling with police posts, colleges, tramway poles" (268-9). For Conrad, this image of Africa, in its imagined replication of the physical and cultural geography of Western Europe, hits far too close to home. This is a continent which is now fit only for the kinds of solipsistic adventure practiced by men like Peary and Amundsen; their kind of travel is, in Conrad's eyes, decidedly less glamorous and heroic than that of their more illustrious predecessors.

These later remarks from Conrad stand in contrast to Marlow's earlier reflections in *Heart of Darkness* over the difficulty in communicating the alienating effects of "darkest Africa" to a metropolitan audience: "This is the worst of trying to tell [...]. Here you all are moored with two good addresses, like a hulk with two anchors, a butcher round one corner, a policeman round another, excellent appetites, and temperature normal—you hear—normal from year's end to year's end" (114). What Marlow laments in 1899—namely the absence of a normative European infrastructure, or social space, within the Belgian Congo—the Conrad of 1922 comes to praise for its powers of imaginative inspiration. In other words from Conrad's vantage point of 1922, that year which North has recently re-excavated as an especially salient "scene of modernism," *Heart of Darkness* becomes an extended exercise in nostalgia where one can still dream of unregulated and unassimilated spaces. Marlow's Congo is an unpopulated, or perhaps depopulated, world of "utter solitude" where one is not forced to step "delicately between

the butcher and the policeman, in the holy terror of scandal and gallows and lunatic asylums” (115). Looking back on his own fiction, Conrad could see himself as especially fortunate in his ability to draw upon the very kinds of raw material which had recently, in his eyes, become unavailable to the modern fiction writer.

But if, in 1922, Conrad expressly lamented the diminishment of the empty spaces of the globe, in *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow had, for all his feelings of solitude, also noticed a corresponding change in African geography. Before he can ever arrive in Africa to partake of its promised glories, that continent too has been unalterably changed: “True by this time it was not a blank space any more. It had ceased to be a blank space of delightful mystery—a white patch for a boy to dream gloriously over. It had become a place of darkness” (67). If the African continent is one of many global spaces under threat of disappearance, it is an uniquely charged and salient one. This particular space has become foreign and unrecognizable to the adult Marlow for two reasons. No longer a naïve young reader of adventure tales, he is now an accomplished and somewhat cynical world traveler who has been, with a few now negligible exceptions, everywhere under the twentieth-century sun. Hence he is no longer able to dream over idyllic images of untrammelled white spaces. But there is of course a second reason for the shift: the spaces of Africa have, in the course of his life, been aggressively filled in by the various European powers who have pursued a renewed imperialist agenda during that time. The textual obliteration of Marlow’s Africa by the imposition of “rivers, and lakes, and names” upon the blank map nicely captures the ways in which New Imperialism attempted to dominate African geography both materially and rhetorically. Part of the reason, then, that Marlow feels African space to be so foreign and inexpressible is that it



is foreign—its geography has, in the course of his lifetime been fundamentally rewritten in the service of alien economic and political interests. As we shall see this ravenous reapportionment stands as the ironic fulfilment of many of New Imperialism's own worst fears.

As Hobsbawm has noted, in the years surrounding the publication of Conrad's novel it was the New Imperialism which dominated Africa, rhetorically as well as territorially. Keeping this in mind, then, I want to turn to some instances of New Imperialist rhetoric, for it is only in such a context that the specific nature of Conrad's response to the changing spaces of empire and of the globe can truly be measured. Cecil Rhodes's remarks on the disappearance of Africa reveal that Conrad's more global and more localized anxieties over diminishment and depletion participated in a wider discourse of broadly similar fears. As they responded to the same general set of preoccupations, New Imperialists like Rhodes were certainly far less nuanced in their approach than was Conrad. Their multiple and contradictory constructions of Africa did however help to position the continent as a particularly charged space within which Conrad could subsequently register his own reaction to globalization.

While Conrad and Marlow both mourned an Africa that was girt round with wires and fully integrated into global networks of exchange and communication, his contemporaries were not nearly so resistant to that image. Many advocates and practitioners of the New Imperialism took as their stated goal exactly such an assimilation. The success of that project would both regulate an unruly African landscape and vindicate Western European claims regarding, in the words of Marlow's aunt, its civilizing power to "wea[n] those ignorant millions from their horrid ways" (72). Henry Stanley's 1886 memoir *Incidents*

*of the Journey through the Dark Continent* is exemplary in this regard. Stanley was one of those many explorers from whom Conrad claimed to have received his earliest images of Africa, a line of influence which seems to also to have produced the title for Conrad's novel. Stanley's retrospect of his third expedition to the Congo is filled with triumphalist accounts of the subjugation of the African landscape:

For nearly six years we laboured at building of a State out of the immense heart of Africa, where we had endured so much [. . .]. It now has a regular Government and an Endowment Fund which furnishes a quarter million of dollars annually for the expenses of its administration. A flotilla of eight steamers navigates the waters of the Upper Congo regularly. There are about three hundred Europeans in Congo State at last accounts. A telegraphic cable lies across the mouth of the great river, and Europe is within twenty-four hours' communication of the State. The romance of the wild land is all gone, but instead we have something approaching to order and system and peaceful intercourse. (198)

While his words anticipate Conrad's nostalgia for an outmoded Africa, Stanley is quick to point out that this loss has been but a small price to pay in exchange for bringing the Congo tightly under European control. The basic trajectory of progress is hard to miss here. Stanley's governing presumption here is that Africa is a merely inert physical space that awaits the superimposition of a fully Western, and fully modern, geography. Harvey points to the philosophical and ideological import of such presumptions:

Social theory has always focussed on processes of social change, modernization and revolution [. . .]. Progress is its theoretical object, and historical time its primary dimension. Indeed, progress entails the conquest of space,

the tearing down of all spatial barriers, and the ultimate ‘annihilation of space through time.’ (205)

Harvey’s claims, clearly borne out in Stanley’s inflationary rhetoric, explain what motivates both the configuration of African space as inert and the fervour of its subsequent transformation. Stanley’s success in “modernizing” the Congo depends upon representing that space as something that is simply under the control of Europe and European self-interested notions of progress. Far from nostalgic, Stanley imagines an Africa fully remade in Europe’s own image and integrated into a far-flung network of commerce and exchange.

The most obvious signs of that integration lie in the image of the cable strung across the mouth of the Congo, which strangulates Africa and ties it irrevocably to the rest of the world. Conrad’s global wires are here recast as a now entirely positive sign of modernity and cultural homogeneity. The warships that penetrate and patrol the interior of the Congo are the more insidious guarantors of that forced assimilation even as they make obvious its novelty and fragility. Stanley is particularly proud of the ways in which his effort to reconfigure African space has enhanced its proximity to the rest of the world; henceforth London is within a mere day’s communication of the Congo. This is, of course, an enforced instance of Harvey’s “time-space compression” and further evidence of the fixation with the “tearing down of all spatial boundaries” upon which notions of progress often turn. Above all, this is a politically directed kind of compression, since one kind of proximity is valued over all others in that economic integration is not yet global, or even, continental, in scope. The collapsing of the distance between the Congo and Europe means that those two spaces are now in some ways closer together than two

coterminous colonial states which still remain unlinked by the common language of administration and commerce. The process has as its real effect something akin to the symbolic intentions of what Benedict Anderson calls the “jigsaw effect,” whereby “the imperial states color their colonies on maps with imperial dyes” which makes “each colony appear like a detachable piece of a jigsaw puzzle. As this ‘jigsaw effect’ became normal, each ‘piece’ could be wholly detached from its geographic context” (163).

Stanley’s yoking of the Congo to London is akin to this kind of geopolitical reconfiguration, in which two places, metropolis and colony, are painted with the same coloured brush and exposed to the same twentieth-century sun. While proximity is unabashedly lauded, it is conceived of in a wilfully incomplete and selective form.

Stanley measures his success in subjugating the spaces of the Congo in social as well as geographic terms. Now endowed with a European administration, telegraph, and a capital “G” Government and capital “S” State, the social spaces of this newly modern Congo have themselves been remapped, or, perhaps more accurately, mapped for the first time. Stanley’s attention to these sorts of details recalls Lefebvre’s reading of “social space” as that which is

indistinguishable from mental space [. . .] on the one hand, and physical space on the other [. . .]. [S]uch a social space is constituted neither by a collection of things or an aggregate of (sensory) data, nor by a void packed like a parcel with various contents, and that is irreducible to a ‘form’ imposed upon phenomena, upon things, upon physical materiality. (27)

Stanley’s reconfigured Congo is conceived very much as a space meant to be lived in, that looks to London for both its desired physical image and social order. In both of these

indistinguishable manifestations, this particular African space is successful to the degree that it conforms with the more distant locales with which it is integrated.

Following from Stanley's recognition of the possibility of an African social space comes, however, an associated anxiety that this particular locale might not be as easily contained and as seemingly inert as he has made it out to be. Indeed, Stanley's triumphalism gains its force from a necessarily prior depiction of Africa as a dark and threatening continent. The fears associated with this configuration are evident in his account of an earlier expedition to central Africa in 1874. Unlike his recollection of the third trip, this second account takes the form of a diary, a form whose temporal and geographic immediacy lends urgency and unpredictability to his responses to hostile and volatile surroundings. In numerous entries, Stanley alludes to the hardships which he has had to "endure" in Africa, ranging from frequent skirmishes with the natives to the "shrill weird cries of the lemur and gorilla" (Stanley and Neane, 150). For the writer/explorer, these are often mere hindrances that block him from the successful completion of his mission; for instance when natives appear "with shields and sticks," Stanley remarks on the incident as a merely bothersome attempt to "interrupt our descent" (149).

But this self-congratulatory rhetoric makes sense only in a context where Africa is imagined as a dangerous space: "Day and night we are pained with dreadful drumming which announces our arrival and their fears of our purposes. We have no interpreter and cannot make ourselves understood. Either bank is equally powerful, to go from one side to the other is like jumping from the frying pan into the fire. It may be truly said that we are now 'Running the gauntlet'" (155). Any self-awareness that is hinted at in Stanley's inkling of native fear is quickly forestalled by the clichéd image of his surroundings as a

kind of Scylla and Charybdis which can only be negotiated with the greatest of care. The strangulation of the mouth of the Congo by a telegraph wire thus stands as a response to the threat which that gauntlet seems to pose to those who would subjugate and assimilate its environs. And always implied in this threat is the danger that Stanley himself will succumb to the dreadful violence of the African native: "The boat led the way as usual, but I saw the natives so clearly, they presented such easy targets that a blind man might have shot a dozen, that I relented, thinking it a pity to shoot people who took no pains to conceal themselves" (178). Reasserting his still preserved pitying gentility, Stanley thus decides that this gauntlet is not quite strong enough to threaten his material well being or to compromise his moral strength. But the anxiety over just such a transformation is present throughout Stanley's narrative and is perhaps what motivates his desire to bring Africa to hand, to force its physical and social contours to conform to accepted Western, and soon-to-be-global, standards. If for Stanley, the goal is always closer integration and homogenization, there are frequent signs that that process remains as yet threateningly incomplete.

In Stanley's narrative, the optimistic vision of a tightly controlled and integrated African space predominates over the perils that attend that process. And even when they do surface, those dangers are mere obstacles to be negotiated on the road to global progress and integration. But sometimes, as Stanley's earlier diary suggests, the attempt to assimilate Africa fully into the putative modern world produces fears over another kind of integration, namely a moral regression that is familiarly cast as "going native." This process claims Conrad's Kurtz as one of its most famous examples. Conrad's depiction of Kurtz though is, as it turns out, much more nuanced than the broadly similar

representations of many of his contemporaries. For many New Imperialists, as anxious as they were to bring Africa closer into the orbit of Western Europe, increased proximity carried with it its own set of anxieties. Generally, these fears surfaced in narratives which cast African space as that which threatened to contaminate Europe and the world; such a threat necessitated exactly the kinds of containment strategies and imaginative geographies that Jameson identifies with Conrad himself.

In his unambiguously titled 1912 retrospective *Thinking Black: Twenty-two Years without a break in the long grass of Central Africa*, Daniel Crawford provided what is perhaps the most striking instance of a contaminating and porous African geography. While its title seems to position Africa as a site of segregation and entrapment, Crawford's narrative repeatedly situates Africa as a place that is frighteningly difficult to contain and isolate. Crawford's recollection of his initial contact with African geography sets the tone for all that will follow:

Even before sighting the African coast, and while still far out at sea, we saw the whole coming problem in another panoramic parable. This time it is a romantic river reading us a lesson, and by way of warning that the confluence of the Congo might soon be expected, here is our blue Atlantic painted a muddy brown eight miles out into the ocean. Parable, surely of the ugly fact we are soon to prove that evil African communications corrupt good European manners. (xv)

Here Africa and its inhabitants are cast as parable, as allegorical characters on an imaginative stage. Even the surrounding waters around Africa form part of a predictive and unchanging geography that warn of the dangers lurking within. Crawford's seascape is in fact a wholly aestheticized geography; the discoloured water, perhaps a veiled

reference to fears of racial miscegenation, appears “painted,” and the whole panorama should be read as a lesson. In his most lasting image, Crawford reveals that he is himself aware of this symbolic transformation of African geography:

There, in that monster mouth of the Congo, yawning seven miles wide, and vomiting its dirty contents into the blue Atlantic—there I say, you see the sad and symbolic story of decadence on the West Coast of Africa. For the fearful fact must be faced that all things European degenerate in Central Africa—European provisions go bad, European fruits, European dogs degenerate. So, too, European men and women. (xv)

Crawford provides an especially exaggerated example of familiar configurations of Africa as a geographic and non-social space which threatens to produce European degeneracy. Such regression threatens any self-satisfied notion of European progress, for which, as Stanley suggests, the African space is ironically so important.<sup>9</sup> Too Crawford again reads Africa as a homogeneous territory, as the physical contours of “West Africa,” the climactic features of “Central Africa,” and the moral contours of both all add up to the same thing: degeneracy.

In her study of postmodern space, Caren Kaplan argues that spatial metaphors such as these aim “to clarify or explain another set of meanings that are far less familiar or

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<sup>9</sup> Quite frequently, New Imperialist ideology, with its talk of a civilizing mission and rigid social hierarchies, looked to Darwinism and social Darwinism for much of its legitimation. In *Darwin's Plots*, Gillian Beer points to some of the reasons, both rhetorical and political, for the appeal of Darwinism. Beer argues that both *The Origin of the Species* and *The Descent of Man* rely upon a narrative aesthetic that reveals their affinity to literary works: “[T]he organization of *The Origin of the Species* seems to owe a great deal to the example of one of Darwin’s most frequently read authors, Charles Dickens, with its apparently unruly superfluity of material gradually and retrospectively revealing itself as order, its superfecundity of instance serving an argument which can reveal itself only *through* instance and relations” (8). Beer’s emphasis upon the imposition of narrative onto the natural world by both Darwin and his followers highlights the way in which fin-de-siecle England tended to authorize new imperialism through the appeal to teleological, positivist narratives. As Crawford reveals however, these narratives were not always as successful at effecting closure and containing rupture as they purported to be.



distinct” (145). Crawford’s symbolic seascape is in this regard not all that different from R. P. Blackmur’s invocation of a nameless archipelago in order to explain Ezra Pound’s Cantos. In both cases, a proper reading of a geographic frontier is the key to understanding and mitigating the threats that lurk inside. Caplan’s claim that such an “‘absolute space,’ marked by ‘fixity and inertness,’ becomes a given in critical discourses that utilize spatial metaphors” (145) is borne out in Crawford’s narrative, as he reduces Africa to the fixed status of an easy-to-interpret landscape painting in order to domesticate that space, even while he draws attention to its perils. If Africa is vaguely threatening for its homogeneity, then, its level of predictability is comforting; one can read the signs of decay and regression from the outset.

Crawford’s Africa is most dangerous then, not for its lack of internal difference, but for the ways in which it threatens to visit that homogenization on the rest of the world. Like Blackmur’s archipelago turned thoroughfare, Crawford’s African geography reveals anxieties over the decreasing differentiation of the world’s spaces. As the “monst[rous]” mouth of Africa, Crawford’s Congo inverts Marlow’s vision of Kurtz’s open mouth in *Heart of Darkness*: “I saw him open his mouth wide—it gave him a weirdly voracious aspect, as though he wanted to swallow all the air, all the earth, all the men before him” (128). While for Conrad, it was the decadent European who threatened to consume and assimilate African geography, here the threat is reversed in an image of Africa as an uncontainable space which releases its vile contents into the previously pristine space of the Atlantic through a mouth that is alarmingly porous. In such a context, Stanley’s triumph of the telegraph wire which now stretches across that same opening, speaks to a

desire to wire that mouth closed, and to subordinate its voice to the voices of the now more proximate London.

In his 1898 polemic, *The Control of the Tropics*, Benjamin Kidd spoke more directly to these same fears. While like Stanley before him, Kidd saw the subjugation of Africa as the sign of European cultural superiority, he took issue with the system of direct colonial administration because of its adverse effects upon the imperial official. “In the first place,” Kidd begins bluntly, “the attempt to acclimatize the white man in the tropics must be recognized to be a blunder of the first magnitude. All experiments based upon the idea are mere idle and empty enterprises foredoomed to failure” (48). Kidd is unequivocal in where he lays the blame for this failure; it is the African space, in both its geographic and social conditions, which precludes “acclimatization”:

We can not look for good government under such conditions; we have no right to expect it. In climatic conditions which are a burden to him; in the midst of races in a different and lower state of development; divorced from influences which have produced him, from the moral and political environment from which he sprang, the white man does not in the end, in such circumstances, tend so much to raise the level of the races amongst whom he has made his unnatural home, as he tends himself to sink slowly to the level around him. (48)

Here Kidd anticipates *Heart of Darkness* where, just one year later, Marlow lamented that in the Congo, “no warning voice of a kind neighbour can be heard whispering of public opinion” (115). Kidd also follows Crawford in the way that he warns of the dangers of getting too close, or worse, too immersed in Africa. But while Crawford’s subtitle connotes resigned isolation and decay, Kidd’s title, “The Control of the Tropics,”

implies that for all its threatening elements, tropical space can still be regulated and controlled. Indeed Kidd's proposed solution to the problem of direct imperial administration imagines a world in which Africa is loosely, but irrevocably tied to Europe.

No one can doubt that it is within the power of the leading European peoples of today—should they so desire—to parcel out the entire equatorial regions of the earth into a series of satrapies, and to administer their resources, not as in the past by a permanently resident population, but from the temperate regions, and under the direction of a relatively small European official population.

And this without any fear of effective resistance from the inhabitants. (51)

Kidd's solution to the problem of contamination reflects what Bongie sees as a New Imperialist re-characterization of the empire/colony relationship from one of "paternal despotism" to one of "enlightened paternalism" (273). A more indirect approach to colonial rule, and more importantly the rhetorical invocation of a less proximate empire/colony relationship, thus protects Victorian liberalism from charges of hypocrisy (277-8).

At the same time, though, Kidd's proposal constitutes a re-establishment of geographic distance which seriously curtails travel between the realms of ruler and ruled. Ironically, Kidd's idea can only work in the context of a "today" which has seen "the power of leading European peoples" such as Stanley facilitate other forms of commerce and exchange and thus bring the two domains into closer proximity with one another. Kidd's repeated insistence on the importance of securing colonial "resources" also reflects upon the larger sources of his anxieties in a context of ever increasing proximity

and exchange. Like Stanley, who lists London as the only place to which the Congo is now closer, Kidd's rhetoric reflects the designs of an era of colonial protectionism that led up to the First World War. As the networks of global connectivity and exchange, which imperialism itself helped to foster, threaten to elude full control and shatter existing bilateral, if unequal, trading patterns, proximity must be carefully managed with reference to what Harvey calls "the free flow of capital across the surface of the globe" (271). Part of Kidd's "control over the tropics" thus entails a carefully patrolled form of Anderson's jigsaw effect which insures that if the Congo has suddenly become much closer to London, it remains remote from Brussels, Berlin, and Paris and their own respective and competing empires. The freed up capital of a shrunken world begins by facilitating but ends by threatening the structures of imperialism which had helped to foster its circulation.

Kidd's attempt to mitigate proximity and to contain Africa cartographically is thus partly a response to the continent's stubborn refusal to stay in its place. In his famous 1905 study, *Imperialism*, J. A. Hobson expressed frustration in his attempt to map and subdivide Africa's various spaces. Hobson provides his readers with lists of territories identifying their date of acquisition, their area and population, and the nature of their "affiliation" with a particular European nation.<sup>10</sup> But in the end Hobson finds he can not stabilize the globe in the way that he would like. His efforts, he admits, "do not, however, profess strict accuracy [. . . and] 'rectification' of a fluid frontier is continually taking place; paper 'partitions' of spheres of influence or protection in Africa or Asia are

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<sup>10</sup> As Smith and Katz argue, such a reaction-formation is not hard to fathom; an insistence upon spatial tropes and their stability typically emanates from a "decentering and destabilization of previously fixed realities and assumptions," processes which leave space "largely exempted from such skeptical scrutiny"

often obscure, and in some cases the area and the population are highly speculative”

(15). Hobson’s fluid and paper boundaries anticipate Crawford’s much cruder representation of the mouth of the Congo, just as the rectification process, in which Hobson himself participates, constitutes an attempt to put Africa in its place. While his use of scare quotes around the words “rectification” and “partitions” lends his rhetoric a relatively rare kind of cultural self-awareness, Hobson’s effort at firm demarcation remains. If in an increased age of proximity, Africa was becoming too close to home, Hobson sought to clearly define its contours so as to keep it at bay. Such precision is very much in keeping with Michael Keith and Steve Pile’s recent claims for the rhetoric of geography in which “space can now be recognized as an active component of hegemonic power [. . .]. It tells you where you are and it puts you there” (37). For Hobson, amidst a rhetorical landscape in which here and there were becoming threateningly close to one another, a rigorous taxonomy of space was meant to mitigate the globally integrating effects of the disintegration and fluidity of Africa itself.

While New Imperialists like Crawford and Kidd worried over Africa in an age of global proximity, some of their contemporaries saw in Africa an especially salient instance of the recent diminishment of the world’s spaces. As noted by White and Hosbawm, feelings of a generally global depletion were voiced by many, including Lenin. In direct contrast to Lenin’s views on the subject, New Imperialist expressions of depletion were undoubtedly motivated at least as much by economic greed as they were by the sense that global space was fundamentally changing. For if African space could be imagined as running out, almost any imperial venture could be justified in the interests

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(80). For Smith and Katz, the putative fixity of space “provides coherence and order for an otherwise floating world of ideas” (80).

of securing that space. In 1899, Rhodes provided an especially blatant example of such naked self-interest. Rhodes revels in the fact that, as he sees it, England has undergone a kind of a paradigm shift so that geography of all sorts is now recognized as a limited commodity: “[A]ll thoughts of a little England are over [. . .]. The people have found out that England is small, and her trade is large, and they have also found out that other people are taking their share of the world and are enforcing hostile tariffs” (Vindex 642). Rhodes situates fears of African depletion within a wider context where all the spaces of the world are perceived as both smaller and more proximate than they once were. This connectivity is due to an increasingly complex network of trade which fosters both a reactionary protectionism and a resigned, though selective, openness to the world. In a world composed of limited shares, African space is seen as possibly the last compensation for a similarly diminished England. In this context then the “English people intend to retain every inch of land they have got, and perhaps sir, they intend to secure a few more inches” (643). Despite Rhodes’s overbearing tone, he rescales the world to the point where hundreds of miles have become mere inches, a sign both of anxieties over global contraction and of a cartographically oriented imagination. An Africa composed of inches and a “little England” are each the diminished and depleted corollary of the other.

By the time of this Boer War speech, Rhodes’s fears had been borne out in the minds of some. In an 1897 advertisement, Stanley’s sometime publisher, George Newnes, announced an upcoming speech by Stanley in London, in which his African adventures

were viewed with unabashed nostalgia.<sup>11</sup> In words which also anticipate Conrad, the advertisement opens:

AFRICA has always engaged a full share of the interest of the civilized world, and especially during the first half of the century now verging on its close; it was then regarded as a dark and mysterious continent, by far the largest portion of its interior being quite blank on the map of the world.

Now there is not much left of it that has not yielded up its secrets to enterprising explorers. The great valley of the Congo and its Tributaries, the Zambesi Valley, and the great Central Lakes, then equally unknown, are now as familiarly spoken of as Cape Town and Zanzibar. (200)

What was once exotic geography, the authors tell us, has now become mundane; Cape Town and Zanzibar, having long since passed into common parlance, are the touchstones by which more recently exotic places have also been familiarized and tamed. But around the same time, Hobson reflected much less romantically on African loss as he pointed out that “[n]o substantial settlement of Britons was taking place in 1905 upon any of the areas of the Empire acquired since 1870.” This arrested state of affairs was due to the simple fact that “[t]he tropical character of most lands acquired under the new Imperialism renders genuine colonisation impossible [. . .]. The new Empire was even more barren for settlement than for profitable trade” (45). Hobson’s remarks underline the futility of Rhodes’s designs upon a disappearing African expanse. For Hobson this impatience, like the nostalgia of the Newnes advertisement is completely understandable. The barren and wild African space has proven impossible to manage and has undermined

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<sup>11</sup> The advertisement is reprinted in Goontilleke’s edition of *Heart of Darkness* on pages 200-1.

European claims to cultural superiority, just as Stanley feared it might. That the “unclaimed” spaces that remain in Africa are hostile to development merely exacerbates anxieties over depletion and contraction; for men as various as Rhodes, Hobson, and Lenin, one need look no further than Africa for confirmation that the world’s spaces were in short supply and high demand.

These, then, are the predominant means by which Africa is managed under New Imperialist “representations of space.” To reiterate, for Lefebvre, such representations are synonymous with “conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers [. . .] all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived [. . .]. This is the dominant space in any society” (38-9). With its pretensions of quasi-scientism, and its service to the imperial state, the rhetoric of men like Stanley, Crawford, Kidd, and Rhodes produced African space as it dominated in Conrad’s society. For Stanley as for others, Africa presented a special opportunity to showcase the geographic integration made possible by recent technological and military advances. At the same time, Crawford and Kidd worried over the societal implications of an Africa made ever more proximate by those same advances and forces of worldwide contraction. And still others such as Rhodes saw in Africa the especially worrying signs of depletion that were in evidence everywhere upon the globe, up to and including the North Pole. However they conceived Africa, then, these explorers and polemicists conceived it according to the imperatives of a home-grown brand of imperialist ideology that both amplified and emanated from anxieties over a contracting world.



For Lefebvre, these kinds of representations of space identify “what is perceived with what is conceived” (39). In other words, they remap their own native preoccupations or desires onto a particular locale thereby subjugating it to an alien and “imaginative” geography. In contrast to this dominant and dominating mode of mapping, Lefebvre points to the subversive potential of what he calls “representational spaces.” This is “space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’ but also of some artists [. . .]. This is dominated—and hence passively experienced—space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate” (39). Though passivity and change seem strangely at odds here, Lefebvre’s identification of this less official, less alien, and more “lived” means of representing space with the work of artists bears upon the following reading of Conrad.<sup>12</sup> For while Conrad frequently invoked the rhetorical gestures common to New Imperialism, he sought to reorient and historicize their representations of Africa as informed by the emergence of nascent forms of globalization. If Conrad’s 1922 response to global contraction was steeped in nostalgia and vexation, so too in *Heart of Darkness* he lamented a world in which free space was now at a premium. But, in his reading of African and imperial geography, Conrad breaks from the generally reactionary or triumphant responses that alternatively characterized New Imperialist rhetoric. For Conrad, globalization was as inevitable as it was lamentable. In a modernizing world, its accelerating demands were both an extension and a complication of the hierarchical patterns of imperial exchange which themselves had helped foster larger, less discriminating patterns of contraction and

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<sup>12</sup> Many have pointed to Conrad’s lifelong affiliation with the “clandestine or underground side of social life” with which Lefebvre associates “representational spaces” (33). White claims that Conrad’s upbringing entailed a “sensitivity to oppressive autocracy and a profound scepticism about the idealism of social, and particularly nationalistic, movements” (182). Knowles sees Conrad’s distaste for such official efforts

depletion. Conrad's novel, then, offers not so much a rear-guard defense of imperialism and colonialism as it provides a close-up look at a process of transition whereby an emergent globalization begins to reorient and rewrite the existing patterns of imperial exchange.

In *Heart of Darkness*, then, imperialism is that which helps to usher in globalization in its early, crudest forms. At times that process seems to be further along than at others. The particulars of Marlow's employment in Africa have made especially manifest for him the complex and multilateral patterns of exchange and communication which comprise the modern world. Crucially, he works not in the service of any particular government, but instead for a kind of crude multinational company headquartered in Brussels. Incorporated as *Le Société Anonyme Belge pour la Commerce du Haut-Congo*, the company's name denotes the almost sourceless flow of capital associated with a more contemporary brand of globalization. According to Fernand Sylvain, such a title denotes "a juridical entity with social capital distinct and independent from its shareholders, which has as its object the marketing of products and/or services." As in any modern incorporated concern, "shareholders are not responsible for the debts of the corporation beyond what they have themselves invested" (67).<sup>13</sup> The money that backs Marlow then is highly impersonal, circulating freely across boundaries and "accountable" to no one individual or even, despite its name perhaps, one nation. As he will soon see, the anonymous character of the company's capital will be just as much in evidence upon the reaches of the Upper Congo as it is in Brussels.

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reflected in his "recurrent studies of refined idealism being corrupted and transformed into a fixed idea" (6).

<sup>13</sup> The translation is my own. The company name is appended in the Goontilleke edition of Conrad's novel and is drawn from Conrad's service in the employ of the Belgian company.

The means by which Marlow subsequently and swiftly travels to Africa reveals a similarly free-flowing system of international exchange. This Belgian trading company hires the English Marlow as a replacement for a Danish sailor named “Fresleven” (68) and sends him to the mouth of the Congo aboard a French ship. Once there, he transfers to a smaller vessel, captained by a Swede. When he reaches his final destination, he encounters Kurtz, “whose mother was half-English, his father was half-French. All Europe contributed to the making of Kurtz” (116). He also makes the acquaintance of Kurtz’s Russian acolyte who is in the employ of a “Dutch trading-house on the coast” (121). The world in which Marlow finds himself is thus very much like Conrad’s; as a sign of an emergent truly global age, it is “girt about” by manifold and intersecting, if still somewhat haphazard, lines of exchange. The Congo, as much as Europe itself, is a place where boundaries between nation-states are breaking down under the pressure of economic and migratory forces which will not be easily confined. Kurtz’s multicultural genealogy is as reflective of this new reality as the clothing worn by his Russian apprentice: “He looked like a harlequin. His clothes had been made of some stuff that was brown holland probably, but it was covered with patches all over, with bright patches, blue, red, yellow,—patches on the back, patches on the front, patches on elbows, patches on knees ” (119). With its imperial colour scheme, the harlequin’s outfit is reminiscent of the global map which Marlow has seen in his company’s Brussels office. But unlike that map, the harlequin’s outfit is seemingly devoid of ruled lines; it is instead an improvised piece of patchwork which nicely symbolizes the weaving together of informal multilateral alliances and patterns of exchange within the fabric of Marlow’s Africa. The kinds of integration, whether imposed or not, which he witnesses within

Africa, then, are in reference to something more, and something newer, than the world of “old empire.” Of course, they do reflect the reinforcement of a colonial network within the context of ever more frantic strains of New Imperialism, but at the same time, and even more ominously, they reveal the signs of that new global reality which Conrad could more easily grasp in 1922.

Confronted with these signs that the world of “old empire” was outmoded, Conrad did share in the worries of his contemporaries that African spaces were, paradoxically, contaminating, uncontrollable, and rapidly diminishing. As Marlow’s narrative of lost childhood innocence makes clear, Conrad, like many of his peers, viewed that development as the impossible-to-ignore sign of worldwide depletion. In places as diverse as Australia, Africa, and the North Pole, the evidence seemed to be in. And as the remoteness of these locales make clear, it was not just any kind of space that was disappearing; it was an exotic space, not yet assimilated and integrated into the global economy, that was under threat of extinction. Many readers have also noted that Conrad frequently depicts those increasingly more proximate locales as diseased and contaminated; along these lines, three recent studies in particular stand out. Todd Willy reveals that in eight separate stories “Conrad’s narrators explain suicides and suicidal thoughts as being the inevitable result of exposures to a contagious sociological condition, to that specific state which both Conrad and Durkheim labeled savagery” (190). Willy argues that, so positioned, Africa and the Far East threaten to expose the weakness of Western society in that “that widespread suicide by civilized people is an infallible symptom of their pathological degeneration” (190). In his reading of Victorian homophobia in *Heart of Darkness*, Donald Wilson draws upon Henry James and Eve

Sedgwick in claiming that “the jungles of Africa conceal their own ‘beast’—the ungovernable wilderness, wherein Marlow is forced to acknowledge the existence of ‘certain midnight dances ending with unspeakable rites’” (98-9). As the site that unlocks the “homosexual condition” and permits its transmission, Conrad’s Africa foregrounds “the triumph of the wilderness over civilization” (115), and thus overturns what Wilson calls the “normative narratives” of the Victorian middle class in favour of tales of “degeneracy” and “decay” (97). Similarly, Hunt Hawkins, while calling for a subtler reading of Conrad’s colonial spaces, points out that isolation in Africa, “while gratifying certain compelling needs, ultimately leads to psychological instability and disintegration” (73).

*Heart of Darkness* itself bears out many of these general claims; as Willy, Wilson, and Hawkins separately show, Conrad’s Africa is a porous and fluidic space which destabilizes other, more metaphoric, boundaries: those between civility and barbarism, between moral rectitude and cowardice, between life and death, and between acceptable and illicit forms of sexual activity. Like his New Imperialist contemporaries, then, Conrad worried not only over the depletion of the world’s spaces but also over the threat of contamination in a newly proximate globe. As Marlow represents the demise Kurtz, he provides an especially salient example of Hawkins’s general claim for a geographically specific kind of instability: “But the wilderness had found him out early and had taken on him a terrible vengeance for the fantastic invasion. I think it had whispered things about himself which he did not know, things of which he had no conception till he took counsel with this great solitude” (125). The African wilderness, as a threatening, non-social, space threatens to contaminate all who enter it, and bears

ultimate responsibility for the final downfall of the psychologically frail European figure. Along with men like Stanley and Kidd, Conrad implicitly indicted the advances in communication and transportation that had enabled contact with the remote spaces of the world, and which served to confirm European narratives of progress. For, ironically, those same advances also created the conditions for the contamination of Europe and its subsequent decline into degeneracy.

By virtue of its contaminating capacity, Africa is, in Conrad's novel, a space to be carefully regulated and patrolled. Hence, as Marlow attempts to convey the magnitude of that danger, his rhetoric becomes militaristic: "The great wall of vegetation, an exuberant and entangled mass of trunks, branches, leaves, boughs, festoons, motionless in the moonlight was like a riotous invasion of soundless life, a rolling wave of plants, piled up, crested, ready to topple over the creek, to sweep every little man of us out of his little existence" (93). Marlow's depiction of African geography as an inundating wave recalls Crawford's reading of the mouth of the Congo, though here the "soundless" landscape seems to be as impenetrable as it is penetrating. As he subsequently populates the landscape, however, Marlow subverts the familiar metaphor of invasiveness at the same time that he reverses conventional representations of Africa as the theatricalized other: "The high stillness confronted these two figures with its ominous patience, waiting for the passing away of a fantastic invasion" (97). In a departure from contemporary rhetoric, Marlow represents the two European figures as themselves the foreign agents of contamination, and it is they who now appear to be the mere stuff of fantasy. By remapping Africa as contaminated, rather than contaminating, Marlow signals that the lines of potentially poisonous exchange run in more than one direction around the

modern globe. But, in this second representation, as in the first, Africa is hardly any equivalent to the putatively normative lived social spaces back home; devoid of any native institutions, Marlow's Africa is merely soundless and still, a particularly passive kind of Said's imaginative geography.

Even to the degree that it is subversive, this representation of a contaminated Africa comes only after Marlow has himself entered into the continent, after he has been exposed to instances of geographical imposition worthy of Stanley himself. But, when he encounters the continent for the first time, his response is entirely predictable.

I watched the coast. Watching a coast as it slips by the ship is like thinking about an enigma. There it is before you—smiling, frowning, inviting, grand, mean, insipid or savage [. . .]. This one was almost featureless, as if still in the making, with an aspect of monotonous grimness. The edge of a colossal jungle, so-dark green as to be almost black, fringed with white surf, ran straight like a ruled line, far far away along a blue sea. (73)

While all geography is enigmatic to the foreign observer, the African landscape is especially so, for it is devoid of the “features” which delineate and anthropomorphize innumerable other vistas. But, this monotonous geography is of Marlow's making, a physicalized version of the many New Imperialist attempts to refine the continent out of existence. Marlow's anxiety over a contaminating African continent provokes a “simple line” geometric response worthy of Wilhelm Worringer's modern artist. While the colour of Crawford's miscegenated ocean may have changed, the desire for geographic abstraction remains just as strong, as does the attempt to rule the particularly unruly spaces within a newly connected globe.

For all Marlow's efforts at demarcation, his geographic encounter with Africa forces upon him the signs of economic integration, forced or otherwise, which are bringing the spaces of the world into increasing proximity. As he sails further along the African Coast which "every day [. . .] looked the same, as though we had not moved" he passes "various places—trading places—with names like Gran' Bassam, Little Popo; names that seemed to belong to some sordid farce acted in front of a sinister backcloth" (73). Following his earlier abstraction of African space, Marlow here enacts what Said sees as the central strategy of an Orientalist discourse which confines an entire region of the globe upon a "theatrical [. . .] stage" (*Orientalism* 63). Both Marlow's imaginative efforts manifest a desire to demarcate lines—geometrical, generic, architectural—which would separate one region of the globe from another. But the forces of economic integration which he is then witnessing preclude the success of any such reactionary endeavour.

There can be no doubt that the integration of Africa into a larger, if unequal, economic network is a forced process. Aboard the French ship, Marlow witnesses first-hand the efforts of Europe to extend its reach into all the blank spaces of Africa: "We pounded along, stopped, landed soldiers; went on, landed custom-house clerks to levy toll in what looked like a God-forsaken wilderness, with a tin shed and a flag-pole lost in it; landed more soldiers—to take care of the custom-house clerks, presumably" (73). Economic integration is here virtually synonymous with military subjugation as a sign of the cruder form under which globalization first emerged. Marlow's response to this kind of forced integration is one of denial and mystification. After witnessing a French war-ship shelling the continent, he comments:



It appears the French had one of their wars going on thereabouts. Her ensign dropped limp like a rag; the muzzles of the long six-inch guns stuck out all over the low hull; the greasy, slimy swell swung her up lazily and let her down, swaying her thin masts. In the empty immensity of earth, sky, and water, there she was, incomprehensible, firing into a continent. Pop, would go one of the six-inch guns; a small flame would dart and vanish, a little white smoke would disappear, a tiny projectile would give a feeble-screach—and nothing happened. (74)

Wilson is right to notice the language of “emasculatation” here, though he is perhaps a little too quick to read the passage as simply casting aspersions on French virility (102-3). More obviously, Marlow’s words condemn the general effort to penetrate the far-flung spaces of the globe as laughably impotent. But, in his initial refusal to witness the successful signs of that effort, as he repaints the landscape into a static image of “empty immensity” Marlow is quite clearly in denial regarding the changing face of the global landscape. The words “nothing happened” belie, in a very practical sense, everything that he has witnessed and will witness in the course of his narrative.

Once he has reached the Outer Station of the trading company for which he works, Marlow encounters more signs of a forced integration that threatens to shatter the world around him: “A horn tooted to the right, and I saw the black people run. A heavy and dull detonation shook the ground, a puff of smoke came out of the cliff, and that was all. No change appeared on the face of the rock. They were building a railway” (76). His subsequent vision of the workers’ “right angles” recalls his earlier vision of Africa as a “straight line,” and signals a sustained effort to abstract the discomfiting social space of

imperial Africa out of existence. But as anxious as he is to mystify and efface lines of connectivity, Marlow bears witness to global ties that as yet remain underground. As he gets closer to the multinational Kurtz, however, denial is not so easy. On his overland journey between the Outer and Inner Stations, Marlow observes a dizzying array of connectivity that is impossible to ignore: "Paths, paths, everywhere; a stamped-in network of paths spreading over the empty land, through burnt grass, through thickets, down and up chilly ravines, up and down stony hills ablaze with heat" (81). This network of connections is thus both multi-directional, and unstoppable; once it is "stamped-in," it becomes an intractable reality. Still, though, Marlow continues to make manifest the signs of his discomfort. "No use telling you much about that," he remarks in an attempt to forestall at least the acceptance of this new reality.

In the end, however, the reality and the effects of an alienating and enforced contraction of space are impossible to ignore. As he encounters a group of worn-out railway workers in a grove of trees at the Outer Station, Marlow reflects upon the realities of spatial compression which are both the cause and effect of their labour: "Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all the legality of time contracts, lost in uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient, and were then allowed to crawl away and rest" (78). Marlow here yearns for a pre-homogenized Africa just as Conrad will yearn for a pre-homogenized globe. If Africa is still as yet imaginable as differentiated geography, the homogeneous imposition of a foreign social space under the sign of an anonymous legality, combined with a newfound ease in traversing vast distances, makes that condition increasingly fragile. Marlow's subsequent contact with

the native sailors aboard his steamer reveals similar signs of the alienating effects of forced economic integration:

[T]hey had given them every week three pieces of brass wire, each about nine inches long; and the theory was they were to buy their provisions with that currency in river-side villages. You can see how *that* worked. There were either no villages or the people were hostile or the director [. . .] didn't want to stop the steamer for some more or less recondite reason. (106)

Under the new regime, the workers, imported from all regions of Africa, are entirely alienated from the effects of a labour whose exchange value is manifest in the entirely useless, if homogeneous, currency in which they are paid: "[U]nless they swallowed the wire itself, or made loops of it to snare the fishes with, I don't see what good their extravagant salary could be to them" (106). Like the railway's diminishment of distance and difference, the imposition of an arbitrary but harmonized, because substitutable, system of monetary exchange signals the penetration of a kind of primitive European economic union into the heart of Africa. Bequeathed upon the natives by a "they," whose anonymity reflects that of the Belgian company "down the river," this new system appears to be unstoppable, simply by virtue of its placeless origin: "As long as there was a piece of paper written over in accordance with some farcical law or other made down the river, it didn't enter anybody's head to trouble how they would live" (106). The sources of this system appear to be everywhere and nowhere at the same time; they are the product of a vague legal system attached to the complexly integrated network which is still down river but spreading fast over the landscape. Within the previously blank

spaces of central Africa, the signs of a complex integration on the order of Kurtz's interwoven genealogical lines are everywhere to be seen.

Marlow's experiences in Africa reveal the extent to which that penetration is, like Stanley's project at the mouth of the Congo, designed to effect exactly the kinds of homogenization and integration which he and Conrad both lament. His experience in the Brussels offices of his employers reveals the company's undifferentiated approach to managing the spaces of the world. Marlow describes his approach to the office as a journey through a depopulated urban space, a "narrow and deserted street in deep shadow, high houses, innumerable windows with venetian blinds, a dead silence, [. . .] immense double doors standing ponderously ajar" (69). Once inside, he witnesses the kind of careful regulation of space which will mark its approach to its colonial enterprise. In the company's outer office is exactly the type of "parceled out" map of Africa which Kidd imagines and which Anderson demystifies: "On one end a large map, marked with all the colours of a rainbow. There was a vast amount of red, [. . .] a deuce of a lot of blue, a little green, smears of orange, and, on the East Coast a purple patch" (69). This cartographic representation is the essence of Anderson's "jigsaw effect," where the colour-coded privileging of the empire/colony relationship violently rewrites African geography. Marlow's vision of the map as a "rainbow" reveals the ways in which that process is encoded as both natural and benevolent. In its privileged location on the end wall, the "large map" dominates the outer office in the same way that it purports to preside over colonial space.

His subsequent experience in Africa reveals the company's propensity to map out the distant spaces of empire as structurally analogous to those of the bureaucratic metropole.

Even the names of the company's outposts on the river—Outer Station, Central Station, Inner Station—reflect an attempt to model that space based upon their successful management of their similarly subdivided metropolitan headquarters. Once at the Outer Station, Marlow encounters the company's chief accountant whose "penholder behind his ear" (79) manifests the nakedly economic, rather than strictly territorial, interests of his employer. The economic orientation is further reflected in the company books in which the accountant makes "correct entries of perfectly correct transactions" (80). In keeping with his bureaucratic function, the accountant also attempts to enforce a rigid subdivision of space upon which successful economic penetration depends. On first meeting him, Marlow remarks, "he had come out for a moment, he said, 'to get a breath of fresh air.' The expression sounded wonderfully odd, with its suggestion of sedentary desk-life" (79). The expression sounds odd because it seeks to preserve both the spatial and temporal divisions of the metropolitan work world, a sense of inside and outside and of proscribed break periods that is more in keeping with a home office than a colonial outpost. If the "rest of the station was in muddle," the accountant attempts to bring order to "the chaos" by importing a European sense of interiority and exteriority. With its "high desk" behind which the accountant presides, the branch office replicates the spatial configuration of the head office in Brussels, in which the director similarly sits behind a "heavy writing-desk" (69).

Marlow's final image of the station reveals that that replication often carries violent effects. On leaving the accountant's office for the last time, Marlow takes note of its special place within the colonial landscape: "fifty feet below the doorstep I could see the still treetops of the grove of death" (80). That the accountant's office is elevated above

the resting place of the emaciated and abstracted physical labourers serves as a nice literalization of imperial power at the same time that it exposes its spatial dimension. Unlike Jameson's image of Lord Jim's geographically imposed "blindness," Marlow is able at once to see both the instruments of colonial power and the labour conditions upon which they almost literally rest. As it repeats the spatial dimensions of the home office, the accountant's hut thus translates the mere threat of power and domination into actual physical subordination and punishment.

The signs of a willed effort to remake one space in terms of another, to force an alien mode of managing space onto another territory, are frequent in Marlow's Africa. Arriving at the Central Station, he notes that the manager lives "all alone in a clay hut with a sort of verandah" (85). This hut perhaps stands as the successful transplantation of a Victorian residence into the African landscape and a concomitant attempt to preserve the divide between public and private. Conversely, Kurtz's own subjugation of space is even more nakedly violent than that of the accountant and thus goes much too far in its attempt to replicate the domestic space of the metropolis: "There was no enclosure or fence of any kind; but there had been one apparently, for near the house half a dozen slim posts remained in a row, roughly trimmed, and with their upper ends ornamented with round curved balls" (119). When he subsequently approaches the dilapidated enclosure, he quickly realizes that the fence is topped not by wooden balls, but by human skulls. Kurtz has thus gone to extreme lengths to import a homogenized domestic geography into Africa, obsessed with replicating the mediating space of the threshold whose importance is clear at both the company's head office and its liminal Central Station. Economic

integration of empire is thus accompanied by, and predicated upon, geographic homogenization.

As Harvey has shown, global capital is itself dependent for its successful transmission upon a similar process of reproducible spatial structures (296). Thus the forces of imperialism and globalization may be seen to be somewhat compatible, at least in the initial demands which they put upon space. But, as globalization is unleashed, as global integration accelerates and extends its homogenizing effect, it threatens to efface the kinds of borders and boundaries upon which imperialism, as a jigsaw effect of protected if unequal bilateral relationships, depends for its survival. It seems significant that Kurtz's attempt at reproducing the enclosures which permit and protect the flow of imperial capital has failed. In so failing, Kurtz foregrounds African geography as a series of porous spaces which had so threatened New Imperialists like Crawford and Kidd. Examples abound in the text of this inability to contain and confine. Kurtz's roof, like his one-time fence, is full of holes, the accountant's hut is "so badly put together that [. . .] he was barred from neck to heels with narrow strips of sunlight" (79), and the European interlopers of the Central Station remain only temporarily enclosed "inside a rotting fence" (85). The home of Kurtz's Russian acolyte similarly manifests a failed attempt at separating one space from another: "we came upon a hut of reeds, an inclined and melancholy pole, with the unrecognizable tatters of what had been a flag of some sort flying from it [. . .]. A torn curtain of red twill hung in the doorway of the hut, and flapped sadly in our faces. The dwelling was dismantled" (101-2). As a fragile boundary, the perforated curtain recalls the paper-thin and fluid boundaries which so

frustrated Hobson in his similar attempt to impose a foreign taxonomy upon the African landscape.

During his time at the Central Station, Marlow observes one particularly telling destruction of a colonial structure: “One evening a grass shed full of calico, cotton prints and beads, and I don’t know what else burst into a blaze so suddenly that you would have thought the earth had opened to let an avenging fire consume that trash” (85). Any effort to extinguish the blaze proves futile, he tells us: “You see the thing had gone off like a box of matches. It had been hopeless from the start.” Despite Marlow’s description of the materials inside as “trash,” the loss has a greater significance than he assumes. After all, the structure houses the colonial form of currency which the trading company is offering in exchange for the “precious ivory” of central Africa. In this image the crude instruments of colonialism’s commercial viability are destroyed along with its dominating structures. The fragile and unstable network of imperial exchange thus makes way for something that is more “stamped-in,” whose anonymity is not tied to one specific structure, and is thus impossible to locate. Once the spaces of empire become too undifferentiated and porous, the imperial project, symbolized too in the novel by Kurtz as its fallen emissary, begins to crumble and ignite.

Moreover, in a newly proximate globe, the process by which the colony is remapped in terms of metropolitan structures is one that is easily, and threateningly, reversible. Upon returning from the Congo, Marlow visits the Brussels home of Kurtz’s “Intended.” Standing outside her door, Marlow recalls Kurtz and imagines him destroying a world that has become so diminutive in the modern age that it is now fully consumable for the first time: “I had a vision of him on the stretcher, opening his mouth voraciously, as if to



devour all the earth” (143). Marlow’s vision of a consumed earth is notable for where and how he sees it; Kurtz’s consumptive exploits in deepest Africa are mapped onto the domestic structures of the metropole. The demands for closer economic and territorial integration fostered and necessitated by colonial expansion have produced a globe which can now be imagined to be extinguished. And demands for increased proximity and contraction have begun to produce some unsettling anxieties in the heart of the modern metropolis.

In a reversal that is entirely to be expected in a newly networked globe, the porous spaces of Africa thus visit that openness upon their relationship with the imperial center. Opening with representations of two capitals of empire—London and Brussels—the novel reflects the now “democratic” nature of global proximity. Marlow’s experiences in Africa have shown him that colonialism depends upon the reproduction and policing of what are the ironically closed spaces of its primary economic structures: the home office, the private domicile, the metropolis itself. As those structures begin to collapse under the pressures of a changing globe, this collapse threatens the imperial seat itself, in part because of the ease with which the distances between the two spaces are traversed. After Marlow returns from Africa to Brussels, a city street takes on the appearance of a “well-kept alley in a cemetery” (69), while Kurtz’s transplanted ghostly figure appears to “stare” out of a door panel of the Intended’s house. The house itself seems to Marlow to threaten to “collapse before I could escape” (148). Here the collapses of colony threaten to visit themselves upon the imperial metropolis, as the signs of a fully unleashed form of homogeneity and proximity. As the volume and rapidity of commercial exchange between a once firmly demarcated colony and metropole increase, due in part to advances

in communication and technology, the spaces of each threaten to collapse into one another. Globalization, originally cast as the facilitator of more efficient colonial management, is thus seen as that which threatens to shatter the hierarchical structure of that project.

Marlow himself recognizes the degree of this emergent bi-directional, even multi-directional, interdependence: "I had no difficulty in finding the Company's offices. It was the biggest thing in town and everybody I met was full of it. They were going to run an over-sea empire and make no end of coin by trade" (69). Marlow's ability to see the structures of colonialism within the metropole thus directly refutes Jameson's claim for modernism's inability to represent those spaces which he claims comprise its missing "fourth dimension" ("Modernism and Imperialism" 51). In a contracted globe, such invisibility, no matter the degree of political will which attempts to summon it, is unimaginable. Now technologically and economically integrated, all of the world's spaces are "full of" each other.

The same phenomenon holds true for metropolitan London in which the novel is initially set. That London and Brussels provide such mirror examples of each other is another sign of the interchangeability and homogeneity which Conrad and Marlow both lament. As it is represented by the novel's frame narrator, London's Thames is, like the Brussels offices of the trading company, a tightly controlled space. The anonymous narrator introduces us to the metropolitan/commercial setting by way of a pastorally inflected description: "The *Nellie*, a cruising yawl, swung to her anchor without a flutter of sails, and was at rest. The flood had made, the wind was nearly calm, and being bound down the river, the only thing for it was to come to and wait for the turn of the tide" (61).

Many of the narrator's opening remarks repeat this image of a fixed, static space in which all potential movement is arrested. "The sea and sky," he tells us, "were welded together without a joint," the "day was ending in a serenity of still and exquisite brilliance" and "the water shone pacifically" (62). This seems to be truly a place where "nothing happens," hardly recognizable, then, as the principal transportation hub of the largest empire on the face of the earth. Ironically, the frame narrator points out that this space had "served all the men of whom the nation were proud, from Sir Francis Drake to Sir John Franklin" (62), men who had themselves remapped, and in their own way compressed the globe. Now, though, in an age of much more rapid and volatile contraction, the frame narrator struggles to reconfigure London and the Thames as a wholly aestheticized geographic space that bears only national significance and permits the entrance of nothing new or foreign.

Of course, the frame narrator's attempts at containment are notoriously flawed. His attempt to manage and patrol textual space is doomed, shattered by Marlow's radical narrative detailing the unruliness of the colonial space. As Marlow interrupts the frame narrator, he forces upon his auditors a subversive reconfiguration of fin-de-siecle imperial and global geographies: "And this also [. . .] has been one of the dark places of the earth [. . .]. I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago" (63-4). Watts claims that Marlow conjures up here "a humiliating chronological perspective" (59), and while this is true we might see its subversive quality lying as well in its radical cartographic component. For Marlow's ironic act of "imaginative geography" dramatically repositions London's place on the imperial map; the seat of empire becomes the colonial periphery, as the meridian from which the globe

is surveyed shifts from Greenwich to Rome. Marlow's reconfiguration is in fact doubly ironic in the way that it looks backward in order to describe an emerging global reality. As networks of economic exchange and migratory patterns become more and more complex, global centers shade more easily into one another, and become like the Belgian company itself, more interchangeable and more homogeneous. That London can be at once colonial outpost and imperial center reveals the rapidity and unpredictability that characterizes a fully unleashed global economy which has begun to supersede the more hierarchical patterns of exchange which have facilitated and resisted it.

As my initial chapter has shown, modernism does not always recognize, or perhaps want to recognize, the signs of that emerging reality for what they are. Hence the response of Marlow and Conrad to the world's diminishment is often overshadowed, both for themselves and for their readers, by their related fixation upon the colonial systems of exchange whose accelerations and alterations are undoubtedly the surest and most troubling signs of globalization. Frequently too, in *Heart of Darkness*, depletion and contraction are experienced as shattering, an interpretive paradigm seemingly justified by the many broken structures of colony and empire which litter the novel's African landscape. Thus while Marlow eventually admits that he had feared Kurtz might "devour all the earth" (143), he initially figured the nature of Kurtz's perceived threat very differently: "he had kicked the very earth to pieces" (135). The tale's frame narrator, too, turns to strategies of obfuscation in order to block the signs of emergent globalization. After hearing Marlow's story, with its threats of contraction and depletion, the frame narrator reasserts the self-sufficiency of a closed-off, aestheticized, national geography, whose welds and lack of joints render it immune to global incursion and homogenization.

At the close of the novel, the narrator attempts to foreclose any long-range view which could either see into the future or survey a steadily contracting globe: “The offing was barred by a black bank of clouds, and the tranquil waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth flowed sombre under an overcast sky—seemed to lead into the heart of an impenetrable darkness” (148). Safely enclosed within an imaginative geography, the nameless narrator thus is able to reconstitute the globe as place of far-off, impenetrable spaces, despite all evidence to the contrary. Any anxiety over the “ends of the earth” is mitigated by the word “uttermost” in a special instance of what Ian Watt has called the novel’s “adjectival insistence” (11). With his attempt to reassert expanse, the frame narrator thus recalls the earlier efforts of Marlow to read Africa in terms of galactic space.

Conrad himself at times displaces and masks his anxiety over global contraction. His heavy investment in diminishing colonial spaces is both a displacement of a larger anxiety and the best means for him to prove his point. That Conrad’s early contacts with globalization came partly by way of New Imperialism’s own related fears of proximity and diminishment only served to complicate the connections between the interrelated sets of spatial anxieties. In this light, his nostalgia for an earlier form of empire becomes something more than reactionary and racist, and his indictment of domination and homogenization becomes something both more broad and less pointed than a pure critique of racism and imperialism. Instead, each comprises part of his attempt to chart, albeit mournfully, the implications and effects of an emergent form of globalization. In

1899, he could not recognize the trajectory of that indiscriminating and ubiquitous process as completely as he could more than two decades further on in the final years of his life.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DIARY OF A GLOBE TROTTER: LOCAL RESPONSES TO WORDLY ANXIETIES IN JAMES JOYCE'S *ULYSSES*

Finally, there are the number and rapidity of ways of communication and transportation. By suppressing or diminishing the gaps separating social segments, they increase the density of society [. . .]. If society, in concentrating, determines the development of the division of labor, the latter, in its turn, increases the concentration of society.

—Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (262)

I hear the ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry, and time one livid flame.

—James Joyce, *Ulysses* (20)

Considerations of space influenced their lordships' decision.

—James Joyce, *Ulysses* (271)

The last of these three observations comes courtesy of J. J. O'Molloy, one of the many denizens of Barney Kiernan's pub that serves as the setting for the "Cyclops" episode of *Ulysses*.<sup>1</sup> As cramped as that particular locale might be on this particular June day, O'Molloy's remark is not made in reference to the kind of "concentration" noted by Durkheim. Instead, O'Molloy is making a joke at the expense of Edward VII<sup>th</sup>, King of England and earl of Dublin, regarding the impossibility of representing all of "his satanic majesty's" paramours on a single wall mural due to "considerations of space." But O'Molloy's subversive put-down also inadvertently glosses what is one of the recurrent preoccupations of both this chapter and Joyce's novel as a whole. Throughout "Cyclops," the pub patrons repeatedly engage in considerations of spaces of all kinds—global, national, local, rural, and urban. No man is more "considerate" in this regard than

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<sup>1</sup> In what follows, I will for the sake of convenience frequently refer to the chapters of *Ulysses* by their now commonly accepted "episode titles." The titles were themselves provided by Joyce to Valery Larbaud in 1921 and later printed in full in Stuart Gilbert's *James Joyce's Ulysses*.

the chapter's nameless "citizen," whose predominant inclination is to read local developments in terms of global politics. For instance, when told of a recent rise in the local markets, he responds, "foreign wars is the cause of it" (243).

Given his extreme nationalist zeal, the citizen's recurrent concern over Ireland's place in the global economy, both past and present, is not surprising in itself. His brand of ideology is, after all, directed towards a stable and enclosed national space, and he regards the signs of global incursion with evident suspicion. Like many of Joseph Conrad's contemporaries, the citizen sees a shrunken globe as portending an assault of sorts upon the Irish house in which "we want no more strangers" (265). But his capacity and propensity to see the big picture is shared by others who lack his extreme zeal for territorial vigilance. The more benign Joe Hynes, for instance, as he agrees with the citizen's reading of global cause and local effect, adds the more specific claim that "It's the Russians wish to tyrannise" (243), referencing the Russo-Japanese war of 1904. Hynes then alludes to another far-off event in order to contextualize the local practices of British colonialism: "[I]f they're any worse than those Belgians in the Congo Free State they must be bad. Did you read that report by a man what's this his name is?" (274) If the citizen is worried over the signs of global diminishment, his anxieties are justified in Hynes's allusion to the Belgian Congo and to the Casement report in which Conrad himself had a hand.<sup>2</sup> The convergence of the texts of Conrad and Joyce upon one particular place underscores the reality of the global situation in 1904 as both authors depict it. Given the advances in transportation and communication that allow the pub

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<sup>2</sup> In his introduction to Conrad's novel, D.C.R.A. Goontilleke tells us that after returning from the Congo in 1890, Conrad met several times with Roger Casement, whose name the citizen recalls for O'Molloy. "Their mutual attempt to bring the horrors of imperialist excess to public light arose partly from their mutual correspondence with one another" (208-9).



patrons easy access to Conrad's Congo, the world is now a smaller place than it has ever been before.

In fact, it has become so small and so familiar that in the novel's "Ithaca" chapter, the impersonal narrator functions as a kind of global positioning system for the characters. Inquiring into the physical orientation of Leopold and Molly Bloom as they lie awake upon their bed, the catechistic narrator inquires "In what directions did listener and narrator lie?" to which the reply is given: "Listener, S. E. by E: Narrator, N.W. by W.: on the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel of latitude, N., and 6<sup>th</sup> meridian of longitude, W.: at an angle of 45° to the terrestrial equator" (606). The response here is extreme in its absurd reduction of the novel's central characters to mere coordinates on a planetary grid. It also suggests that local positioning is no longer sufficient in a world that is itself reduced. Thus, when the narrator subsequently inquires, "In what state of rest or motion?" the response is both local and global at the same time: "In rest relatively to themselves and to each other. In motion being each and both carried westward, forward and rereward respectively, by the proper motion of the earth through the tracks of neverchanging space" (606). If outer space is expansive, the same can not be said for the world that is confined within its orbital tracks. It is only really after the third question regarding the couple's disposition that the narrative responds with any sense of an appropriately personal space. When asked, "In what posture?" the narrator finally replies "Listener: reclined semi-laterally, left, left hand under head, right leg extended in a straight line and resting on left leg [. . .]. Narrator: reclined laterally, left, with right and left legs flexed, the indexfinger and thumb of the right hand resting on the bridge of the nose" (606). While it remains as impersonal as ever, the narrative does at least finally allow for some sense of intimacy, as it replaces

a planetary mapping system with a geography of human bodies. But as was the case with the citizen, the “Ithaca” narrator’s initial impulse is to look first to the global in order to orient the local and the intimate.

The effort to locate Leopold Bloom in global terms is an entirely appropriate one. “Ithaca” reveals that Bloom’s is a particularly expansive geographic imagination. As it is catalogued for us in that chapter, his bookshelf references a desire to see the world in imaginative terms at the very least. His collection includes “Ellis’s *Three Trips to Madagascar*, [. . .] “*Voyages in China* by ‘Viator’ [and . . .] Hozier’s *History of the Russo-Turkish War*” (582). As an oblique indicator of its reader’s romanticized self-image a fourth title, “*In the Track of the Sun*” (582), carries the telling sub-title “Diary of a Globe Trotter” (Gifford 72). Thus, Bloom’s global inclinations arise, no doubt necessarily, out of that particular moment in time when heroic adventurers, whom Conrad also mourns, no longer have a place to go. Despite his obvious yearning for exotic locales, there is a sense in which Bloom is, in his imagined persona, a less than glamorous adventurer. For him, the world is composed of a series of easily traversed guide-book-like hot-spots. That the promises of exoticism and difference held out by these books remain unfulfilled is hinted at by two additional titles on Bloom’s shelf: “*The Story of the Heavens* by Sir Robert Ball [and . . .] *A Handbook of Astronomy*” (582). These two books indicate both that the globe itself is no longer large enough for the wanderings of the modern day Ulysses and that even those galactic spaces are in the process of being domesticated into guide-book form. In such a context, the first volume on the bookshelf, “*Thom’s Dublin Post Office Directory* (1886),” seems hopelessly outdated in its effort to preserve a local geography free from incursion. The expanses and

expansiveness of Bloom's bibliography threaten to dominate the geographic imagination of readers for whom the far-off comes to overpower the immediate.

In what follows, I argue that Bloom's globally oriented imagination is an inevitable function of living in 1904 Dublin as Joyce represents it. In a conversation with Frank Budgen, Joyce had famously declared that he had set out in *Ulysses* "to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth, it could be reconstructed out of my book" (Budgen 67-8). While no one would dispute the novel's attention to urban detail, and to what Peter Barta calls the wanderings of the Dublin's resident "peripatetics" (48), a significant part of its local verisimilitude lies in its portrayal of the city's increasing immersion in global networks of exchange. As Bloom and O'Molloy, along with many others, traverse the confines of Dublin, they repeatedly confront the fact that the rest of the world is increasingly encroaching upon their city. That the first interpretive inclinations of these characters are expansive in scope is reflective of their shared citizenship in an ironically shrunken world. As a transitional space in all sorts of ways, 1904 Dublin served as a particularly profound register for the kinds of globalizing developments which made themselves felt upon its landscape. To follow Durkheim, both Dublin and the world display an increased "density" or "social concentration" that is, in part, the result of developments in transportation, communication, financial exchange, and the division of labour. This shift in which city parallels world is partly the result of global incursions into the local, but it is also the sign that, as a privileged imperial outpost and provincial center, Dublin was, even apart from the effects of global change, difficult to coordinate in its own right.

Gerry Smyth claims that from at least 1800 on “modern Irish nationalism was concerned as much with issues of space (ownership of land, landscape and identity, geography as destiny, exile, and so on) as with the temporal status of the nation” (58). Smyth’s comment thus goes a long way to explaining the extended consideration which characters like the citizen give to space and its vicissitudes. For Smyth a significant aspect of the emphasis on space lies in “the elevation of the country over the city as a signifier of Irishness” (196). In the context of Dublin’s integration into a global grid, it is in the rural areas of Ireland that the true Irish character is seen to reside and thrive. Barta nuances this view with a doubled sense of transition, claiming that within Ireland, “Dublin—an increasingly industrial city in an undeveloped rural Ireland with few large towns—was regarded as decidedly foreign” (49). As Dublin is plugged into international systems of exchange, so it seems increasingly alien to the rural Irish majority, so that signs of internal fracture within Ireland are difficult to separate from the impact of global change. Even to the extent that this is an indigenously oriented, or at least indigenously experienced, process of change, it is one which sees the transitions in regional and national conceptions of space read in terms of foreign incursion.

In Joyce’s novel *Stephen Hero*, Peter Maguire finds that this particular geographic imagination is legitimized by an educational system bent upon native Irish revivalism. In the classrooms of that novel, “young scholars, in an uncompromisingly urban setting, lear[n] the speech of rural Ireland from [. . .] textbooks” in ways that lend further credence to the notion of national bifurcation (Maguire 295). That the fractures now evident within Irish national space have some of their sources in global change is reflected in the spatial makeup of the classroom: “The Irish class which Stephen attended

was held in a very sparsely furnished room lit by a gasjet which had a broken globe” (*Stephen Hero* 65). Once again, then, the effects of unwanted international incursions into integration are experienced as a kind of global shattering.

In this instance though, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that regional and national changes were not solely, or perhaps even primarily, the result of a shattered globe; rather those more indigenous changes noted by Smyth and Barta provided Dublin’s citizens with a geographic sensitivity for the other, less internal, developments to which I shall attend shortly. For in this historical context especially, the Irish national space is itself transitional in a very specific way. Set in the era of British colonial Ireland of 1904, but published in 1922, the year in which the Irish Free State was proclaimed, *Ulysses* presents the story of a particular era when the Irish nation went from being one kind of space on the globe to another. Notably, the reasons for that change are largely, though not entirely, of Ireland and England’s own making. Speaking in 1921, the Irish nationalist Patrick Pearse pointed to independence as the solution to the nation’s ostensible demise and internal fractures. Freedom from imperial incursion, Pearse felt, would “quickly eradicate most of the ills and social divisions which had bedevilled Irish society throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (Bannon 133). In a fully independent Ireland, “the population will expand in a century to twenty millions. [. . .] [I]ts towns will be spacious and beautiful” (Bannon 133). For Pearse, 1922 heralds the arrival of an Ireland upon the global stage, an Ireland in which increased congestion is fully compatible with expansion and spaciousness. Conversely, Ireland’s colonial status and its susceptibility to imperial invasions of all sorts were seen to be barriers to all three.

In the process of freeing itself from the “Act of Union” of 1801, the modern Irish nation and its citizens had special reasons to be wary of incursion, though, as we shall see, some forms of integration were seen as preferable to others. Maguire points out that the national revivalist attempt to reclaim possession of Ireland took the form of what he calls a “*dindshenchas*,” a reactionary taxonomic system which both attested to, and attempted to arrest, the signs of geographic change with reference to a still nationally significant landscape:

[*D*]indshenchas [. . .] was a device much in vogue at the time of the Irish Literary Revival. Not only was it an authentic element of Irish poetry and folklore; it also reimbued the names of Ireland’s places with meanings redolent of the Gaelic past. Each mountain, stream, or village could, by means of *dindshenchas*, share in the identity of pre-Norman, Gaelic Ireland. Instead of the barbaric sounds arising from the Anglicization of place-names [. . .] each feature of the landscape was linguistically integrated into Ireland’s past, and into Ireland’s poetry.

Whereas place-names in English repeated and reinforced cultural amnesia, place-names in Irish evoked a rich seam of heroic and religious legends. What began as a literary or philological exercise quickly acquired a vast political importance. (308)

Maguire’s comments nicely capture part of what motivates Irish revivalists like the citizen of “Cyclops” in their fascination with pre-modern Irish cartography. The effort of national reinscription reveals just how invested many of Ireland’s residents were in the spaces around them as they marked the transition from colony to a still-not-quite-independent state, and as they sought to attest to Pearse’s claims for a new-found national

capaciousness and self-sufficiency. While the changes in national space took place in the context of a “broken” globe, they were more explicitly related to resisting an act of union that had hit much closer to home.

As Smyth and Barta point out, however, the changes in the national and regional spaces of Ireland can not be separated from related shifts within Dublin itself. In *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus hints at the impossibility of disconnecting one set of territorial developments from another. Situating himself in space, he writes the following sequence vertically, without the commas, in the flyleaf of his geography reader: “Stephen Dedalus, Class of Elements, Clongowes Wood College, Sallins, County Kildare, Ireland, Europe, The World, The Universe” (12). Stephen’s geographic imagination works in the exact opposite direction to that of the “Ithaca” narrator. Stephen begins with the intimate and the local before moving out to the larger expanses of continents and worlds. In his extended reading of the list of names, Jason Mezey draws our attention to the fact that it “exclud[es] The United Kingdom as an incorporating term” (336). Stephen thus “unwittingly produces a text that rends a gaping hole in the fabric of colonial history” (336). But as surely as it is a sign of occlusion, Stephen’s map also suggests that in a globalizing world, Mezey’s intermediary terms do not perhaps matter as much as they once did. Despite this oblique evidence for the shattering effect of global incursion, though, Stephen, in contrast to Bloom, does make clear the priority of the local for him; he can only get to “Europe, The World and The Universe,” through first negotiating his more immediate environs.

Indeed, Dublin’s status as a transitional city space constitutes the background against which we can understand the heightened consciousness of its citizenry surrounding larger

global trends and transformations. Again these more local and circumscribed shifts in urban space, visible in both the novel and the historical record, are the result of both internal and external pressures placed upon the emergent Irish national capital in an era of rapid transformation. If the nation is transforming in the years traversed by the novel's composition history, so too is Dublin itself. From 1904 to 1922, Dublin went from being the secondary imperial city to the capital of a not yet fully formed state. In a 1905 letter to his brother Stanislaus that is reprinted in Richard Ellmann's biography, Joyce inserted this transition itself into a much more expansive historical context, as he pointed out "that Dublin has been a capital for thousands of years, [and] that it is the 'second' city of the British Empire" (208).

Since he composed the novel during and immediately after the First World War which had so dramatically altered European political, economic, and material geography, Joyce had even more reason to imagine *Ulysses* as a kind of archaeological enterprise which might preserve Dublin should it forever "disappear" from the face of the earth.

Moreover, in the years surrounding the proclamation of the Free State, Ireland and Dublin were the sites of a more nationally specific corollary to that geographic upheaval. In particular, the Easter Uprising of 1916 threatened dramatically to rewrite urban landscape as its plotters sought to eradicate the material signs of British rule. As it happened, most of these efforts were concentrated on the general post office, the rebellion's "most potent monument [. . .] occupied by the rebels led by Patrick Pearse, and subsequently destroyed in the fighting that ensued" (Thacker 199). As Thacker points out, the choice of this particular site reflects the inability to ever separate urban geography from its national and colonial implications: "This building is, like Nelson's



pillar, another site redolent of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy, being completed ten years later, and in a similar neo-classical style to that of the pillar” (199). Nelson’s pillar is itself of course a further reminder of the immense political intent with which Irish geography is written and rewritten. Built in 1809, just eight years after the proclamation of the Act of Union which incorporated Ireland into the United Kingdom, the pillar was itself the frequent target of Irish national dissent. It was finally successfully destroyed in 1966 during the fiftieth-year anniversary celebrations of the Easter Uprising (Thacker 199).

In a rather lugubrious tone, Richard Kain adds even more substance to the picture as he recalls the destruction of the Four Courts buildings which had coincided with the publication of Joyce’s commemorative novel in 1922:

The English were about to return to police Ireland when the Provisional government attacked the Four Courts [. . .]. The General Post Office had been gutted in 1916, the classic Customs House had been fired in 1921 to paralyze English legal administration. Now the third, and most beautiful Dublin landmark was destroyed, as were large areas in the center of the city. For many years these monuments stood as gaping ruins, grim reminders of the pall of sorrow that hung over the country. (142-3)

All of these places figure prominently in Joyce’s novel, and their destruction underlines the importance of the “moment” the novel records, as the city systematically refashions itself, leaving intact the material signs of destruction to symbolize the emergence of a new political reality. As evidence of a dramatic shattering of urban geography, they also serve to sensitize city residents to the ways in which larger geographic vistas were

changing. As they arose from both indigenous and international imperatives, these local reconfigurations stood as powerful corollaries to the kinds of globally integrating developments of which they were also often an instance.

The efforts to redefine and to reconstellate Dublin's urban spaces in the years surrounding the publication of *Ulysses* were not always so violent as those enumerated above. As the novel was being written, efforts were underway to rename many of Dublin's most prominent streets and landmarks to reflect a sense of history that was Irish rather than colonial. Set back in time eighteen years, *Ulysses* retrieves some of the earlier usages for the sake of historical verisimilitude, while other names, unchanged as yet in 1922, point to the contingency of the novel itself and show how it is very much embedded in its own particular historical moment. Thus, by the time the novel is set, Essex Bridge over the Liffey has been renamed Grattan Bridge, and St. Patrick's Street has already been renamed Nassau Street, and hence both are called by their modern names in the novel. But three other locales, yet to be renamed by 1922, retain their British resonance: present-day O'Connell Street is still known as Sackville Street in both 1904 and 1922, Rutland Square, already renamed Parnell Square by 1922, correctly retains its earlier name in the novel, and Great Brunswick Street has, by 1922, yet to be renamed Pearse street after one of the heroes of 1916.<sup>3</sup> Thus some of the designations point to Joyce's deliberate attempt to present a historically accurate picture of Dublin, while others emphasize the fleetingness of even his encyclopedic efforts. This composite allusion to an always inevitable geographic transience is undoubtedly itself part of

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<sup>3</sup> For these cartographic cross references I am indebted to D. A. Chart's *The Story of Dublin*, Gifford's *Annotations*, various maps of the city of Dublin today, and of course *Ulysses* itself.

Joyce's effort to record all of the complexities of this particular historical moment as accurately as possible.

The fixation upon urban nomenclature further situates Joyce's Dublin as a city in the midst of a remarkable state of transition. As Maguire has pointed out, place names are often one of the most favoured means of manifesting and commemorating this shift. The efforts to remap Dublin's urban spaces and to replace Anglo-centric names with the names of Irish patriots, many of them very recent ones, thus reflect an application of *dindshenchas* to a modern context, in that it is an attempt to replace foreign sounding names with domestic ones, and thus to foster an insistently indigenous and local sense of geography. As a case in point, in its original guise the name "Great Brunswick Street" points to the foreign domination of Irish geography, Brunswick being the English name for the German house from which Queen Victoria was descended (Gifford 328). The post-1922 renaming of Great Brunswick as "Pearse Street" both commemorates the Irish patriot and attaches a local significance to urban geography, since Pearse was born in a house on the street which would later bear his name. As part of its transition to national capital, then, Dublin's shifting geographic nomenclature reflects an attempt to fend off the foreign and the far-off and to replace it with a sense of the local and the indigenous.

Of course, with its excision of specifically English names, this kind of *dindshenchas* targets a specifically colonial form of incursion. As the citizen's enumeration of Irish heroes in the "Cyclops" episode grows to include such figures as "Napolean Bonaparte, [. . .] Ludwig Beethoven, [and . . .] the Queen of Sheba" (244) it suggests that some forms of incursion, are viewed with much more equanimity than others. The inclusion of such names alongside the more familiar Irish nomenclature of "Cuchulin, [. . .] Brian of

Kincora, [and . . .] Patrick Sarsfield” (244), suggests that incursion in its own right is not always viewed as a problem. In fact, the integration of Dublin and Ireland into a more globally diffuse network of names and places may well present one solution to the Act of Union from which the city and nation are currently trying to extract themselves.

Finally, Dublin’s transition must be measured in other than simply political terms. Economically, geographically, even demographically the city was rapidly changing in the years leading up to the composition and publication of Joyce’s novel. In her tellingly titled essay, “A Tale of Two Cities: 1860-1920,” Mary Daly paints a picture of a city that was in serious decline by 1904: “In the half century before independence, therefore, Dublin ceased to be a major city in either British or European terms, while she continued to lack the presence of an Irish parliament which had been a focal point in previous centuries” (113). Daly goes on to chronicle many of the other reasons for Dublin’s inexorable downward slide, its “failure, with very limited exceptions, to become a modern Industrial city” (113). In a confirmation of Pearse’s fears, the overall picture that emerges is that of a city that is not only backsliding, but also seriously divided between rich and poor, young and old, and city and suburb: “While the population of the city actually fell between the years 1851 and 1891, the population of suburbs to the south of the city such as Rathmines and Pembroke rose sharply” (118). Daly thus confirms the views of Pearse and many others that both Dublin and Ireland are sites in transformation, much of which has to do with the changing realities of the nation’s colonial status in the years surrounding the composition and publication of Joyce’s novel.

True to Joyce’s intentions, readers of *Ulysses* have certainly noticed its accuracy in recording this highly fraught moment in the history of both urban and national space in

Ireland. Morton Levitt cites the most familiar version of the argument: “Joyce chose Dublin as his setting, we are told, because it was large enough to serve as model of the modern metropolis yet not too large to prevent the crossings and recrossings, the personal connections and missed connections which make up so much of his view of urban life at the beginning of this century” (386). Undoubtedly, one of the people Levitt is thinking of here is Fredric Jameson, who, true to form, historicizes the city’s transition by paying close attention to both its colonial and economic contexts. In “‘Ulysses’ in History,” Jameson writes that Joyce’s Dublin “is not exactly the full-blown capitalist metropolis, but like the Paris of Flaubert, still regressive, still un- or under-developed enough to be representable, thanks to the domination of its foreign masters” (135). Because, Jameson argues, Dublin is arrested in its development, it is a city still poised on the bridge between two economic modes of production, and its “compact size anachronistically permits the now archaic life of the older city-state” (“Modernism and Imperialism” 61). Jameson thus quite correctly points out that Dublin’s changing status is not solely due to the influence of all the indigenous factors enumerated here. Instead, the city and the nation’s historical transformation must also be seen as a function of its position within not only a colonial system presided over by English “foreign masters” but also the more anonymous networks of economic exchange which were, in 1922, taking its place.

The signs of economic and political transition are everywhere in the city. For instance, in “Hades,” as Bloom and his fellow mourners travels to Paddy Dignam’s funeral in Prospect cemetery, their carriage is forced to make two stops. They are blocked first by construction workers who are laying railway track, but the second stoppage occurs in order to allow a herd of cattle to pass. The construction work is no doubt a fact of life in

a city whose tramway system “in 1904 was regarded as the most efficient and ‘modern’ in Europe” (Gifford 128-9). But the presence of cattle in the street reveals that, as Jameson claims, the city is still very much a provincial center, still very much immersed in an agrarian centered economy. Bloom’s proposed solution to the problem forces us to see 1904 Dublin as experiencing a kind of historical overlap which will soon be effaced: “I can’t make out why the corporation doesn’t run a tramline from the parkgate down to the quays [. . .]. All those animals could be taken down in trucks to the boats” (81). Bloom’s proposal, if implemented, would submerge one pattern of land-use and emphasize the other; the efficiency of the modern transportation network hides, at least partially, the signs of Dublin’s still provincial status.

The novel as whole presents us with a kind of liminal geography, as many of its characters wander in and out of the “compact” city into its less well-defined peripheral areas. Along with Bloom and Stephen, individuals such as Father Conmee, Lynch, and Buck Mulligan travel back and forth among city, suburb and village in a demonstration of the hard to define space in which the novel is set. Given the novel’s mixed geography, Smyth’s assertion that “Joyce champion[s] the city” is somewhat off the mark. It seems safer to say that Joyce presents a “city” whose spaces are somewhat hard to define; if they are not by any means rural, then they are certainly not yet fully urban either.

The city’s status as both within and without the modern world is made especially evident in two incidents in *Ulysses*. The first concerns the running of the Gold Cup, a horse race to be run on June 16<sup>th</sup> on the outskirts of London at 3:08 Greenwich Mean Time (Gifford 98). In 1904, Dublin time was twenty-five minutes behind that of London; this means that the race is to begin at 2:43 Dublin time. As the day unfolds in the course

of the novel, many of the characters exchange tips on the horses speculating right up to the time of the race, and even beyond, over the probable winner. In “Wandering Rocks,” Lenehan and McCoy discuss the race as they wait until the last possible moment to make a wager with the local book-makers:

—This way, he said, pointing to the right. I want to pop into Lynam’s to see

Sceptre’s starting price. What’s the time by your gold watch and chain?

McCoy peered into Marcus Tertius Moses’ sombre office, then at O’Neill’s clock.

—After three, he said. Who’s riding her? (191-2)

As Gifford and others have pointed out, if it is after three-o’clock, the race has already been run and the winner decided. However, “the news, which was to come by telegraph, was not due to reach Dublin until 4:00, so Dublin bookmakers would still take bets at 3:00” (Gifford 270). The fact of the delay is confirmed for us by Blazes Boylan’s inquiry in the subsequent “Sirens” chapter: “Where’s your cry? Glass of bitter? Glass of bitter, please, and a sloegin for me. Wire in yet?” The chapter’s playful narrator then reports the barmaid’s response: “Not yet. At four she. Who said four?” (218). Distance and delay are thus still a fact of life for Boylan and his fellow bettors. If Dublin has been integrated into external networks of exchange, if the distant has begun to penetrate the local, this process is as yet incomplete, and Dublin remains, in more ways than one, the “second city of the British empire.” London is both tantalizingly close and frustratingly remote, while Dublin stands as both center and periphery at this particular historical juncture.

As the city becomes increasingly a national center and recedes as a colonial periphery, its geographic markers themselves begin to shift in signification. One particular instance

of this shift helps to attune Dubliners to a corresponding transformation that is occurring around the world. As Thacker has noted, one of the most salient instances of an imperial incursion into Irish urban/colonial space is Nelson's pillar which Bloom and so many others pass and re-pass in the course of the day. The monument, he tells us, was erected in 1809 both as a menacing symbol of British power on the high seas and as an "image of Irish union and loyalty with Britain" (198). In its original design the pillar "formed an impression of the city [. . .] as being under surveillance" (199). In 1904, as it continues to dwarf the surrounding buildings, not to mention the individual colonial subject, the statue stands as an unforgettable reminder of imperial power and its ability to intrude at will into provincial space. But in "Aeolus," Stephen tells a story to the editor of the *Freeman's Journal* which cleverly reinscribes the pillar as a tourist space and trivializes its surveillance function. In what Stephen calls, "The Parable of the Plums," two Dublin spinsters "want to see the views of Dublin from the top of Nelson's pillar" (119). On their way to the pillar, "they buy one and fourpenceworth of brawn and four slices of panloaf [. . .]. They purchase four and twenty plums from a girl at the foot of Nelson's pillar to take the thirst off the brawn." They then give "two three-penny bits to the gentleman at the turnstile and being to waddle slowly up the winding staircase" (119). The picnic-like atmosphere and the very presence of an entry fee and a turnstile testify to the tower's newest incarnation as a modern tourist site. And this is, of course, exactly how the women treat it. Reacting with unease to the sexual connotations of Stephen's tale, the editor warns him, "Easy [. . .]. No poetic license. We're in the archdiocese here" (121). But the story's threat lies as much in its trivializing of this particularly charged public space as it does in its licentiousness. It presents an image of an urban space whose



ideological function seems on the verge of being converted into the drawing power of a tourist site. Indeed, the words of an early twentieth century guidebook reveals that Stephen is not alone in his geographic conversion: “While the city is well supplied with memorials of those Irishmen whom their country has delighted to honour, the most visible monument here as in London is that of the great English admiral whose name is a passport to the enthusiastic admiration of all English-speaking peoples” (Fitzpatrick 298). If Conrad had to look to the North Pole for an instance of less heroic adventure, the signs of that loss are rarely out of Stephen’s line of sight.

But the reality of living in 1904 Dublin is such that the relationship between local and global geographic change is more than just one of analogy. Throughout Joyce’s novel, characters are continually confronting the fact that it is not just their city that is changing, but the rest of the world as well. Like many places in Dublin, global space is becoming increasingly congested, depleted, and homogeneous. Moreover, part of what is changing about the rest of world is its relationship to the local. The redefined relationship between near and far is the most troubling, and sometimes the most liberating, implication of living in a now diminished world. For Garrett Deasy, the headmaster at the school where Stephen teaches, increased proximity brings both economic potential and fears of contamination. In “Nestor,” Deasy shows Stephen a letter to the editor of the *Freeman’s Journal* railing against a threatened British embargo on Irish cattle infected with foot and mouth disease. The letter’s obsequious opening words, “May I trespass on your valuable space?” are cleverly ironic given Deasy’s argument that both quarantines and similarly conceived English prohibitions on Irish trade imperil Ireland’s place in an emergent modern European, and even global, economy (27). Deasy’s effort to quell fears of a

world-wide outbreak of the epidemic entails a recognition of the anxieties that attend international trade in an especially communicable age. Deasy also recognizes that he is battling a long entrenched propensity to see national and regional spaces as something into which contaminants must not be allowed to trespass. And yet, despite these fears, Deasy argues that the benefits of world-wide exchange far outweigh its risks. Indeed, international exchange is seen as the solution to its own attendant perils: “My cousin, Blackwood Price, writes to me it is regularly treated and cured in Austria by cattledoctors there. They offer to come over here” (27). And Deasy’s desire for Ireland’s increased global presence is, in his mind entirely compatible with his love for the Britain and its empire on which, Stephen reminds him, “the sun never sets” (25). Indeed, in light of Deasy’s fears that “Old England is dying” (28), an increased global integration might be just the thing to take the place of an earlier union that is now, albeit lamentably, outmoded.

Like Stephen, Bloom very early in his day comes face to face with the fact of global incursion. On a quick errand to get a pork kidney, he encounters several local landmarks in quick succession: St. George’s church, Larry O’Rourke’s grocery, Saint Joseph’s National School, and Dlugacz’s butcher shop. True to Joyce’s vision, this kind of quotidian urban detail is one of the features for which the novel is famous. And on his return home, Bloom sees more of the same: a wine store, a house for sale, an acquaintance whose name he has forgotten. But, in addition to all of these he “sees” something else, something slightly more exotic:

He walked back along Dorset street, reading gravely. Agendath Netaim: planters’ company. To purchase waste sandy tracts from Turkish government

and plant with eucalyptus trees. Excellent for shade, fuel and construction.

Orangegroves and immense melonfields north of Jaffa. You pay eighty marks and they plant a dunam of land for you with olives, oranges, almonds and citrons [. . .]. Your name entered for life as owner in the book of the union. Can pay ten down and the balance in yearly instalments. Bleibtreustrasse 34, Berlin, W. 15. (49)

What Bloom sees as he walks home along Dorset street is a newspaper advertisement for a German company seeking investors for a planting scheme in what was, in 1904, the province of Palestine in the Ottoman Empire.

In his examination of advertising in Joyce's fiction, Garry Leonard writes that "the first objective of the perfect advertisement is to draw the consumer's attention to the particular product as something distinct from its environment [. . .] so that the consumer sees the product as possessing a radiant quality impossible to find or even imagine elsewhere" (2-3). The foreign place-names, the German concatenations, the allure of far-off locales—all of these make such a differentiation particularly easy here amid the mundane details of Bloom's everyday perambulations. Being an ad-man himself, he is almost immediately transported: "Nothing doing. Still an idea behind it. He looked at the cattle, blurred in silver heat. Silverpowdered olivetrees. Quiet long days: pruning, ripening" (49). That the ad works so well on Bloom is due in large part to his already noted expansive geographic imagination. "Globe Trotter" is indeed an appropriate enough epithet for Bloom who wanders the exotic locales of the world even as he wanders Dublin's streets.

But the side-by-side coexistence of the exotic and the quotidian which Bloom witnesses on his morning walk is, like that of the books arrayed on his library shelf, also part of the advertisement's appeal and effect. As Leonard goes on to point out, while a successful advertisement must hype the exotic element, it must not go too far in this regard because the "commodity" in question must be "at the same time available to everyone" (23). Again the Agendath ad is successful in this capacity as Bloom's reverie of far-off lands is cut short by a very ordinary association he makes with olives: "Olives are packed in jars eh? I have a few left from Andrews. Molly spitting them out" (49). Very quickly, Bloom is back in the land of the quotidian, of his wife spitting out olives purchased at a local shop. Too, the actual origin of Bloom's imagined exotic journey could not be more mundane, for the advertisement is found on the pages of the daily newspaper in which his pork kidney has been wrapped by the butcher. Bloom's experience walking down Dorset street thus bears witness to the penetration of the far-off into the realm of the "daily." It also reveals the extent to which the far-off has been placed, by virtue of that integration, into familiar domestic containers.

Just as importantly, it is a specific sense of exotic space as depleted which has been imported into Bloom's daily routine. For the land to which the advertisement alludes and to which Bloom is momentarily transported is a highly contested one. In 1904, Palestine was still a province in the Ottoman Empire, but during World War I and the years in which Joyce was writing and rewriting the novel, its status was in flux. By the time *Ulysses* was published in 1922, Palestine had become a protectorate of the British Empire.<sup>4</sup> During the war, in order to gain the support of Arab nationalists, Britain had

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<sup>4</sup> For an extensive account of the issue, see M. E. Yapp's *The Near East Since the First World War*, and Philip Jones's *Britain in Palestine, 1914-1948*. In what follows, I refer to the area as "Palestine," not as a

promised Arab nationalists control over the region once the Ottomans were defeated. However, under the terms of the Sykes-Picot agreement, concluded secretly with the French government in 1916, that autonomy was not to be extended to Palestine, which was to be placed under “international” control.<sup>5</sup> The British government subsequently issued the Balfour Declaration of 1917 in which it “viewed with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”<sup>6</sup> Together, the two sets of promises configured Palestine as a highly contested space, or, in Leonard’s terms, as a commodity in short supply and high demand.

Given how events in the Middle East have unfolded in the years since 1922, Joyce could hardly have chosen a more apt location to make his point that all too often there is not enough space on the globe to go around. Even in 1904, the same connotation would not be entirely lost on Bloom, who as a Jew living in Dublin, is hyper-sensitive to questions of belonging and of homelands. In his study of *Ulysses* and Jewish identity Neil Davison argues that Bloom suffers from an “identity crisis” of which he and the reader are always aware: “It is Bloom’s struggle for a viable Jewish identity in Christian/nationalist Dublin that forms the core of ‘the story’” (185). If Bloom consistently “struggles with his own Jewish identity” (11), he would surely not be unaware of a similar struggle for control over the Jewish homeland, which, as Philip Jones tells us was very much in the public eye even well before 1904 (23). Moreover, as Davison points out, the advertisement in question is intended partly as an appeal to

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matter of political preference, but simply in keeping with cartographic conventions of the period in question. Interestingly, Palestine’s ambiguous and highly-charged post-war status as both British protectorate and “homeland” to both Palestinian Arabs and Jewish Israelis constitutes another in the series of links the novel makes between Ireland and Israel.

<sup>5</sup> The entire Sykes-Picot agreement is available on-line at the World War I Document Archive at <<http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1916/sykespicot.html>>.

Zionists, with its promise that buyers will secure permanent ownership of Palestinian land (145). The promise of security and permanence constitutes a large part of the appeal of this particular enterprise: “Your name entered for life as owner in the book of union” (49). In a world whose spaces are diminishing in supply, it is crucial that ownership of land—no matter how small—be legally recorded. If during his morning walk through his local neighbourhood, Bloom is suddenly and temporarily transported to an exotic, far away space, it is with the sense that such spaces are both rapidly disappearing and hotly contested. The rapid transformation of associations which this particular space carries for Bloom is thus reflective of a global reality. The initial connotations which it carries as a desirable far-off blank space into which the imperiled modern citizen can escape are quickly effaced by the signs of its domestication and depletion. The speed with which this vision is integrated into his typical stream-of-consciousness thought process testifies again to the degree to which the distant and the far-off have permeated the local and quotidian.

Bloom’s early experience with global incursion and diminishment helps to explain his anxieties over space at a much later point this same day, when he sits on the beach lusting after Gerty MacDowell. After she departs from the scene in “Nausicaa,” he thinks he might “[w]rite a message for her.” Taking up a “bit of stick,” Bloom first inscribes “I” into the sand and then “AM” and “A.” (312). At this point, he realizes the exercise is in vain: “No room. Let it go. Mr. Bloom effaced the letters with his slow boot” (312). The extended passage is, of course, a fairly obvious comment upon both Gerty and Bloom’s frustrated sexuality, Bloom’s bit of stick being hardly up to the task at hand. But even at

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<sup>6</sup> The Balfour Declaration and accompanying documents can be viewed on-line at the World War I Document Archive at <<http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1917/balfour.html>>.

this very personal moment, the words “no room” suggest that Bloom’s anxieties have another, much less intimate, register. Immediately after his writing failure, he allays his fears of depletion as he notices that the seascape in front of him is comfortably capacious: “No fear of big vessels coming up here. Only Guinness’s barges” (312). Alone on the beach, Bloom has removed himself from the world of international commerce and exchange; only local shipping traffic frequents the area, in a scene which must seem like a throwback to an earlier era. To underscore his point, Bloom reflects upon the slow-pace of the barge and contrasts it favourably to the advances which have diminished global space: “Around the Kish in eighty days.” The allusion, of course, is to Jules Verne’s novel, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, published in 1873. If Verne’s novel had testified to the newfound speed with which the world’s spaces could be traversed, Bloom’s parodic vision of the slow moving barge returns us, once again, to a purely imaginary “simpler” time when it would only be possible to traverse the “Kish,” a bank of rock just two miles from Dublin harbour, in eighty days (Gifford 57). Bloom’s response to their being no space for his message is thus bound up with his earlier confrontation with the fact of global depletion. Isolated on the beach he takes refuge from the modern advances which have diminished the earth and increased global proximity. But the allusion also works ironically to reinforce fears over contraction and depletion. By substituting “Kish” for “world,” Bloom suggests that the globe has in fact shrunk to the size of something that he can now hold entirely within his line of sight. His recollection of Verne’s novel as an artifact from an age gone by presses upon him the fact that the days of such a leisured traversal of global geography are now firmly in the past.

Bloom is of course not alone in his exposure to the signs and effects of global encroachment. But few of his contemporaries reflect on it in quite the same way that he does, suggesting that they may in fact have already become somewhat desensitized to it. For instance, during the “Aeolus” episode, which takes place in the offices of the *Freeman’s Journal*, Professor MacHugh and O’Molloy poke fun at the appearance of Stephen and O’Madden Burke. In the process, they reveal that the technological advances which have made modern journalism possible have telescoped time and space:

The professor, returning by way of the files, swept his hand across Stephen’s and Mr. O’Madden Burke’s loose ties.

—Paris, past and present, he said. You look like communards.

—Like fellows who had blown up the Bastille, J. J. O’Molloy said in quiet mockery. Or was it you shot the lord lieutenant of Finland between you?

You look as though you had done the deed. General Bobrikoff. (111 sic)

Gifford tells us that General Bobrikoff was the military governor of the “province” of Finland in 1904 and was assassinated by a Finnish patriot on June 16, the day upon which the novel is set. Gifford points out that he was shot “at 11:00 a.m. Helsinki time; since it would have been 8:35 Dublin time, the news would have reached Dublin in the course of the morning” (140). Since we know from events of the novel that “Aeolus” takes place at roughly 12:00 noon, we can assume that this item is relatively hot off the wires. But for O’Molloy, it has already entered the historical record; in his put-down, the Bobrikoff reference is thematically and formally parallel to the allusions to much more temporally remote, if physically closer, events: the Paris uprising of 1871, and the storming of the Bastille in 1789. The relative ease with which data, and to a lesser extent individuals, can



traverse space means that history happens quickly and that the far-away is not so far-away as it used to be. The trajectory of the remarks here points again to David Harvey's notion of a "time-space compression." For O'Molloy and his listeners this contraction means that a very recent event is fully comprehensible as historical allusion and that events on the other side of Europe are now integrated into the daily record of contemporary Dublin.

Journalism and the telegraph are the preferred means by which contraction and incursion are expressed in the novel. In "Hades," Simon Dedalus and his cronies discuss the running of the Gordon Bennett cup, an automobile race run that day near Frankfurt in Germany and reported upon by the daily newspaper. In "Lestrygonians," Bloom walks along Frederick Street lost in reverie over a blind stripling he has seen: "Poor fellow! Quite a boy. Terrible. Really terrible [. . .]. Where is the justice being born that way?" (149). Then, without warning, Bloom's thoughts quickly take him to the other side of the Atlantic, as he remembers a story he has seen in that morning's *Freeman's Journal* regarding a tragedy in New York harbour: "All those women and children excursion beanfeast burned and drowned in New York. Holocaust" (149). Gifford again explains that on June 16, 1904, a thousand people, mainly women and children, died when a steamship burned and sunk in the East River (186-7). Thus, Bloom's thoughts replicate in reverse the rapid trans-Atlantic transmission of these events by telegraph as they occurred and were reported in New York. Like his thoughts of Palestine, his reflections upon this event, heartfelt though they may be, are so rapidly and thoroughly integrated into his interior monologue that the remoteness of the event is almost erased.

This suggestion is made even more pointedly in the “Wandering Rocks” chapter when Father Conmee briefly pauses over the same event:

Father Conmee began to walk along North Strand road and was saluted by Mr. William Gallagher who stood in the doorway of his shop. Father Conmee saluted Mr. William Gallagher and perceived the odours that came from baconflitches and ample cools of butter. He passed Grogan’s the Tobacconist against which the newsboards leaned and told of a dreadful catastrophe in New York. (182)

For Conmee, the “dreadful catastrophe” is really of no more account than the smells emanating from Gallagher’s grocery store. The point here seems partly to be that Conmee is insensitive precisely because the event is physically remote: “In America those things were always happening” (182). But at the same time, the sensationalism and the rapidity of transmission that are the hallmarks of journalism work together here to erase even the possibility of the remote and the exotic. Once immersed within the local sensory landscape, the event, like Bloom’s re-contained Palestine, has been stripped of any extraordinary appeal it might have had. In a contracted world, the events of “far-off” America are no longer news; they are simply “always happening” as part of the daily life of Conmee and Bloom.

As Conmee walks from central Dublin to the outlying village of Artane, his thoughts wander to other exotic locales. Aboard the city’s outbound tram, Conmee sees a theatre billing for Eugene Stratton, an American minstrel performer. Once again, the advertisement sets in motion a familiar trajectory of observations: “From the hoardings, Mr Eugene Stratton grimaced [. . .] at Father Conmee. Father Conmee thought of the

souls of black and brown and yellow men and of his sermon on saint Peter Claver S. J. and the African mission and of the propagation of the faith” (183). Conmee’s journey on the local tram from center to periphery is thus accented by an imaginative journey to much more remote locales. The speed with which Conmee moves from Stratton’s America to the African mission of Claver is particularly telling for the complex ways in which it collapses both difference and distance. Vincent Cheng’s reading of Bloom’s own reflections on Stratton are important in this regard:

Bloom does not make a distinction between black and blackface: after all, since the presentation of blackness in Ireland and England was a purely cultural construct feeding cultural desires for exoticism, the reified image of negritude (i.e., the blackface music-hall stereotype) becomes the dominant (perhaps even exclusive) one. No distinction is (or can be) made between real blacks (since those were almost never experienced by Irish people) and blackface “negroes” by a culture in which the only available experience of “blackness” is the essentialized otherness of a stereotyped construction. (174-5)

Cheng’s point holds for Conmee as well as it does for Bloom. For Conmee, there is no real slippage between Stratton’s exaggerated-for-comic-effect features and the no less stereotypical image of the “heathen” black souls of Africa. But Cheng’s observation requires a further nuance; it is not simply that Stratton tautologically fulfills a cultural expectation of “otherness.” Rather it is that any genuine possibility of otherness, regarding both race and locale, is erased, or at least seriously compromised by the domestication of the “exotic.” Through the association of Africa and its inhabitants with Stratton the music-hall impersonator, any genuine sense of cultural differentiation is

erased at the very same moment that it is “reified.” As contact with America and Africa have become daily in both senses of the word, Conmee has seemingly come to believe that the modern world’s cultures, places, and spaces are really all the same.

If then, as Patrick McGee has argued, “Wandering Rocks” is a chapter that more than any of the others seeks to capture the everyday experience of Dublin’s walkers (71), then surely contact with far-off places like America, Africa, and Finland must be counted as part of that experience. The ease with which impersonations double as the “real thing” testifies to a kind of perceived global homogeneity, just as the underwhelming reactions of both Conmee and Bloom to the tragedy in New York reflect the ubiquity with which the far-off intrudes into the everyday. Still though, the process of integration is as yet nascent and unfulfilled, for surely the almost unblinking responses of Bloom and Conmee are partly due to the fact that these events are still somewhat remote. An incident in “Aeolus” confirms this point. As Bloom enters the offices of the *Freeman’s Journal*, a newsboy cries out, “Terrible tragedy in Rathmines! A child bit by a bellows!” (120). That Bloom’s reaction to this relatively minor incident in the nearby community of Rathmines is virtually on par with his response to the distant ship disaster actually works to reemphasize the remoteness of the latter event. It is not the case, then, that all sense of distance has already been erased. Rather what we observe through the reactions of Bloom, O’Molloy, and Conmee, is that such a contraction appears, both to readers and characters alike, to be a “work in progress.” And yet, at the same time that the exotic and the remote are upheld or reified, they also collapse into the local as evidenced by their side-by-side juxtaposition within the pages of the *Freeman’s Journal* and within the

minds of its readers. By these standards, New York and Helsinki have become almost as close by as Rathmines itself.

As the local space of Dublin is shifting in response to indigenous pressures, the Dubliners of Joyce's novel are frequently seeing signs that the globe, and their relationship to it, is changing. Of course, one of the most salient developments involves the inflection of the local with the global, as the distinctions between here and there, near and far begin to transform and break down under the pressures of worldwide contraction. In light of that collapse, the efforts of many of the novel's characters to renegotiate and remap their more immediate locales takes on an additional resonance. I argue that as characters like Conmee react to global incursion they almost always do so obliquely, mapping their anxieties onto the smaller spaces and confines with which they are more familiar. Such a displacement signals first that globalization, to the extent that it can be called by that name, is so nascent as to be yet unacknowledged. And second, even to the degree that it is acknowledged, its effacement is, of course, perfectly in keeping with the nostalgic and preservationist attitude with which these characters tend to the spaces around themselves.

Immediately after his first experience of global incursion, Father Conmee boards the outbound tram for the outlying village of Howth, from where he will walk the last kilometer to Artane. As he walks, Conmee reflects upon an age gone by: "The Malahide road was quiet. It pleased Father Conmee, road and name. The joybells were ringing in old Malahide. Lord Talbot de Malahide, immediate hereditary lord admiral of Malahide and the seas adjoining [. . .]. Those were old worldish days, loyal times in joyous townlands, old times in the barony" (183). The name of the road takes Conmee back first

to a nineteenth century poem set in Malahide and then to the much more remote past, when in the twelfth century, Henry II of England granted the surrounding lands to the Lord Talbot of Malahide (Gifford 263). The spatial connotations of Conmee's recollection of an earlier simpler era become clear through his invocation of the terms "townlands" and "barony." As Gifford reports, the "townlands are subdivisions of parishes varying considerably in area. They are regarded as delineations of ancient land-holdings" (130). And as Kevin Sullivan tells us, *Old Times in the Barony* is actually the title of a book by the real-life Father Conmee which presents a "nostalgic but unsentimental recall of an older way of life around the neighborhood of Luainford; a way of life which, even in his own day, had all but vanished from the Irish scene" (17). For Conmee, nostalgia for the past is bound up with an earlier mode of dividing and subdividing the districts around Dublin, as if the reconstitution of these long-gone spaces is somehow reassuring in the modern age.

While Conmee appreciates the modern tram which has brought him there, and which has allowed him to circumvent the less savory districts around Dublin (182), he also resents the ways in which such advances have broken down the boundaries between different kinds of spaces. If earlier he had somewhat resentfully dismissed the intrusion of New York and its barrage of horror stories into his local environment, he is similarly unsettled as he crosses a field between Malahide road and Artane. Still lost in reverie about "old times in the barony," Conmee happens upon a tryst between Stephen's friend Lynch and an unnamed paramour:

A flushed young man came from a gap of a hedge and after him came a young woman with wild nodding daisies in her hand. The young man raised his cap

abruptly: the young woman abruptly bent and with slow care detached from her light skirt a clinging twig. Father Conmee blessed both gravely and turned a thin page of his breviary: Sin. (184)

For Conmee, part of the couple's sin lies in their illicit use of this particular space which is both the object and the effect of Conmee's nostalgia. And no doubt Lynch and the young woman have made use of the same tram system as Conmee in order to get to Howth. Later in "Oxen of the Sun," Lynch will describe the encounter alongside similar stories of escapades and debauchery told by Lenihan and Mulligan, and, not surprisingly, Lynch does not mention where it took place or how he got there. The encounters of Lenihan and Mulligan may have taken place closer to home, but this difference is hardly worth noticing anymore, as modern transportation links have effaced the distance between Howth and Dublin, just as the telegraph has closed the respective gaps between New York, Helsinki, and Dublin. This kind of contraction means that, at least as far as Conmee is concerned, no space is sacred in the modern age. In an ironic confirmation of incursion, local instances of compression and contraction are thus inseparable from an ironically "larger" phenomenon in which all of the spaces of the world seem to be collapsing into each other.

For Conmee, Lynch's trespass upon the sacred space of ancient Malahide stands in direct opposition to the story told in the nineteenth century poem, "The Bridal of Malahide," whose opening line he had cited. As Gifford tells us, the poem tells the story of Lord Galtrim, a bridegroom who is called from the altar to defend his lands against invaders and is killed in the battle, leaving his betrothed a "maid, wife, and widow in one day" (263). Compared to Lynch's defiling of this bucolic setting, Galtrim, much like

Connmee himself, defends Malahide against invaders. In doing so, he preserves the sanctity of the space both by his military prowess and by the legend which his actions thus bestow upon the space. Connmee's nostalgic allusion to Galtrim's story constitutes a renewed attempt to safeguard it against more modern incursions such as that of Lynch. Coming on the heels of his close encounter with America, Connmee's desire for older, more parochial subdivisions of space seems motivated by both the instance of localized incursion which he mentions and the global one which he does not.

Connmee's nostalgic and localized attempt to imagine and redeem a space free from incursion is reinforced by the similar efforts of other Dubliners within the same chapter. A few pages further on, we see Ned Lambert as he guides the Anglican minister Hugh C. Love through the seed warehouse where Lambert works. Since he is "writing a book about the Fitzgeralds" (190), which might well resemble Connmee's history of the barony, Love is interested in this particular space for good reason. The site was once, as Gifford tells us, St Mary's Abbey in the parish of the Fitzgeralds (268). Since that time, its fall has been rather precipitous. In an account of the Abbey's declining fortunes, written just three years after the novel is set, D. A. Chart, like Love, can only mourn its faded grandeur:

The Chapter House, which must have been a lofty and splendid room, has been divided into two stories by the building of a floor half way up its walls. In the upper chamber, a loft used for storing sacks, the beautifully groined stone room remains intact, looking very incongruous amidst its surroundings. The upper part of an old window is still visible. In the lower story, the ancient architecture is concealed by the brickwork of wine vaults. (137)



Itself written at a transitional moment, Chart's story depicts a space whose original function is barely "still visible," almost completely "concealed" under a series of historical transformations. In fact, the history of this one particular place is in some ways parallel to that which Conmee witnesses unfolding in Howth. Joyce subtly marks this parallel by inserting a narrative intrusion from Conmee's section into the Lambert/Love section. Immediately after Lambert explains Love's interest in historical places to O'Molloy, we are thrown back to Conmee's encounter in Howth: "The young woman with slow care detached from her light skirt a clinging twig" (190). Thus, if the systematic destruction of St. Mary's Abbey is a much more prolonged process than that taking place in Howth, the profanation and defiling of both sacred spaces are figured as happening at almost the same instant in time.

But the particular series of reconfigurations undergone by the former St. Mary's helps to explain the preservationist impulses of both Love and Conmee. Lambert confirms the significance of this particular locale: "Yes, sir [. . .]. We are standing in the historic council chamber of saint Mary's abbey where silken Thomas proclaimed himself a rebel in 1534. This is the most historic spot in all Dublin. O'Madden Burke is going to write something about it one of these days" (189). Gifford then fleshes out Lambert's claim:

The scene of the section is the old chapter house of St. Mary's Abbey. The tenth-century abbey, located on the north bank of the Liffey just east of the modern city center, was the oldest religious establishment in Dublin. It became a Cistercian abbey in the twelfth century, but it was dissolved in 1537 and later destroyed by fire; some of its stone was used to build Essex (now Grattan) Bridge over the Liffey. At the end of the nineteenth century what remained of the

chapter house was part of the premises of Messrs. Alexander & Co., seed merchants. (268)

Like Chart and Gifford after them, Love and Burke seem to realize that in 1904 the Abbey is on the verge of vanishing completely, at least in any recognizable form. Gifford's account reveals the exact trajectory of external pressures—sectarian, political, and finally economic—under which this space has been successively compromised. That is, St. Mary's is refashioned into first a different kind of abbey, and then into a bridge whose name carried first colonial and then revolutionary significance. In its final transformation, the Abbey has become a place of commerce and economic exchange within a city which serves as both a provincial center for the hinterlands and a link to the rest of the world. Of course, all of the transformations which Gifford records are, to some degree at least, enmeshed in less parochial, more global, developments. After all, the dissolution of St. Mary's in 1537 and its subsequent decay make no sense outside the context of both the German and English Reformations. The use of its stone to build a bridge over the Liffey is significant not only for the political valences of the bridge's name, but also as a function of the transportational advances which have allowed Dublin to arise as an "Hibernian metropolis" in the modern world. But that final transformation of the chapter house into a place of commerce is what really confirms the drive towards integration which had been present all along.

Dublin's insertion into the global economy is thus analogized and visited upon this smaller space as it too is assimilated into more immediate networks of exchange which will themselves, in the next phase of incursion, be fully taken up by globalization. Confronted with these virtually indistinguishable signs of transformation, the

preservationist and nostalgic impulses of Joyce's Dubliners are aroused. Love and the others respond to assimilation by directing their efforts towards the only space that is still even remotely under their control—the local and immediate. As Lambert tells Love to “[b]ring the camera whenever you like. I’ll get those bags cleared away from the windows” (189), he makes manifest the effort to preserve local spaces even as he bears witness to their transformation into nothing more than photographic images.

In their flights of romantic nostalgia, both Conmee and Love have something in common with Gerty MacDowell, the character through whose consciousness the first half of “Nausicaa” is filtered. Like Conmee especially, she relies upon a certain “geographic imagination” in order to preserve her illusions about the world around her. Many critics have commented on Gerty’s purple prose in *Nausicaa* and her indebtedness to the conventions of sentimental Victorian fiction. She herself acknowledges this line of influence in her reference to “that book *The Lamplighter* by Miss Cummins, author of *Mabel Vaughan* and other tales” (298). Sounding much like Gerty himself, Hugh Kenner describes Nausicaa as “imitating a Victorian lady novelist” (*Ulysses* 100). R. B. Kershner, however, pauses more deliberately over the implications of that particular brand of parody: “Gerty MacDowell’s apparent possession [. . .] by the guiding consciousness of *The Lamplighter* and *The Princess Novelette* certainly has its comic side, but it has its tragic side as well; like a cut-rate Madame Bovary or Julien Sorel she has been painfully misled by her reading, indeed lamed by it” (2). Kershner is right to point to the crippling conventionality of Gerty’s nostalgic narrative, but he too overlooks the ways in which her devotion to cliché is bound up with a romantic vision of Irish geography.

Nowhere is this connection more manifest than in the opening lines of the chapter where Gerty sets the stage for us:

The summer evening had begun to fold the world in its mysterious embrace.  
Far away in the west the sun was setting and the last glow of all too fleeting day lingered lovingly on sea and strand, on the proud promontory of dear old Howth guarding as ever the waters of the bay, on the weedgrown rocks along Sandymount shore and, last but not least, on the quiet church where there streamed forth at times upon the stillness the voice of prayer to her who is in her pure radiance a beacon ever to the stormtossed heart of man, Mary star of the sea. (284)

For all its sentimental trappings, Gerty's narrative is more complex than Kenner's dismissal would allow. If Mary is an unwavering "beacon" to the "heart of man," so too is the sensualized but de-realized sunset that bestows a benediction upon the surrounding landscape, itself anthropomorphised as "dear old Howth." It is this romanticized geography, as much as Christian iconography, which functions as the guarantor of Gerty's wistful view of the world as both benevolent and unchanging. Indeed, in its impressionistic and static view of geography, Gerty's opening paragraph recalls not just Cummins but also the first lines of *Heart of Darkness* in which the frame narrator similarly describes a vista in which all is at rest. Gerty's image of the evening as "folding the world in its mysterious embrace" is thus not only a reflection of her own repressed sexuality, but also a figuration of what she herself is doing to the modern-day metropolis in front of her.

There are hints, however, that this is an uneasy representation. The day has been “too fleeting,” and Howth promontory, “dear” as it is, is “guarding” against something. And after Bloom’s appearance on the strand a few minutes later, we get an idea of what this “something” is. For, his subsequent and not so subtle masturbatory episode on the beach in front of her excites her at the same time that it justifies her fears. Like Lynch’s tryst in Howth, Bloom’s act constitutes an illicit use of public space and reveals that Gerty’s romantic image is simply that. But as Bloom himself will soon reveal, Gerty’s response to his incursion masks another, less intimate, instance of encroachment. As the Guinness barge travels up the waterway, it conjures up images of the “big vessels” of international trade and commerce which have themselves invaded the environs of “dear old Howth.” Like Conmee and Love before her, Gerty confronts changes in the landscape, changes whose local implications are themselves inseparable from global incursions. Like them, Gerty responds imaginatively and nostalgically, though her vista is no more durable than Bloom’s pathetic attempt to leave a message for her in the sand à la Spenser. If the geography around Gerty and Bloom is appealing as an unchanging romantic backdrop, it is also recalcitrant to their attempts to subordinate it to their own narratives of longing and desire.

The imaginative acts of Conmee, Love, and Gerty are thus forms of spatial displacement in that through their local focus, they mask, willfully or not, the signs of any anxiety over global incursion. Their combined efforts come as no surprise, since the attempt to preserve local spaces, to seal them off from all forms of encroachment, is perfectly compatible with the fact that globalization was still as yet in its most nascent form. Even when the forces and pressures of worldwide integration could be recognized

for what they were, any overt act of recognition would itself constitute an instance of the very kinds of incursion which these characters take such pains to resist and displace.

Among all of the novel's characters, it is Stephen Dedalus who expresses the most striking, and by now most familiar, formulation of displacement. Standing in front of his morning class, Stephen casts the visible signs of geographic change in particularly apocalyptic terms: "I hear the ruin of all space, shattered glass and toppling masonry, and time one livid flame" (20). Having recently returned home from exile in Paris under the pressures of economic constraint, Stephen has, in the lines leading up to his vision, exiled himself from the martello tower in which he and Buck Mulligan have been uncomfortably residing. Stephen's world is thus shrinking in both global and local terms. Not surprisingly, then, he expresses his very real anxieties over commodified space through an allusion to William Blake in a way which displaces and alleviates them. He reconfigures the changes in global and local geography into an apocalyptic event through whose force its historical implications are effaced. As he remaps contraction and depletion as shattering, Stephen further tropes the already slightly displaced reactions of Conmee, Love, and Gerty, who also resist acknowledging the global implications of local change.

But as widespread as it is, displacement, whether instinctual or strategic, comprises only part of the novel's complex response to global integration. The novel's most sustained attention to what is outside of Ireland comes not from these characters, who after all only fleetingly and resentfully acknowledge the global, but rather from the strangely opposed figures of Bloom and the "citizen." Not only do they respond directly to globalization, and to all its associations of incursion, depletion, and homogenization,

but also they reveal that integration, economic or otherwise, is not always necessarily a bad thing. For these two, ambivalence towards globalization is a natural function of Ireland's unique position in history and in the modern world.

Unlike the Anglophilic Mr. Deasy, for whom increased globalization is a natural extension of Ireland's colonial relationship with "old England," the citizen has learned to associate foreign incursions with a specifically British imperial threat to Ireland. It is this suspicion which motivates his condemnation of a world at large in which Irish markets are subject to the whims of "foreign wars." It also lies behind his subsequent and rather menacing question to Bloom: "What is your nation if I may ask?" Bloom responds to this in the only way he can: "Ireland [. . .]. I was born here. Ireland" (272). As it happens, Bloom's nativist idea of citizenship is quite similar to that of the citizen himself, who spends the entirety of the chapter decrying a history of incursions upon Irish territory by the foreign British. For him, the British are "strangers" who have been admitted into the Irish house: "Our own fault. We let them come in. We brought them in. The adulteress and her paramour brought the Saxon robbers here" (266). The figures he refers to here are drawn from the twelfth century when Dermot MacMurrough with the help of Devorgilla, wife of O'Rourke, Prince of Breffni, solicited the help of Henry II and thus instigated the "first Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169" (Gifford 39).

The citizen's memory here is long indeed, but there can be no doubt that a much more salient event, the Act of Union in 1801, is the chief of his grievances. The bulk of his historical references—Robert Emmet and the struggles of 1798, the "heroes of '48," "Rory of the hill"—derive from the time of the Union and afterwards. After all, under this act, accompanied by considerable pressure from the English, the Irish parliament

“dissolved itself and [was . . .] absorbed into the English parliament at Westminster” (Gifford 3). Summing up its aftermath, Mezey points out that the Act of Union “marked a transformation of Irish space and subjectivity” (339). As Jeanne Flood nicely puts it, the Act sensitized all of Ireland to the “question of boundaries” (69). In the wake of its implementation, “the repeated assertion of national autonomy by Ireland was repressed by England on the insistence that no boundary existed between Ireland and England, Ireland simply being a part of Great Britain. In essence the Irish nationalist tradition in both its revolutionary and parliamentary forms has always insisted that there is a boundary” (Flood 70). The signs of this border, and of Ireland’s status as a unique kind of colony within the British empire, are everywhere in Joyce’s Dublin. The lord-lieutenant’s vice-regal procession through the streets at the end of “Wandering Rocks,” the transformation of the native Irish parliament into the Bank of Ireland in that same episode, and Nelson’s pillar are just three of the more salient signs of that border’s incursion into the heart of the city itself.

Given these overly visible manifestations, it is not surprising that the Act would stick in the citizen’s craw. It is because of the lasting deleterious effects of the forced union with England that the citizen attempts to revive a native culture that could inoculate the Irish people against the foreign contaminant. His efforts in this regard center first on language: “So then the citizen begins talking about the Irish language and the corporation meeting and all to that and the shoneens that can’t speak their own language” (255). But as “founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association,” the citizen is also “dedicated to the revival of Irish sports such as hurling, Gaelic football, and handball” (Gifford 316). If, as Maguire notes, “[l]anguage became one of the central issues of colonialism” (298), so its



revival was an integral issue in the redemption of a national Irish space free from incursion. The choice of Phoenix Park as the venue for the games, the space of an earlier violent insurrection against British colonial authority, reflects an attempt to demarcate a hallowed indigenous geography within which expressions of only Irishness are permitted.

The effort to expel English sport from Ireland is part of the citizen's general attempt to distance England from Ireland in spite of the claims of homogeneity made by the Act of Union. If England is getting closer, the citizen is not going to let Ireland go down without a fight. Hence his repeated reference to the English not as English, not even as Anglo-Saxons, but simply as Saxons, or "sassenach." By relegating the English invader to both the more remote past of pre-Norman England and the more remote geography of middle-Europe, the citizen is able to deflect, at least momentarily, the continuing signs of English encroachment. Like his final expulsion of Bloom from the pub, and his aims to revive a properly Irish social space in Phoenix Park, his designation of the English as Saxons is meant to fortify Ireland's boundaries, to deny the threat which the Act of Union and subsequent events have posed to its integrity.

The citizen's frequent efforts to mythologize Irish locales such as Phoenix Park to protect them from incursion is brilliantly satirized by the long-winded interpolations of the chapter's second narrator. Describing a handkerchief handed to the citizen by Hynes, the interpolator provides an incredibly encyclopedic view of Irish geography that is worth quoting in its entirety:

The scenes depicted on the emunctory field, showing our ancient duns and raths and cromlechs and grianuns and seats of learning and maledictive stones, are as wonderfully beautiful and the pigments as delicate as when the Sligo

illuminators gave free rein to their artistic fantasy long long ago in the time of the Barmecides. Glendalough, the lovely lakes of Killarney, the ruins of Clonmacnois, Cong Abbey, Glen Inagh and the Twelve Pins, Ireland's Eye, the Green Hills of Tallaght, Croagh Patrick, the brewery of Messrs Arthur Guinness, Son and Company (Limited), Lough Neagh's banks, the vale of Ovoca, Isolde's Tower, the Mapas obelisk, Sir Patrick Dun's hospital, Cape Clear, the glen of Aherlow, Lynch's castle, the Scotch house, Rathdown Union Workhouse at Loughlinstown, Tullamore jail, Castleconnel rapids, Killballymacshonakill, the cross at Monasterboice, Jury's Hotel, S. Patrick's Purgatory, the Salmon Leap, Maynooth college refectory, Curley's hole, the three birthplaces of the first duke of Wellington, the rock of Cashel, the bog of Allen, the Henry Street Warehouse, Fingal's cave—all of these moving scenes are still there for us today rendered more beautiful still by the waters of sorrow which have passed over them and by the rich encrustations of time. (272)

Through unflagging, but not unfailing, memories like those of the citizen, these scenes are still part of the Irish present in 1904; they stand as the legitimation and objective of his vigilant efforts to patrol Irish space. The natural outgrowth of his fence-building impulse is the tendency to see Irish geography as not only insular but also as incredibly expansive, as constituting a universe all to itself. If the world must not be permitted to invade Ireland, Ireland can expand to the point where it becomes the world. While Bloom dreams of becoming a globetrotter, for the citizen Ireland is a self-sufficient globe all to itself. The narrowness of his vision is of course effectively satirized through the

parodic and humiliating reduction of Irish geography to the size of a handkerchief upon which he visits his own set of indignities.

At times, the threat to Irish integrity seems not so much to come from a specific nation or even imperialism as from simply modernity itself. The way John Wyse Nolan, another pub patron, sees it, the most dire issue facing Ireland is in fact its possible reduction in a world whose resources are everywhere diminishing. For Nolan, the citizen's protectionist impulse is an entirely legitimate one that is based on an awareness of global trends: "As treeless as Portugal we'll be soon [. . .] or Heligoland with its one tree if something is not done to reafforest the land. Larches, firs, all the trees of the conifer are going fast" (268). The citizen responds with a familiar sacralizing of Irish geography: "Save them [. . .] the giant ash of Galway, and the chieftan elm of Kildare with a fortyfoot bole and an acre of foliage. Save the trees of Ireland for the future men of Ireland on the fair hills of Eire O" (268). For Nolan and the citizen, the problem is not simply Ireland's subordination to an English ship-building economy thirsty for raw materials. The potential for a depleted Ireland is greatly compounded by virtue of England's own insertion within a larger modern economy where the demand for those materials is increasing by the year. Nolan's reconfiguration of Ireland as "Heligoland," a barren pair of rocks off the coast of Germany (Gifford 352), suggests that a depleted Ireland is so diminished partly by its greater proximity not just to England, but to the rest of Europe as well. As if to confirm the intractable fact of encroachment, Lenehan simply responds: "Europe has its eyes on you" (268). It is not just England, then, but the rest of the world too that is not so easy to shut out.

Ireland's well documented experience with a particular and forced form of compression has thus made the citizen and his counterparts at least somewhat wary of any kind of increased connection with the outside world. If his insularity is mainly in response to a specifically British form of incursion, his more general vitriol at a modern economy under the putative control of the "Jewish tribe" suggests that, for him, "xenophobe" is an entirely fitting label. Of course, the exact origin of that xenophobic suspicion seems hard to pinpoint. On the one hand, his hatred of England may be all the stronger for the way in which it brings the rest of the world along in its invasion of Ireland. But on the other hand, the rest of the world may be simply guilty by its association with threats of incursion and depletion.

In this regard, the citizen is no Molly Ivors, the similarly disposed Irish nationalist from Joyce's short story "The Dead." Certainly Miss Ivors takes issue with Gabriel Conroy's putatively English orientation; she goes so far as to label him a "West Briton" (179). But for her, the enemy is not England alone. Gabriel's threat lies instead in his professed affiliation for an entire world of non-Irishness. In fact his intended vacation itinerary as he relates it to her is notable for its omission of England: "'Well, we usually go to France or Belgium or perhaps Germany,' said Gabriel awkwardly" (180). To Miss Ivors, such excursions are almost as threatening as any corresponding incursion: "And why do you go to France and Belgium [. . .] instead of visiting your own land? [. . .] And haven't you your own language to keep in touch with - Irish?" (180). It is in response perhaps to both the heat of Miss Ivors's interrogation and to his own part in bringing the world closer together that Gabriel later observes, "it seemed to me, I must confess, that we were living in a less spacious age" (194).

The admittedly less refined citizen does not follow Miss Ivors in simply fearing increased global proximity and integration for their own sake. For of course, it is with England that his chief complaint lies. If the Act of Union and all its associated indignities have made him wary of any sort of closer ties with the rest of the world, he is sometimes capable of seeing beyond that vision, such as when he speaks of the United States as “our greater Ireland beyond the sea” (270). Here though, he references not so much integration, as a reversed process of consumption that is almost Kurtzian in scale. An Ireland that is both here and beyond the sea is the expansive modern corollary of the global pre-modern Ireland depicted on his handkerchief. But it is when he turns to the past that the citizen is able to look much more favourably upon global integration and trade. As he does so, he condemns England for isolating Ireland from the rest of the world, in an ironic confirmation of Mr. Deasy’s earlier fears:

Where are our missing twenty millions of Irish should be here today instead of four, our lost tribes? And our potteries and textiles, the finest in the whole world! And our wool that was sold in Rome at the time of Juvenal and our flax and our damask from the looms of Antrim [. . .]? Where are the Greek merchants that came through the pillars of Hercules, the rock of Gibraltar now grabbed by the foe of mankind, with gold and Tyrian purple to sell in Wexford at the time of Carmen? Read Tacitus and Ptolemy even Giraldus Cambrensis. Wine, peltries, Connemara marble, silver from Tipperary, second to none, our farfamed horses even today, the Irish hobbies, with King Philip of Spain offering to pay customs duties for the rights to fish in our waters. What do the yellowjohns of Anglia owe us for our ruined

trade and our ruined hearths? (268)

The citizen thus de-links globalization and colonization in a direct contrast to the contiguities between the two which Conrad had emphasized. According to the citizen, the British, in their zeal to control colonial Ireland, have severely restricted its integration with the rest of the world. He argues that it is not so much globalization itself that is the problem. Instead, it is a globe that has come under the control of the “Saxons” which is an anathema to him. Indeed he suggests that if only Ireland could regain its rightful place in the European and global economy, many of its ills would be over.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, a close look at the citizen’s list reveals that his idea of globalization is a very specific one and one that is tilted impossibly in Ireland’s favour. Every item on it is very clearly an export; far from suffering from a trade deficit, the citizen’s Ireland seems to need to bring in absolutely nothing. This is of course perfectly in keeping with his vision of Ireland as an entirely self-sufficient nation, whose geographic and topographic features are epic in their grandeur. Moreover, it also fits with his unilateral ideas regarding Irish migration: the Irish may spread overseas to populate other nations, but there are to be “no strangers” in this house. Thus even when foreigners—“sassenach” or not—are imported into Ireland they must be decontaminated and domesticated. Hence, the citizen’s list of honoured Irish citizens “expands” to include “Patrick W. Shakespeare, Brian Confucious, [and] Murtagh Gutenberg” (244). Globalization may well be the answer to a history of English incursion, but incursions of any kind will always be viewed with a high degree of suspicion and vigilance.

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<sup>7</sup> In many ways this is indeed what has happened. In the years since its admission to the European Union, the Republic of Ireland has pursued closer and closer ties with its continental allies, far outstripping British eagerness for integration.

For all their explicitness, the citizen's conflicting responses to globalization have much in common with the more fleeting and displaced reactions of characters like Conmee, Love, and Gerty. The responses of all of these characters to increased integration seems to be largely nostalgic even when that process is fully embraced. In a claim unique to the novel, the citizen argues that there is no contradiction between a desire to return to the past and an aspiration towards globalization. But as the sole positive evaluation of proximity and integration, the citizen's claim is hopelessly skewed. Not only is it bound up with a problematic nostalgia which also pays homage to especially unsavoury kinds of exclusion, it is hopelessly naïve in its pronounced tilting of the trade balance in Ireland's favour.

In Leopold Bloom, however, the citizen has an unlikely partner in his endorsement of globalization. And for Bloom, the vision is decidedly forward looking, rather than protectionist and nostalgic. One of the most obvious signs that all is not well in the citizen's world is his forced expulsion of Bloom from Kiernan's pub at the end of "Cyclops." The banishment is especially grating for Bloom, whose ideas of citizenship in a modern world are far more inclusive and fluid than those of his tormentor. While he defensively points to his own Irish nativity when under attack, his ideas of nationality are somewhat progressive. For Bloom, a "nation is the same people living in the same place [. . .] [o]r also living in different places" (272). Under this formula, nationality is completely compatible with the migratory movements and patterns of exchange which characterize the modern globe and find obvious expression in the lives of modernists like Joyce and Conrad. Bloom himself seems to be able to be strikingly cosmopolitan, even multicultural, as he is variously identified as "Leopold Bloom," "Henry Flower," and

“Herr Professor Luitpold Blumenduft.” He would thus seem to be a perfect candidate for admission into the “Friends of the Emerald Isle” delegation of “Cyclops.” This is the group that allegedly attends the public execution of Robert Emmet and whose members hail from all over the globe: “Count Athanatos Karemelpulous, Ali Baba Backsheesh Rahat Lokum Effendi, [. . .] Hokopoko Harikiri, Hi Hung Chang, [and] Olaf Kobberkeddelsen” (252). The racist nomenclature echoes the citizen’s own xenophobia, but the mere presence of the multicultural delegation on Ireland’s shores stands as the sign of a modern global reality which Bloom embraces with zeal. Seated in place of honour on the raised platform, the delegation seems to bring new meaning to the adage that “all the world’s a stage.”

As the globe comes to Ireland, so Bloom is at home anywhere on the globe. While he shares the citizen’s love for Irish places, hoping to visit such national sites as “The cliffs of Moher, the windy wilds of Connemara, [. . .] the Giant’s Causeway, [. . .] the islands of Aran, [. . . and] the lakes of Killarney” (597), he truly does want to become a globetrotter. Thus his Irish itinerary is perfectly compatible with one which takes in the far-reaches of the globe. Moreover, the economically integrated globe that he encounters is not one of “blank spaces” but rather one straight out of the pages of a modern day guide-book:

Ceylon (with spicegardens supplying tea to Thomas Kernan, agent for Pulbrook, Roberston and Co, 2 Mincing Lane, London, E. C., 5 Dame street, Dublin), Jerusalem, the holy city (with mosque of Omar and gate of Damascus, goal of aspiration), the straits of Gibraltar (the unique birthplace of Marion Tweedy), the Parthenon (containing statues of nude Grecian divinities), the Wall street



money market (which controlled international finance), [. . .] Niagara (over which no human being had passed with impunity), the land of the Eskimos (eaters of soap), the forbidden country of Thibet (from which no traveller returns). (597-8)

If the last two locales retain a sense of mystery and exoticism, Bloom mainly seems not to care that this is a world where cheap stunts take the place of adventure. Nor does it really matter that spiritual sites have become tourist destinations and that his whole endeavour is made possible by the economic integration and control so evident on Wall Street. Even as he romanticizes himself as a modern-day “Sinbad the Sailor” (607), his immediate reconfiguration of that archetype into the quotidian “Tinbad the Tailor” suggests that, unlike Conrad’s Marlow, he quite happily sees himself more as a sightseer than an adventurer. For Bloom, the pressures of global contraction under the sign of modernity have produced opportunity rather than nostalgia.

This optimism, however, comprises only part of Bloom’s modern vision. For he has already realized that even his very practical aspirations to travel may well be frustrated, given the reality of the modern-day world. His ejection from the Kiernan’s pub, and his encounter with the Agendath ad, with its taint of a contested and congested space, suggests that he may not be welcome everywhere in the world. For of course, the same advances which have increased global proximity, and thus have democratized the possibility of world travel, have also filled up many of the world’s spaces to which one might want to travel.

Recognizing the signs of what Durkheim calls “social concentration,” Bloom surveys the local cityscape and laments: “Too many in the world” (83). However, he reaches this conclusion based not upon an estimation of world population, but rather upon the signs of

urban congestion he sees around him. It comes in “Hades” as he awaits Paddy Dignam’s burial. Having traveled across the city with Simon Dedalus, Martin Cunningham, and Mr. Power in a small horse-drawn cab which frequently falls prey to early forms of urban gridlock, Bloom feels more than justified in making his pronouncement. But what is telling is that he does not, in fact, say “city” but rather “world.” Despite the metaphoric overtones of “world” here, it seems safe to say that Bloom’s comment reflects his anxieties over what is, for him, a less localized phenomenon. He is, after all, an aspiring globetrotter in a world whose far off spaces are becoming both less far-off and more congested. Previously exotic locales are themselves being filled up and fought over with the result that his access to them is as blocked as is his traversal of the city. Looking at the congested city-streets around him, Bloom thus seems to reach the same expansive conclusion as Gustave Le Bon, who in his 1896 study of the same name had pointed to “universal symptoms, visible in all nations” of the growth in size and power of “the crowd” (17).

Partly because of their worldwide ubiquity, Le Bon takes a very pessimistic position regarding crowds. They are, he says “powerful only for destruction. Their rule is always tantamount to a barbarian phase” (18). But while Bloom also sees crowds and crowding as the fate of modernity, he reveals in “Hades” that this phenomenon does not constitute an insurmountable obstacle. In fact, as the would-be world traveler negotiates the filled-up spaces of Dublin and Glasnevin cemetery, his forward-looking solutions to crowding are compatible with his enthusiastic endorsement of an increasingly proximate world. The modern developments which promise to integrate Dublin and Ireland into the rest of the world, are for Bloom, welcome relief to the kinds of territorial parochialism which

will plague him for the remainder of the day. As he seeks to alleviate or at least assuage modern crowded-ness in the course of “Hades” Bloom turns to the very kinds of technological advances in transportation and communication which have rendered the spaces of the modern world more proximate to one another. After his proposal for a tramway to transport cattle to the city docks meets with the approval of his fellow passengers, Bloom then makes another suggestion: “[A]nd another thing I often thought, is to have municipal funeral trams like they have in Milan, you know. Run the line out to the cemetery gates and have special trams, hearse and carriage and all” (81). Bloom’s idea is summarily rejected by his companions, in part because of its foreign source and global application.

Bloom’s technologically minded solutions to congestion become increasingly grandiose and macabre as he watches the funeral ceremony in Glasnevin. Bloom never stops thinking about the crowded spaces around him, even when they are under his feet: “All honeycombed the ground must be: oblong cells” (89). Bloom’s underground vision here is a kind of aftershock to his just-concluded experience with urban gridlock and proximity. His preoccupation justifies Georg Simmel’s claim in his 1903 “The Metropolis and Mental Life” that “bodily closeness and lack of space” are a function of the modern metropolis (329). But for Bloom, the problem of contraction is truly global in scale, and both the Hibernian metropolis and the Glasnevin necropolis serve to register that more ubiquitous phenomenon: “Funerals all over the world everywhere, every minute. Shovelling them under by the cartload doublequick. Thousands every hour. Too many in the world” (83). In her discussion of Joyce and population control, Mary-Lowe Evans places Bloom’s anxieties here within a larger context. She argues that

Bloom's fears of overpopulation contain echoes of the proposals of the nineteenth-century eugenicist Thomas Malthus. Malthusian proposals "challenged the Church's position, making population control an economic issue and bringing the subject of birth control into the public domain" (4). She thus confirms that, for Bloom at least, overcrowding carries global and economic implications. Unlike Conmee, Love, Gerty, and other Dubliners, then, Bloom is almost always able and willing to see the spaces around him in more than just local terms. His larger outlook lends added resonance to his anxieties over depletion and diminishment: "More room if they buried them standing. Sitting or kneeling you couldn't. Standing? His head might come up some day above ground in a landslip with his hand pointing" (89). Wherever Bloom goes on this particular day, the issue seems to be one of less, not more, room.

As the would-be cosmopolitan has found out on this day of wanderings, contraction and proximity are often accompanied by the somewhat paradoxical trends of atomization and isolation. All too often he finds himself alone, virtually cut to pieces by the same forces of technology responsible for the gradual emergence of an increasingly connected world. In "Aeolus" as he talks to a newspaper typesetter, he must "sli[p] his words deftly into the pauses of the clanking" made by the press (99). Of this modern reality, Bloom observes "Machines. Smash a man to atoms if they got him caught" (98). In the same way, the world has been smashed to atoms, shattered into "oblong cells" by machines such as the telephone and the telegraph, which had seemed to promise an integration free of any such side-effects. It is partly this fear of isolation and "honeycombing" which explains Bloom's reaction to the lowering of Dignam's coffin into the grave: "The gravediggers took up their spades and flung heavy clods of clay in on the coffin. Mr.

Bloom turned away his face” (91). But the distress here is not for any intimate reason, for he barely knew Dignam. Instead, Bloom’s reaction expresses and occludes his anxieties surrounding a world which has become even more fragmented as it has become more congested and depleted. The compartmentalization of modern life that is itself a function of globalization is worried over in macabre fashion here: “And if he was alive all the time? Whew! By jingo, that would be awful! No, no he is dead, of course; of course he is dead. Monday he died” (91). For Bloom, the solution to contraction lies not in the past but in the future, a future in which even more pervasive and penetrating forms of connectivity alleviate atomization: “They ought to have some law to pierce the heart and make sure or an electric clock or a telephone in the coffin and some kind of canvas airhole. Flag of distress” (91). Even the rats, he seems to suggest, have it right: “Wonder does the news go about whenever a fresh one is let down. Underground communication. We learned that from them” (94). For Bloom the utopian community is one whose spaces are porous and penetrable, a place where the threat of social withdrawal and atomization is triumphed over by ever more proficient methods of connectivity.

Bloom, then, seems to display an ever-present optimism in the face of the many threats that attend global encroachment. Indeed, Bloom’s grandiose and overly practical schemes are relentlessly satirized in the novel’s “Circe” episode, through the hypothetical creation of a particularly expansive and inclusive modern space. Named the “new Bloomusalem” it is “a colossal edifice with a crystal roof, built in the shape of a huge pork kidney, containing forty thousand rooms” (395). Where Stephen’s imagined shattering of all space is apocalyptic, Bloom’s own Blakean scheme seems to compensate very well for a world in which there is no more room. By his own standards,

“Bloomusalem” is a kind of utopian community that is thoroughly modern and efficient in its management and distribution of space. But as it is presented in satirical form, the project turns out to be just as destructive and hard-headed in its disregard of history as was Stephen’s vision. In its own way, the project entails a great deal of shattering:

In the course of its extension several buildings and monuments are demolished. Government offices are temporarily transferred to railway sheds. Numerous sheds are razed to the ground. The inhabitants are lodged in barrels and boxes, all marked in red with the letters: L.B. Several paupers fall from the ladder. A part of the walls of Dublin, crowded with loyal sightseers, collapses. (395)

As an attempt to compensate for diminishment and a world traversed by sightseers, the new Bloomusalem, at least as it is presented here, brings its own set of problems. And like so many modernist responses to globalization, it recasts the problems of depletion and incursion as a cataclysmic shattering.

But it is in “Ithaca” that we finally get Bloom’s own vision of “Bloomusalem,” or as he alternatively calls it “Bloom Cottage. Saint Leopold’s. Flowerville” (587). In reality, he does not imagine such a brazen destruction of history or space, but rather he dreams about his own quiet corner of the universe. Turning to Bloom’s dreams for the future the questioning narrator asks, “In what ultimate ambition had all concurrent and consecutive ambitions now coalesced?” (585). The respondent then provides a typically long-winded Ithacan answer, the first part of which distances Bloom’s vision from those nostalgic and anachronistic imaginations of Conmee, Love, and Gerty. Thus, it is Bloom’s expressed desire: “Not to inherit by right of primogeniture, gavelkind or borough English, or

possess in perpetuity an extensive demesne of a sufficient number of acres, roods and perches, statute land measure (valuation £42), of grazing turbary surrounding a baronial hall with gatelodge and carriage drive” (585). Unlike Conmee, Bloom does not dream of old times in the barony or its halls. He scoffs at the idea of inheriting property, preferring instead to acquire it through modern channels of commerce and exchange.

Indeed, Bloom wants simply

to purchase by private treaty in fee simple a thatched bungalowshaped 2 storey dwellinghouse of southerly aspect, surmounted by vane and lightning conductor [. . .] with porch covered by parasitic plants (ivy or Virginia creeper), halldoor, olive green, with smart carriage finish and neat doorbrasses, stucco front with gilt tracery at eaves and gables rising, if possible, upon a gentle eminence with agreeable prospect with balcony with stone pillar parapet over unoccupied and unoccupyable interjacent pastures and standing in 5 or 6 acres of its own ground, at such a distance from the nearest public thoroughfare as to render its houselights visible at night above and through a quickset hornbeam hedge of topiary cutting, situate at a given point not less than 1 statute mile from the periphery of the metropolis, within a time limit of not more than 15 minutes from tram or train line (e.g., Dundrum, south, or Sutton, north, both localities equally reported to resemble the terrestrial poles in being favourable climates for phthisical subjects). (585)

Bloom’s vision stands as his most successful effort to date to reconcile both his optimism for and his anxiety about globalization. While Blamires is quite correct to see the passage “constitut[ing] a neat summary of the ideals of twentieth-century middle-class

suburban man” (218), for Bloom, that image only makes sense within a world whose global realities have necessitated it. Thus, while it is not nearly so expansive as the new Bloomusalem, Bloom Cottage does take in several acres and even that, he stipulates, must be surrounded by empty land. But just as he seeks to compensate for a world whose locales have become, following Simmel, “blasé” (329), he seems not to worry too much about the domestication of its exotic spaces. Where Conrad’s Marlow laments his having never set foot in the polar regions, Bloom is happy enough to visit their local equivalents and even to incorporate them into his own little world.

Finally, even as a suburban ideal, Bloom Cottage reflects in its local orientation Bloom’s desire to be both connected to and detached from the modern world. Since too much proximity can lead to atomization and forced exile, Bloom envisages an alternate mode of modern life, one that is made manifest through his ambivalence over the convenience of mass transit:

What facilities of transit were desirable?

When citybound frequent connection by train or tram from their respective intermediate station or terminal. When countrybound velocipedes, a chainless freewheel roadster bicycle with side basketcar attached, or draught conveyance, a donkey with wicker trap or smart phaeton with good working solidungular cob (roan gelding, 14 h). (587)

Bloom is in some ways the perfect resident in this novel of changing spaces, equally at home riding the tram to the city, or a donkey to the country. If it is important to him to remain connected to the outside world, so seclusion is another cherished attribute of his preferred dwelling. If increased integration and proximity are unavoidable facets of



modern life, Bloom mitigates his general optimism for those changes as he imagines a place of his own that is both near and far, domestic and exotic, new and old.

There are many other reasons for Bloom's desire for this particular kind of land; the suicide of his father and the death of his son make "right of primogeniture" inapplicable. Also, his zeal for deal-making makes purchasing a home privately a particularly entertaining fantasy. The desire for solitude and undisputed ownership may stem from the evidence he has just discovered of his wife's affair with Blazes Boylan. But it also emanates from a day filled with reminders that global space is at a premium. For him, June 16, 1904 has begun with a vision of an exotic Palestine that has been ironically domesticated. He has then progressed through a series of broadly similar epiphanies: his recognition that the signs of global depletion are visible even within the local graveyard, his ejection from Kiernan's pub at the hands of his fellow Dubliners, and his troubled diminishment of the globe into a local landmark in Dublin harbour.

And yet, in the face of all these anxieties, Bloom's response to globalization is virtually unique in the novel. While, like so many of his contemporaries, Bloom thinks locally with regard to global change, he does not share in their general nostalgic, or sometimes even reactionary, response. Besides his own, the only real endorsement of global integration comes from the "citizen," for whom it is invoked as the compromised solution to the specific problem of colonialism. But while it registers the signs and effects of a changing world, "Bloom Cottage" also references its owner's quiet acceptance, even endorsement, of global compression and contraction. For, as the ever-practical Bloom considers how he might pay for such a retreat, he seizes upon a scheme that is unique to his historical moment. He returns us to the circumstances of the Gold

Cup horse race, where, because of a persistent time delay, Dubliners can continue to bet on the London event for a few minutes after it has commenced. Bloom, ever mindful of his experience on this day, realizes that technology has contracted the globe to the point where such practices are now archaic. Far from mourning a new-found global proximity, however, he seeks to exploit it. Hence, when the interrogating narrator asks how Bloom Cottage will be paid for, Bloom's response is a signal one:

What rapid but insecure means to opulence might facilitate immediate purchase?

A private wireless telegraph which would transmit by dot and dash system the result of a national equine handicap (flat or steeplechase) of 1 or more miles and furlongs won by an outsider at odds of 50 to 1 at 3 hr 8 m p.m. at Ascot (Greenwich time), the message being received and available for betting purposes in Dublin at 2:59 p.m. (Dunsink time). (589)

If the various locales of the world are being drawn into close proximity, Bloom is one step ahead of that process. In the sanctity of his own home, he will enact his own private "time-space" compression, which will allow him to reap an enormous economic windfall. Bloom has no qualms about this kind of insider betting; for him, after all, it does not constitute a moral failing. Rather, it signals his willingness to make use of the implications of global integration before legal systems can fully notice and regulate that development. While he is poised between two moments and two spaces, then, there is no doubt where Bloom's allegiances lie. And, moreover, he sees no

contradiction between the territorial plenitude of Bloom Cottage and his blatant manipulation and acceleration of the process of global compression which have provided for its purchase.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A WORLD OF ONE ZONE: DOMESTICATING THE GLOBAL IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *TO THE LIGHTHOUSE*

So it was that the old Northern races, in whose primitive souls the Faustian was already awakening, discovered in their grey dawn the art of *sailing the sea* which emancipated them [. . .] Sailing, real sailing, is a triumph over Euclidean land.

—Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (I:333-4)

They had tacked, and they were sailing swiftly, buoyantly on long rocking waves which handed them on from one to another with an extraordinary lilt and exhilaration beside the reef [. . .] He sat and looked at the island and he might be thinking, We perished, each alone, or he might be thinking, I have reached it. I have found it, but he said nothing.

—Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (279)

[F]or one moment, there was a sense of things having been blown apart, of space, of irresponsibility.

—Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (99)

Written in 1918, the year in which Mr. Ramsay finally completes his sailing trip to the lighthouse, Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* is, like Virginia Woolf's 1927 novel, in part a response to the shattering effects of the First World War. That cataclysmic event was for Spengler a troubling sign that the "Faustian race" was in danger of going the way of all of the "great civilizations" which had risen and fallen throughout history. That the post-war map of a now-fragmented world was composed more of small nation-states than of large empires was particularly worrisome for Spengler. To his eye, Western hegemony had always been based upon a triumph over the spaces of the world:

The bent of the Faustian culture, therefore was *extension*, political, economic, or spiritual. It overrode all geographical-material boundaries. It sought—without any practical object, merely for the Symbol's own sake—to reach North Pole

and South Pole. It ended by transforming the entire surface of the globe into a single colonial and economic system. (I: 335)

Notwithstanding his ultimate conflation of colonial with economic hegemony, what Spengler is in fact bearing witness to at the conclusion of the war is the emergence of one form of “extension” from the ashes of another. If the recent worldwide conflict spelled an end to one era of “Faustian” triumph, it might usher in another. While undoubtedly a product of his own extreme brand of politics, Spengler’s vision of a globe united under one economic system seems less historically accurate than it does incredibly prescient.

Obviously for Spengler global conquest and integration are entirely good things. Thus, unlike Conrad’s Marlow or Joyce’s Bloom, he has no qualms about the domination of the world’s surfaces right up to and including its polar regions. In fact, global subjugation is somehow completely compatible with the promise of continued adventure and infinite expansiveness. In summing up his vision, Spengler revisits the scenes of all those triumphs over space which he takes the opportunity to amplify even further:

If, in fine, we look at it all together—the expansion of the Copernican world-picture into that aspect of stellar space that we possess today; the development of Columbus’s discovery into a world-wide command of the earth’s surface by the West; the perspective of oil-painting and of tragedy-scene; the sublimed home-feeling; the passion of our civilization for swift transit, the conquest of the air, the exploration of the Polar regions and the climbing of almost impossible mountain-peaks, we see emerging everywhere the prime symbol of the Faustian soul, Limitless space. (337)

With its emphasis on the twin activities of sailing and painting as triumphs over space, Spengler's polemic serves almost as a gloss on Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. As Lily Briscoe completes her painting and Mr. Ramsay successfully traverses the open water between his home and the lighthouse, they bring to a close another extended reflection on what it means to triumph over space in the opening decades of the century.

But aside from these obvious continuities, Woolf's novel contains one further echo of Spengler that is itself particularly telling. Long before he sets foot on the shores of the lighthouse island, Mr. Ramsay reveals that his soul is in fact far from "Faustian." Throughout most of the novel he worries over the signs of his failure as an intellectual. His most memorable figuration of this deficiency is one in which he casts mental pursuit as a journey through the letters of alphabet. As he sees it, his own journey has come to a grinding halt as he tries again and again to get from Q to R. But, as if to suggest that the alphabetical metaphor is itself insufficient in representing the magnitude of his intellectual efforts, Mr. Ramsay immediately turns to another image which is remarkable for its echoes of Spengler:

Qualities that in a desperate expedition across the icy solitudes of the Polar region would have made him the leader, the guide, the counsellor, whose temper, neither sanguine nor despondent, surveys with equanimity what is to be and faces it, came to his help again [. . .]. Feelings that would not have disgraced a leader who, now that the snow had begun to fall and the mountain-top is covered in mist, knows that he must lay himself down and die before morning comes, stole upon him. (48-9)

In direct contrast to Spengler, Mr. Ramsay configures the heretofore inaccessible regions of the Poles and the more anonymous mountain-top as scenes of desperation not triumph. Still, Spengler's heroic overtones remain largely intact, since surely failed expeditions must precede the successful conquests which stand as proof of global hegemony. But, as he links his feelings to those of Spengler's surveyor-heroes, Mr. Ramsay does so only through syntactical understatement hinting that, for him, the analogy is a forced one. He, is after all, no Polar hero, but rather an academic living a fairly comfortable life much of which he spends summering in the Hebrides. In Kathy Phillips's words, "Mr. Ramsay, safe at home, might like to think of his intellectual endeavor 'to reach R' as equivalent to battling enemies or leading a Polar expedition in a storm but really he can forego dying in the snow to slip indoors for whisky and wifely sympathy" (104-5).

But the link is contrived for another reason, as Mr. Ramsay's subsequent conflation of his two adventurous exploits makes clear:

Who then can blame the leader of that forlorn party which after all has climbed high enough to see the waste of the years and the perishing of the stars, if before death stiffens his limbs beyond the power of movement he does consciously raise his numbed fingers to his brow, and square his shoulders, so that when the search party comes they will find him dead at his post the fine figure of a soldier. (50)

It seems likely that Mr. Ramsay's juxtaposition of a polar expedition with the image of an heroic adventurer found dead at his post derives from a contemporary event of which he would he would have perforce been aware. For it recalls the infamous end of British explorer Captain Robert Scott, who in 1912 had died in his quest to reach the South Pole. Scott's demise was doubly tragic in that he, like Mr. Ramsay himself, was too late in his

endeavour, having been beaten to the Pole by the Norwegian Roald Amundsen by a few weeks. As it happens, Mr. Ramsay's metaphor of the mountaineering, pole-seeking hero perfectly analogizes his anxiety about his place in history as one more academic in a long tradition of academics. Unlike Spengler, then, Mr. Ramsay sees the conquest of the world's surface, and in particular its more exotic and inaccessible locales, as cause for worry not celebration. Like another of the novel's characters, William Bankes, for whom the modern world has become blasé, Mr. Ramsay suggests that part of the problem of living in the modern world is that those who have come before have been everywhere. For him, global space has turned out to be not so limitless as Spengler had proclaimed.

In this chapter, I argue that *To the Lighthouse* shares more than a Polar preoccupation with the novels of Conrad and Joyce. For Woolf, too, global integration and depletion were undeniable signs of modern life, and as such they made themselves felt at every level of experience. But in comparison with those earlier two writers, Woolf's idea of the global itself tended to be broad, amorphous, and capacious. While Conrad and Joyce frequently invoked explicit images of global depletion and contraction, Woolf tended to articulate the concept rather obliquely and indirectly. Hence, in what follows here I focus my reading more often upon Woolf's perceptions of "space" in general, than upon her relatively infrequent anxieties over the global. While such a shift is well warranted by Woolf's own rhetorical and thematic insistence upon space, it does not conflict with my desire to read Woolf "globally." Her repeated insistence upon space—in both its aesthetic and political dimensions—as a changing social category serves as the primary lens through which she is able to worry over the implications of global change. In fact, if, by virtue of its novelty and general undesirability, globalization is generally displaced



within modernism, Woolf's perseverance with the concept of "space" may well indicate a further and more thorough displacement of the global than that enacted by earlier modernists. By the time of her fictions, globalization was much more of a fact than it had been for Conrad, writing at the dawn of the century. This increased prominence may well account for Woolf's general preference for the broader notion of "space" in place of the narrower "global." But, in the end, as I shall show, much of what she has to say about space and spatial change has a significant bearing upon what she, along with contemporaries such as Spengler, saw as the diminished global spaces around her.

Thus, while she was still interested and invested in a changing global perspective, Woolf, like many of her contemporaries, turned to the metaphor of space for its ability to express feelings of novelty and disorientation; the metaphor was attractive to her precisely because increased global proximity was fundamentally changing social relations. But despite her socially aware notion of space, Woolf's critics have traditionally positioned her as the apolitical novelist of "interiority." She has frequently been seen as more concerned with allegedly transhistorical questions of human nature and human relationships than with critiquing any number of social injustices being perpetrated around her. As Hermione Lee has recently claimed, this view is patently false since "Woolf's writing was always on the radical, subversive, and modern side [. . .]. In her feminist writing and in all her later novels, her strategies of anti-authoritarian ridicule are an essential part of her modernism" (278).

With its connotations of withdrawal, the word "interiority" situates space as a particularly apt metaphor through which Woolf's distaste for exactly this kind of subversive politics can be made manifest. As a result, Woolf's treatments of space are

read in terms of a larger critical dichotomy in which her obvious interest in aesthetics dominates over and even precludes an interest in the political, however that term is defined. Recent critics such as Rachel Bowlby and Leslie Hankins have begun to challenge what is quite patently a false dichotomy. Even in its title, Bowlby's 1988 *Virginia Woolf: Feminist Destinations* alerts us to Woolf's sensitivity to the spatial implications of feminist politics, as does her clever retitling of Woolf's "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," as "a railway carriage of their own" (10). Even more directly, Hankins asserts that Woolf presents a "reinvigorated spatial critique of culture" which centres on issues of female access and mobility (21). I follow Bowlby and Hankins in asserting that, in her representation of the locales around her, Woolf displayed a keen sensitivity to the way in which physical space was inseparable from politics. For me, though, politics does not carry the precise feminist meaning it does for either Bowlby or Hankins. Instead, by that word I merely mean to signal that for Woolf, politics very deliberately happened in and through space. In other words, I take up the rather capacious notion of the word politics, which, as it circulates within Woolf studies, seems often to be a substitute simply for the even vaguer "history," to show that so-conceived, Woolf's concern with global encroachment and incursion was nothing if not "political."

In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf famously pointed to the ways in which female exclusion from the structures of power and higher learning was not just a trope, but a spatially enforced and politically motivated system of segregation. Unlike the abstractionist impulses of her characters Lily Briscoe and Mrs. Ramsay, Woolf's treatment of space did not constitute an attempt to withdraw from the world, for spaces were, by virtue of their cultural importance alone, heavily invested with political meaning

and intent. In what follows, I show that Woolf saw interiority as especially impossible in a world whose most intimate spaces registered the signs of a changing and an encroaching globe. Like Joyce's characters, the inhabitants of *To the Lighthouse* are frequently confronted with the signs of worldwide compression and depletion. But for the Ramsays and their extended family, integration into a global network is just one more sign that time passes; consequently their response to that worldwide realignment is thus particularly recalcitrant and nostalgic.

The critical proclivity to see Woolf's interest in space as a matter purely of aesthetics surely finds some legitimation in her writing itself. For instance, in her 1924 essay "Character in Fiction," Woolf invokes a spatial and architectural metaphor to convey her distaste for *Ulysses*: "Mr. Joyce's indecency in *Ulysses* seems to me the conscious and calculated indecency of a desperate man who feels that in order to breathe he must break the windows" (*Essays* 3:435). For Woolf, Joyce's offense is akin to smashing that same mediating boundary and barrier which will figure so prominently throughout *To the Lighthouse*. Concerned as she is with decorum and decency, Woolf reads Joyce's disregard for convention as analogous to the sudden and forcible removal of the boundary between inside and outside, between a private space and a more public one. Woolf continues to rely upon a spatial metaphor as she turns to T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. In that memorable image, she reports that the poem leaves her feeling as if she must make "a dizzying and dangerous leap [. . .] line to line" (3:435). In her reaction to those twin monuments of 1922, then, Woolf makes a clear association between the disregard for decorum that is entailed by a radically new aesthetic and a new, and vaguely threatening, relationship with the spaces around her. If Joyce forcibly disrupted the boundary

between private and public, between domestic and non-domestic, Eliot left her in another all too Joycean predicament—flying through space, free of any civilizing “nets.” Like many of the New Critics who followed her, Woolf thus turns to spatial metaphors in order to explain what was new and disquieting about modernism.

While Woolf’s dependence upon these kinds of metaphors reveals a partial affinity with the New Critics, it also resonates within another context. The very titles of her own works suggest a preoccupation with spaces and with travelling through them. In 1922, as *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses* were first appearing in their final forms, so too was Woolf’s first experimental novel, *Jacob’s Room*. Seven years later, she would publish her most famous rumination on public and private space, *A Room of One’s Own*. And the titles of both her 1915 *The Voyage Out* and *To the Lighthouse* denote real physical journeys across space, even as they variously draw upon the metaphoric potential of such traversals. Bowlby’s *Feminist Destinations* is thus itself well-titled for its implied recognition of Woolf’s sustained interest in the explicatory power of spatial metaphors.

Despite this general inclination, however, Woolf’s use of those metaphors was neither predictable nor consistent. In “Modern Novels,” an essay from 1919 in which she reflected upon those early chapters of *Ulysses* which had come out in *The Little Review*, Woolf’s criticism of the novel is quite gentle and muted. But to the extent that she does indict Joyce, she does so here precisely for his refusal to “break the windows,” drawing parallels between reading *Ulysses* and the feeling that one remains in a “bright and yet somehow strictly confined apartment rather than at large beneath the sky” (3: 34). Here then, the room functions as a kind of prison, whose boundaries and borders are to be transgressed rather than adhered to in the name of decency. In a subsequent version of

the same essay retitled “Modern Fiction” (1925), Woolf repeats the spatial analogy, though with one subtle and telling change. Here the chamber within which the reader is said to be “confined and shut in” is simply a “room” rather than the more specific “apartment” to which Woolf had earlier referred (4: 162). Woolf’s slight shift in locale might signal a kind of generic, homogenizing reading of space, but more likely it reveals a careful attentiveness to the spatial inflections of her argument, given both the seriousness with which she approached revision in general, and her penchant for analyzing culture in terms of the spaces it inhabits.

Indeed, the shift from “apartment” to “room” foreshadows Woolf’s preoccupation with space in *A Room of One’s Own*. If Woolf had come to see Joyce as indecent for breaking the windows out of his room, the female artist of *A Room of One’s Own* was in fact well-advised to break out of the confines of the debilitating patriarchal spaces which had variously imprisoned and excluded her. She must “leave behind, shut up in their parks among their folios, those great solitary ladies who wrote without audience and criticism” so that she may “come to town and rub shoulders with the ordinary people in the streets” (63). Subsequently, as the title of the essay inescapably suggests, she must secure for herself a more ameliorative set of confines in which her creative potential can be realized. In the essay, then, Woolf articulates an argument which refuses to separate politics and space. For her, public and private spaces such as the university, the city-square, and the public museum, are where patriarchal hegemony makes itself and its exclusions visible. Conversely, the seizure of one’s own space constitutes an act of political resistance and rebellion.

As her diary makes clear, however, sometimes freedom from such debilitating spaces is simply bestowed upon the individual by virtue of modern technology. In August 1927, she delights in the liberatory power of the automobile which she and Leonard had just purchased: “We have motored most days. We opened one little window when we brought the gramophone; now another opens with the motor....Soon we shall look back at our pre-motor days as we do now at our days in the caves” (*Diary* 151). Linking technological development with a changing relation to the material spaces she inhabits and traverses, Woolf reveals that her sensitivity to spatial modes of expression is far from disembodied or purely symbolic. Nevertheless, she continually turns to the spaces around her for their metaphoric capacity; precisely because so much in modernity depends upon space, it can be used as a conceptual category to explain countless manifestations of novelty.

That is, Woolf’s remarks on the car and the gramophone make clear that for her the connotative potential of space derives from a new way of living in, travelling through, and identifying with one’s geographic surroundings. But her insistence upon the denotative meaning of space has, until very recently, remained obfuscated by the critical inclination to see her as a writer fixated upon subjectivity, consciousness, and “interiority.” This tendency is itself part of a larger trend which receives justification from Leonard Woolf’s often-rehearsed claim that Woolf was “the least political animal that has lived since Aristotle invented the definition” (27). Woolf’s most famous biographer, Quentin Bell, lent his weight to this sweeping claim at the same time that he provided it with contextual justification: “[S]he belonged, inescapably, to the Victorian world of Empire, Class, and Privilege. Her gift was for the pursuit of shadows, for the

ghostly whispers of the mind and for Pythian incomprehensibility” (xi). Positioning himself as the chief apologist for Woolf’s putative withdrawal from the world, Bell deflects any criticism for that retreat onto the larger impersonal forces of an “inescapable” history and fate.

Bell and Leonard Woolf are the most authoritative voices to make this kind of claim for Woolf’s relationship—or lack of relationship—to the outside world. In 1942, F. R. Leavis ironically invokes spatial language in order to characterize Woolf’s withdrawal: “the envelope enclosing her dramatised sensibilities may be ‘semi-transparent’ but it seems to shut out all the ranges of experience accompanying those kinds of preoccupation, volitional and moral, with an external world which are not felt primarily as preoccupation with one’s consciousness of it.” For Leavis, the end result was an “effect of something closely akin to a sophisticated aestheticism” (297). As one of Woolf’s earliest and staunchest defenders, Eric Auerbach picked up on Leavis’s charge of aestheticism, though for him withdrawal was not the sign of failure. Surveying Woolf’s fiction alongside that of her modernist contemporaries, Auerbach claimed that “[c]ommon to almost all of these novels is haziness, vague indefinability of meaning: precisely the kind of uninterpretable symbolism which is also to be encountered in the other forms of art in the same period” (51). Like Bell and in contrast to Lewis, Auerbach exonerated Woolf from any criticism attributing interiority or simple “haziness” to the “spirit of the age.” But what unites all of these early readings of Woolf is their insistence on seeing space as a metaphor by which her solipsism can be understood. This early troping of space in the service of interpretation and explication would do much to colour later interpretations of Woolf’s actual treatment of space.

Despite recent dismissals of Leonard Woolf's remarks as "outrageously inaccurate" (Bazin and Lauter 26), his view of his wife's engagement with the external world of politics continued to gain momentum so that increasingly Woolf came to be seen as not only apolitical but also as withdrawn from something even more vague than "politics." Often, as the comments of Bell and others make clear, she is simply seen to be fixated on "interiority" at the expense of "exteriority." This critical insistence is made abundantly clear in the title of Harvena Richter's still influential study from 1970, *Virginia Woolf: The Inner Voyage*. There, Richter appropriates the concept of the voyage in order to articulate what nevertheless remains one of the most cogent arguments for Woolf's putative fixation upon interiority. For Richter even more than for those earlier critics, space and structure are the metaphors that best underline the sophistication of Woolf's exploration of both aesthetic form and human consciousness.

Richter stakes this claim by way of a telling keyword: "Abstraction, reflection, metamorphosis, discontinuity—these and other modes are the means by which Mrs. Woolf brings the reader into the very center of her work" (x). The implications of Woolf's purely aesthetic journey are made clear in Richter's unintentional echo of Wilhelm Worringer's "abstraction," by which Worringer signifies a modernist "fear of space" for its associations with a "time-world;" this fear then entails a retreat into non-representational, ahistorical forms. And Richter's subsequent claims for Woolf's fiction certainly bear out Worringer's account of modern art, though she recasts the turn to abstraction as positive: "If the modern mind was suddenly thrown open to analysis, the inward-turning author, freed from old strictures, could make an exploration of his own. For Proust and Joyce, [. . .] and especially for Virginia Woolf, the novel became 'a little



voyage of discovery.’ And the search, or journey, was almost always a voyage ‘in’” (15). Leaving aside her approval of Woolf’s change in direction, Richter, like Worringer before her, claims that the modernist fixation with space connotes a fascination with the “abstract” rather than the material. But the blatant inversion of Woolf’s voyage from out to in signals the wrenching critical force with which such a claim is made.

Many others have agreed with Richter’s insistence that Woolf privileges the abstract over the material. Mitchell Leaska’s quasi-scientific scrutiny of *To the Lighthouse* from 1968 provides one of the most sophisticated readings of Woolfian abstraction, in that he locates an external/internal divide within Woolf’s characters themselves: “In so far as Lily Briscoe’s use of abstract nouns is concerned [. . .] because the quantity is slightly above the mean value (40:7), she represents that duality of personality in which the intellectual, sensitive part abstracts experience, while the artistic, intuitive moiety senses life as concrete, specific, on the level of ‘ordinary experience’” (140). Perry Meisel’s 1980 study of Walter Pater’s influence on Woolf relies upon similar language, though he again repositions Leaska’s divide so that it separates Woolf’s individual works from one another: “*To the Lighthouse* is a far more abstract account of the self as situated in the common life than *The Waves*” (199).

In his reading of *To the Lighthouse*, Allen McLaurin largely agrees with this assessment, even as he turns the focus to the more narrow issue of Woolf’s representation of aesthetic space:

We have suggested that space is indicated by the use of blue, and that parenthesis, the picture frame, and the looking-glass hold a “world hollowed out.” Lily’s method of working is described as “tunnelling her way into the picture, into the

past.” [. . .] This creation of space, this “framing” in order to cut off the picture space from ordinary space, is the basis of all painting. (199)

McLaurin’s reading of space in *To the Lighthouse* reflects his allegiance to that larger, and until recently, dominant trend within Woolf scholarship—to see her writing as “cut off” from the “ordinary” world.

Despite her recurrent fixation on cities, rooms, and other locales as places of authority and subversion, Woolf’s politicization of space has thus done little to discourage readings of her as apolitical, even ahistorical. Indeed, as in McLaurin’s analysis, often her considerations of space are seen to be the very sign of that alleged withdrawal.

Dorothy Brewster’s reading of what she sees as Woolf’s fixation upon the “recurrent image” of the globe is a particularly striking example of this approach. Brewster begins her analysis by identifying *The Waves* as “the most ‘inner’ and putatively symbolic of her novels,” where we are encouraged to see Woolf’s interest in globes as “a symbol [. . .] of the spirit we live by, Life itself” (79). Tellingly, Brewster instructs Woolf’s readers not to “worry too much over the boundary between the individual consciousness and what lies outside,” while at the same time she insists upon her determination to “keep ‘life in general’ in Mrs. Woolf’s novels from being only a vague abstraction” (82). But in making the globe into a sign of “the interplay between inner and outer,” terms, she admits, “which Mrs. Woolf would never have used” (80), she downplays the specific geographic context which helps to make sense of what she herself sees as Woolf’s preoccupation with the global.

Janis Paul’s gloss of Brewster’s study nicely captures its aestheticizing and de-realizing gesture: “Brewster uses Woolf’s image of the globe as a symbol of the way the

external world becomes round and whole in consciousness” (192). And for justification of her claims, Brewster looks to one of Woolf’s diary entries from 1928 where Woolf indeed seems to enact just such an interiorizing transformation. Woolf writes:

So the days pass & I ask myself sometimes whether one is not hypnotised, as a child behind a silver globe, by life; & whether this is living. Its very quick, bright, exciting. But superficial perhaps. I should like to take the globe in my hands & feel it quietly, round, smooth, heavy. & so hold it, day after day. I will read Proust I think. I will go backwards and forwards. (3: 209 sic)

With its depiction of a child enraptured by the globe, Woolf’s diary recalls Marlow’s memories of his childhood in which he had a “passion for maps.” And for all their symbolism, Woolf’s reflections, like those of Conrad, dramatize and demystify—even as they enact—the transmutation of global space into an art object as a hopeless fantasy. For here, Woolf stresses that the attempt to turn the globe into a symbol for something as amorphous as simply “life” is a childish and “superficial” endeavour. Her final resolution to read “Proust” and go “backwards and forwards” represents, again following Worringer’s analysis, a wish to return to the “time-world” of material spaces. Such a return would necessarily be forestalled by any effort of symbolic abstraction. As important as it is for its recognition of the recurrence of the “global” within Woolf’s fiction, then, Brewster’s reading suffers for its glossing over of the way in which Woolf first displays an attempt to turn the material spaces of the world into metaphors and then chides herself for that attempt.

Following Brewster’s general line, Nancy Bazin’s 1973 reading of *The Waves* derives from the wholly aesthetic conception of fictional space laid out by Joseph Frank.

Alluding directly to Frank, Bazin argues that “the ‘spatial form’ of the novel may be envisioned as a series of ‘angular’ shapes” (146). And it is not just *The Waves* which mobilizes space for aesthetic ends: “To one degree or another, she visualized all of her novels in terms of space much as if the novel were a painting” (32). Aligning herself with the ahistorical, abstractionist overtones of both Frank and Worringer, Bazin continues: “As she discovered techniques which enabled her to rely less and less upon story and, hence, upon a chronological time sequence, she developed what Joseph Frank calls ‘spatial form.’ Spatial form transforms the novel into an image” (32). Again then, it is with reference to Woolf’s preoccupation with space that the transcendent, immaterial, and non-time-world quality of her fiction is asserted. Very recently, Oddvar Holmesland has also cast his reading of *To the Lighthouse* in similar Frankian terms, focussing upon that novel’s “spatial form, or symbolic representation” as it represents “the unselfconscious flow of life” (91). Janis Paul, while claiming to resist this dismissal of the “materialist quality” of Woolf’s fiction (12), contrasts the “rapidly alternating vignettes of a busy London day” that compose the worldly *Mrs. Dalloway* with the “slower rhythms of the sea” which serve as the “bass note” to the much more ephemeral *To the Lighthouse* (155). Certainly, the contrast Paul finds bears some validity, but more importantly her willingness to see some of Woolf’s spaces as less metaphorical than others signals the beginning of an effort to break away from a homogeneous reading of Woolf as generally unconcerned with space as a material, and protean, category of existence. In other words, Paul implies that the opposition between politics and space, like the larger one of politics and aesthetics of which it is a function, is a patently false dichotomy. While Woolf frequently invoked space for its metaphoric and aesthetic

capacities, this inclination coexisted quite comfortably with her belief that physical space and its occupation was crucial to any kind of political action, whether regressive or subversive.

Not surprisingly, what we might call the more denotative, more materially oriented, readings of Woolfian space have tended to focus on what is arguably Woolf's most sustained examination of the politics of space, *A Room of One's Own*. Even with respect to that piece, however, some readers have continued to point to her metaphoric and abstractionist orientation. For instance, Allyson McGill, pointing to the essay's comparison of "the writing of fiction to the building of cathedrals" again stresses Woolf's putative attraction to space as metaphor, here valued as an heuristic that explicates the complexities of modernist aesthetics (264). Ellen Carol Jones aligns herself with McGill in arguing that Woolf's emphasis upon money and a secure space "asserts symbolically" her argument for female emancipation (229). Even James Hoban, while pointing to a more literal interpretation of Woolf's "room," also defends the cogency of those earlier preoccupations with a less literal "interiority." Hoban argues that the places and spaces inhabited by Woolf's essay are "not simply physical phenomena; they represent mental constructs, metaphors for the minds of their inhabitants, or, more precisely, metaphors and images" (150). Of course to stress this apolitical version of Woolf is necessarily to diminish her investment in space as both a historically contingent category of existence and as something—in all its various territorial incarnations—that is subject to change. Moreover, these readings of *A Room of One's Own* together reveal that such an image of Woolf can take hold even when the text under scrutiny seems to be everywhere concerned with the sociopolitical implications of space. And accurate though it may be,

Hoban's argument is somewhat curious given that it is only recently that readings that reclaim a political significance for Woolf's use of space have really begun to emerge.

Of course *A Room of One's Own* is the most logical place around which such renewed readings of Woolf's exteriors and interiors might cluster. Together with her indictment of the sealed off spaces of patriarchy such as the libraries of Oxbridge and the British Museum, Woolf's examination of the cloistered rooms within which female writers have historically been imprisoned makes clear that space for her is something much more than a mere trope. Perhaps the most unambiguous sign of the denotative function of space in her essay lies in her insistence that for the female artist, "it is necessary to have five hundred a year and a room with a lock on the door if you are to write fiction or poetry" (105). As "prosaic" as this advice may be, Woolf maintains that she has not "made too much of the importance of material things" (106).

It is in response to Woolf's insistence upon the political uses to which space has been and continues to be put that Hankins argues that Woolf's essay is "a breathtaking *tour de force* of spatial critique [. . .]. Rhetorical design moves the argument through recognized landmarks of traditional intellectual culture" (20). Hankins's comments are one sign of a recent shift within Woolf scholarship, a shift away from reading her as the novelist of "interiority" and toward seeing her as, like Conrad and Joyce, highly implicated in and responsive to the changing nature of the material spaces in which she lived and wrote. For Hankins, Woolf always sees space as having political implications; it is where society enforces and manifests the exclusion and inclusion of its variously unequal members. Attributing much of the same power to Woolf which contemporary cultural geographers such as Gregory, Harvey, and Soja claim for themselves, Hankins argues that "a

generation before postmodern theorists, these outsider intellectuals [Benjamin and Woolf] initiated revolutionary critiques of the ‘sacred edifices’ of culture” which “spatialized cultural critique” and emphasized “spatial strategies for change” (9). In similar, if less sweeping, terms, Jane Goldman argues that *A Room of One’s Own* “suggests a concern with the *spatial* location of the self” that is bound up with “the essay’s inquiry into the material and external factors in the production of writing by women” (5). Together then, Goldman and Hankins signal an effort to redeem Woolf’s spaces as lived-in, dynamic sites that bear multiple political, material, and social implications.

In decrying what he calls the “official version” of Virginia Woolf, Mark Hussey points out that until recently readings like these have largely been unthinkable. It is only of late, he explains, that scholars have begun to move away from the image of Woolf “as an exquisite stylist whose interest in what has traditionally been allowed as ‘politics’ was negligible” (2). Paul concurs, stating that “[a]lmost every critic at some point has recognized the separation between internal and external worlds in Woolf’s novels. But the inner world of imagination, consciousness, and self has almost always been felt to dominate her world” (191). And Rachel Bowlby, undoubtedly thinking of Bell’s caricature among others, undermines the trend towards interiority in terms that are themselves explicitly spatial: “In this kind of argument, she is set up as the aristocratic lady whose leisure and income enabled her to retreat into a private, self-contained haven whence to expatiate on the beauties of Art and the delicate contents of her self-absorbed mind” (8).

Drawing upon the cogency of just this kind of critique, Nancy Bazin and Jane Lauter lament the enormous sway which the views of Leonard Woolf and Bell have had and continue to have over Woolf scholarship. Rejecting the transparency with which those claims are accepted, Bazin and Lauter offer the equally polemic, but still more satisfying, perspective that “Woolf was extremely political and, indeed, quite radical” (26). To begin to substantiate their claim, Bazin and Lauter tie Woolf’s political commitment to gender, class, and most pacifist causes to her critique of the First World War. Quite simply, they claim that a “feeling of security that could be found in the Victorian age has been shattered by the war. The impression of permanent loss signals Woolf’s awareness that a world war causes irreparable damage to the human psyche” (22). Bazin and Lauter go on to argue that as this awareness manifests itself in a very public critique of this particular war and of wars in general, Woolf projected the shattering effects of global conflict—with its radical redrawing of territories and boundaries—onto one particularly charged space, the Victorian home of Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*.

Bazin and Lauter’s reading of the “Time Passes” section of the novel thus follows that of Makiko Minow-Pinkney. In *Virginia Woolf and the Problem of the Subject*, Minow-Pinkney argues that “what is literally destroying the house is the rain, rats, and wind, but what is figuratively destroying it is the First World War” (99). This sensitivity to space develops in the context of a newly technologized form of world war which is itself remapping the world. Indeed, for Michele Pridmore-Brown, the war made geographic proximity especially evident: “Britain’s island insularity offer[ed] no protection in the air age” (415). In choosing the Victorian house as the ground-zero upon which she can best measure the cataclysmic effects of war, Woolf then signals both the broad fact of her



political engagement with the anti-war cause and her willingness to seize upon a particularly charged site within which she can broadcast the war's assault upon both space and time. Nostalgia for earlier times and unshattered spaces is thus both the means and the sign of a repoliticized imagination.

In addition to these initial efforts, several more recent readers of Woolf have started to examine carefully the spaces and places of her fictions. And, following Hankins's and Goldman's reading of one essay, they have argued for Woolf's generally politicized reading of the cultural and material spaces around her. For instance, Susan Squier states simply that "in so many of her novels, Virginia Woolf presents a politics of space" (212). More broadly, Laura Doan and Terry Brown speak of the "importance of the geography of London for Woolf" (18). Wendy Patrice Williams, in reading *Mrs. Dalloway* "through a geometric shape," returns us to questions of abstraction and interiority, though her claim that "spatial orientation was of primary importance for Woolf" (210-3) underscores Woolf's sustained effort to disorient and reorient the material spaces around her through both aesthetic and political means.

And in ultimately rejecting the "idealized" and aestheticized spaces that she finds valorized in Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, Mary Beth Pringle's brief study of "Mrs. Ramsay's spiritual disconnection from the space she inhabits" again recognizes the sociological and political implications of Woolf's effort. Pringle quite correctly expresses dissatisfaction with Bachelard's analysis for the ways in which it dislocates and even effaces physical space. That earlier landmark study, she reminds us, "posits a relationship between 'exterior space' and 'interior territories.'" That is, "Bachelard shows that external space [...] exists only through people's experiences and perceptions

of it" (306). Pringle points out that Bachelard's analysis emphasizes the formalist and aesthetic dimensions of domestic space in that he encourages us to "read a room or read a house" the way we read a book; both experiences can "move us at an unimaginable depth" (307). Such an "interior" or textual model, though, "idealizes space without regard to its political significance" (311). As I do, Pringle rejects this model; she examines "the toll Mrs. Ramsay paid to create a space for others" as the sign of Woolf's critique of the domestic haven as a social construct. Woolf's aversion to that toll and her sensitivity to its spatial orientation accounts for the fact that "more than an angel gets killed in Woolf's famous novel. One seeking, like Woolf, to destroy an angel must also demolish the space the angel inhabits" (306).

Pringle's attentiveness to Woolf's efforts to demolish the spaces of material culture that were debilitating for both women and men alike recalls Bowlby's important work. As she reads Woolf's essay, "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," Bowlby claims that Woolf's dissatisfaction with gender roles and literary conventions expresses itself in a desire for "the smashing and crashing" with which modernism would announce itself (10). Of course, Bowlby is also quite correct to note the "matronly disapproval" with which Woolf "likens the behaviour of the new writers to the rebelliousness of little boys rolling in the mud as a resistance to genteel constraints" (10); it is, after all, Woolf who admonishes the petulant Joyce for breaking out the windows of his confined room. But Bowlby argues that despite her ambivalence regarding decorum and decency, public and private, Woolf always recognized the ways in which genre and gender were bound up with the material spaces in which they were enacted and performed. In order to smash or

“shatter” those conventions against which she rails in “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown,” Woolf thus uses “public space as a sign of strangeness rather than predictability” (5).

According to Bowlby, not only is Mrs. Brown’s railway compartment a “strange” or defamiliarized space, but also it is one which has been radically reoriented and remapped: “Writers, characters, readers, and the linguistic means of bringing about an interchange between them are radically shaken around in this suburban railway journey” (5). The smashing and crashing that is enacted in Woolf’s landmark essay “cannot be simply narrated as a movement from outer to inner; instead [. . .] it is a question of a different relationship between inside and outside [. . .]. Inner and outer, seer and seen, psychic and social, can in no way be represented apart” (7-8). Bowlby takes aim at Woolf’s putative preference for interiority, seeing it as willfully oblivious to the ways in which the spaces of consciousness are imbricated with, and shaped by, the spaces of material culture. As Woolf “analyses the railway compartment in all its contingency” and suggests that “it will be from the woman in the corner of the railway compartment [. . .] that the most fruitful and troubling questions will be posed” (15), she signals her interest in space as something more than simply a metaphor. Bowlby, then, finds in Woolf’s reading of the “confining” railway compartment of “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown” an investigation of the ways in which the politics of gender and genre are implicated in and produced by the material spaces and places—whether railway carriages, summer houses, city-scapes, war-zones—of her contemporary society. In order to smash the confining conventions around her, Woolf calls for the reorientation of the representational spaces around her.

In the end, then, Bowlby’s reading suggests that Woolf’s relationship to space and the politics of space was complex and conflicted; if at times she lamented the shattering of

time and space that was the legacy of world war, at others she herself initiated the call for the demolition of the particularly virulent spaces in which and through which gender-based inequity flourished. Jennifer Nesbitt has recently asserted that “Woolf’s analysis [. . .] anticipates the work of Henri Lefebvre whose concept of “social space” retrieves space as a category of social analysis” (6). Nesbitt has thus recognized quite clearly the persistence with which Woolf continually returns to space as the repository both of public and private memory and of a patriarchal hegemony that is rooted in social sites such as the university, the city-square, or the public museum.

Even in her recent study of Woolf’s presentation of the “public woman,” in which she critiques Bowlby’s reading of “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown,” Marianne DeKoven, consciously or not, invokes Lefebvre’s concept of a subversive “representational space.” Acknowledging Bowlby’s claims for the railway compartment as a “new representational space where inner and outer interpenetrate,” where “Mrs. Brown’s interiority both encompasses and refers to the new crowds and masses of modernity’s public spaces,” DeKoven counters that Woolf’s “primary move in this essay, as in her fictional practice, is to valorize and inhabit a reconfigured feminine interiority” (235). DeKoven is quick to stress that this brand of interiority is indeed a “reconfigured” one that is attuned to the political implications of space. Nevertheless, in her reading, Woolf ends by “recontaining” women within the confining spaces which disempower them:

This privacy is very different from the enforced female domesticity that reached its apogee in Woolf’s Victorian childhood [. . .]. The privacy of Mrs. Brown’s interiority is very explicitly an alternative to bourgeois domesticity: a liberated space of freedom from its constraints; a space of valorized femininity redeemed

from its denigration of women. But it is also a space that, in refusing not only the female private sphere of bourgeois domesticity but also the hegemonic male public sphere, reinscribes that private/public dichotomy in ways that realign femininity with exclusion from the public sphere. (235)

With her references to such amorphous locales as “space[s] of freedom,” “public sphere[s],” and “a space of potential social change” (242), the metaphoric overtones of DeKoven’s reading become quite pronounced and retrograde, even as they continue to attune us to the “social” implications of Woolf’s study of space. For they return us to a sense of space which once again becomes almost meaningless in its capaciousness.

Kathy Phillips’s recent study is somewhat less problematic as her reading of Woolf’s representation of empire allows for a similar sensitivity to the general ways in which the spaces of the globe were changing. Like Bowlby, Phillips stresses that Woolf “consistently satirizes social institutions” through critiquing the physical spaces in which those institutions are based (vii). As she outlines “the complicated ways in which Woolf sees the British Empire, militarism, and gender relations interacting,” Phillips argues that readings of Woolf as “divorce[d] from social issues” disregard her sustained attention to imperial space as a guarantor of patriarchal hegemony that was becoming increasingly, and fortunately, unstable (xi). Whatever the source of her criticism, her fiction reveals a view of empire as “a gigantic ‘taking’ of someone else’s air and space” (xxxix). This reading of empire allows for a reading of global space as itself the site of flux and reorganization. As the global map transformed in the years before and after the First World War with its smashing of nations and empires, Woolf came to see space and its distribution as both a vanishing commodity and as a manifestation of rampant economic

disparity (xxxvii). For Phillips as for Bowlby, Woolf's critique of contemporary society is both rooted in and expressed through a critique of the intersecting physical, material, and cultural spaces which together constitute its territory.

Finally, notwithstanding the important work of these critics, the most cogent and sustained readings of Woolf's engagement with the various changing spaces around her comes in a recent volume edited by Pamela Caughie and entitled *Virginia Woolf in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. As its title suggests, the volume focuses upon the ways in which Woolf's representation of modern technology and its effects dovetails with that of her famous contemporary, Walter Benjamin. As many of the essays themselves reveal, any attempt to discuss technological development within the context of modernism is necessarily bound up with an examination of space, as both a conceptual category and a material fact. This connection between technology and space is also made explicit within Benjamin's own oeuvre. His collection *Illuminations* contains, in addition to "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," his famous "On some Motifs in Baudelaire," in which he reflects upon modern city spaces and Baudelaire's fascination with the figure of the *flâneur*.

Of course, Benjamin's own reflections on the *flâneur* reveal a deep-seated ambivalence to modern city space and the ways in which that archetype has been superseded by the more "manic" figure of the "man in the crowd" (172). Moreover, Benjamin stresses that the technological advances attended to by later readers such as Caughie produce, and are in turn produced by, the changing face of the cityscape. In contrast to "Baudelaire's Paris" in which were "preserved some features that dated back to the happy old days," such as "[f]erries [that] still crossed the Seine at points that would

later be spanned by the arch of a bridge,” modern London with its “feverish turmoil” has deprived the *flâneur* of the “milieu to which he belonged” (172-3). This shift is directly related to technological advances whose effects leave Benjamin decidedly ambivalent: he appreciates their “shock” value and their defamiliarizing capacity, but he is clearly nostalgic for the Paris of Baudelaire and Edgar Allan Poe. Technology, Benjamin tells us, changes the way we negotiate and inhabit city space: “Whereas Poe’s passers-by cast glances in all directions which still appeared to be aimless, today’s pedestrians are obliged to do so in order to keep abreast of traffic signals. Thus technology has subjected the human sensorium to a complex kind of training” (175).

Benjamin’s link between technology and urban space is acknowledged both explicitly and implicitly throughout the Caughie volume which in its turn links his work to that of Woolf. Hence any examination of Woolf’s engagement with the technological revolutions taking place around her implicates her in a process whereby the spaces of the city, the home, and the globe were being reimagined and reoriented. Caughie herself illustrates this connection as she reads a passage from Woolf’s *Orlando*. In that novel, Woolf had written of her time-travelling heroine’s experience in the modern city:

At last, however, she drew up at Marshall and Snelgroves [. . .]. Then she got into the lift [. . .] and was shot smoothly upwards. The very fabric of life now, she thought as she rose, is magic. In the eighteenth century, we knew how everything was done; but here I rise through the air; I listen to voices in America; I see men flying. (299-300)

Caughie very correctly finds in this passage Woolf’s representation of the “shock” with which modern technology makes itself felt for both Orlando and her fully modern

counterparts; that shock is manifestly the result of the individual's new relationship to the spaces around her. Indeed, Orlando's reflections upon the disorienting effect of "ris[ing] through the air" recalls Woolf's own reflections upon the alienating effects of Eliot's poetry where she felt as if she were flying through the air, leaping "from bar to bar." Orlando's allusions to an increased ability to negotiate large distances through radio and air-travel is reiterated by Caughie's reflections upon what she calls Woolf's interest in "border crossing." Among other things, border crossing encompasses "not just the crossing of generic boundaries among the arts," but also "the crossing of Westerners into other territories, inspired by and transporting new recording devices" (xxx). Caughie thus accurately picks up on Woolf's sense—shared by both Conrad and Joyce—that modern technology was in effect shrinking the spaces around her.

That Caughie's reference to "border crossing" is not merely metaphoric is borne out by several of the essays within the ensuing volume. These essays focus upon Woolf's relationship to various technologies which were transforming the landscape around her. For example, Melba Cuddy-Keane's analysis of Woolf's representation of new sound technologies points out how a new relationship to sound is predicated upon and generative of a new relationship to space. Cuddy-Keane emphasizes the ways in which new methods of transmitting and receiving sound fundamentally altered the city experience: "Woolf's description of leaden circles dissolving in the air [in *Mrs. Dalloway*] prompts us to think of the clock of Westminster as an omnidirectional broadcasting tower, diffusing its metallic tones to all listeners within the city of London—a description that in 1925 suggests an awareness [. . .] of the new broadcasting technology" (71). As sound technology closes the gaps both within and between cities, it



alters both the physical space of London and its “social space,” which in Lefebvre’s sense is neither a “collection of things or an aggregate of (sensory) data, nor a void packed like a parcel with various contents,” but rather simply “the space of society, of social life” (Lefebvre 35). The new fact of radio wave transmission and reception is for Cuddy-Keane, as for Woolf, an undeniable part of the social life of 1925 London.

Cuddy-Keane goes on to make more explicit connections between new sounds and new spaces. Invoking the word “auscultation” to denote “the action of listening,” she argues that in its description of the sound of an aeroplane, *Mrs. Dalloway* represents “the auscultation from different spacial [*sic*] points in the city [to] impl[y] the kind of expanded listening audience actualized with the advent of broadcasting” (71). Cuddy-Keane establishes a similar link in Woolf’s short story “Kew Gardens.” There Woolf represents auscultation as “stationary but omnidirectional and the points of sound diffusion are distributed in space” (84). Indeed the story’s sensitivity to new sound technologies is actually made manifest through its representation of a new kind of spatial configuration:

Whereas this is the common positioning for a listener at a concert—particularly an electroacoustical concert in which the sounds are diffused through loudspeakers distributed around the hall at varying distances from the listeners—it is unusual in narrative where the auscultator generally follows the moving action. Time as progression in conversation (the idea of beginning, middle, and end) is here subordinated, as in much electroacoustical music, to relations among disparate points in space. (85)

For Cuddy-Keane, then, Woolf's spatially oriented representation points to a heightened sensitivity to a changing soundscape, but just as importantly, that soundscape produces and makes manifest a changing cityscape. If Woolf's attitude to sound is revolutionary, so too perhaps is her privileging of space over time. While modernism at large and Woolf in particular are still frequently seen as preoccupied with temporality, Cuddy-Keane provides an important qualification to that claim.

In her reading of Woolf's relationship to the automobile, Minow-Pinkney establishes a further connection between technology and space. Turning to Woolf's comparison of motoring to "opening a window," Cuddy-Keane claims that Woolf linked "technological development with a liberating expansion of space" (76). Minow-Pinkney largely concurs, calling Woolf the motorist a proponent of this new-found "exhilarating freedom." For evidence, Minow-Pinkney turns to Woolf's essay from 1927 entitled "Evening Over Sussex: Reflections in a Motor Car." As Minow-Pinkney claims, Woolf uses the essay both to display her enthusiasm for car travel and to "describ[e] vivid sensations produced in a psychic process characteristic to motoring" (163). Out of this new relationship to the spaces which one now traverses with relative ease, comes a new kind of art. And the materiality of this modern experience is never in doubt:

The link between motoring experience and aesthetic practices is not just a matter of trope or analogy but motoring, together with other experiences distinctive to the modern age of technology, affects the human sensory organization itself, which, dissolving its linear cohesion, necessitates new modes of thought and aesthetic representation adjusted to it. (163)

It is not just the fact of technology itself, but rather technology as it involves a new relationship to surrounding spaces which effects this change.

Minow-Pinkeley makes the link between technology and space even more explicit as she reinforces the connection between Woolf and Benjamin. Woolf's motorist, she claims, is an updated version of Benjamin's *flâneur*. Both figures explore the "relationship between art and the conditions of modern life" (166). Moreover, "[t]he fast, constantly changing images that one encounters in the busy movement of the stream of crowds and heavy traffic, or in fast motoring, disrupt the coherence of the association of images and fragment the subject's identity" (166). The changed relationship to space brought on by both urban growth and technological development is for Minow-Pinkney a crucial context in which Woolf's "revolutionary aesthetic" must be understood.

Finally, Holly Henry's reflections upon one further instance of technological development have significant bearing upon Woolf's relationship to a context of spatial reorientation. Henry claims that advances in telescopic lenses and, consequently, in astronomy, changed the way Woolf saw both the world and the world of fiction. In particular, Woolf's exposure to Edwin Hubble's theory of an "expanding theory" and his "radical reconfiguration of the universe had a powerful shaping effect on her aesthetic and political practices" (136). Again then, if those "alternative aesthetic and political perspectives [were] made possible through emerging telescopic technologies" (138), that technological advance was refracted through a new configuration of space which affected not only one's sense of the universe but also of the earth within it. This double realignment is evident in a quotation from Bertrand Russell which Henry herself cites. In 1919 Russell wrote in *The Atheneum* that

[t]he universe as astronomy reveals it is very vast. How much there may be beyond what our telescopes show, we cannot tell; but what we can know is of unimaginable immensity. In the visible world the Milky Way is a tiny fragment; within this fragment, the solar system is an infinitesimal speck, and of this speck our planet is a microscopic dot. (232)

Henry stresses Russell's emphasis upon a universe that is "expanding," by which term she alludes to Arthur Eddington's 1933 popular study, *The Expanding Universe*, whose author expounded a similar view. By "rescaling" the cosmos, Henry claims that Hubble, Russell, and Eddington were bringing "into the purview of popular audiences new vistas of intergalactic space" (142). Such a shift necessitated a radical rescaling and "decentering of humans" that augmented the similar effects of post-Darwinian science (140).

But what Henry downplays in her essay is the way in which global space was itself reconfigured and diminished by virtue of its being re-presented as a "speck," a "microscopic dot," or for James Jeans, another popular astronomer with whose work Woolf was familiar (Henry 142), a "grain of sand" that is "totally indifferent or definitely hostile" to the beings which inhabit it (Jeans 16). Remapping the globe as infinitesimal simultaneously magnified the distances and spaces beyond its "borders" while it increased the sense of proximity upon it. Henry draws attention to the ways in which the human rescaling produced by emergent lens technology afforded Woolf a position from which she might specifically critique war and aggression. A new vision of space thus enables a modern brand of pacifist politics.

In what now follows, I will build upon this linkage as I show that the global downscaling that was produced by hypothetical views from afar was entirely compatible with Woolf's general awareness of an increased sense of global proximity and homogeneity. For me, Woolf's politicized reading of space that Bowlby and Hankins have made so evident with respect to texts like "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" and *A Room of One's Own* extends to her treatment of global space in *To the Lighthouse*. But in that novel, her politics of space entails not the subversion of patriarchal structures or the expropriation of a private space of one's own but rather the illumination of the changing global context in which those smaller acts of resistance take place. For Woolf, global space, like the more immediate locales which it constantly penetrates, is much more than some repository for metaphor; it is one of the most visible "sites" upon which the advances of modernity are registered. And any attempt to evaluate the political potential of the room, the university, the private home must take place in the context of a world whose refusal to remain "outside" is explicitly recognized.

If *To the Lighthouse* is a novel about space, then nowhere is that theme made more obvious than in the struggles of Lily Briscoe to complete her painting. Lily is of course the novel's surrogate artist, the single female painter whose attempts to arrest a moment in time through the timelessness of art are meant to echo the efforts of Mrs. Ramsay to forge lasting memories that can similarly withstand the ravages of historical contingency. As she endeavours to complete her painting over the ten-year period in which the novel is set, Lily is beset by challenges from all sides, ranging from the demands put upon her by "odious" men like Charles Tansley and Mr. Ramsay, to her own frequent self-doubts regarding her decision to pursue her art at the expense of a more conventional lifestyle.

But her chief struggle lies upon the representational canvas itself, for it bears the traces of her inability to re-present what “she could see [. . .] all so clearly and commandingly, when she looked,” before “the whole thing changed [. . .] in that moment’s flight between the picture and her canvas” (27-8). The most obvious sign of that failure is what Lily simply calls the “awkward space” at the center of the painting. This is a space that she seeks to avoid or obfuscate by “put[ting] the tree further in the middle” (115). Elsewhere she reflects that she might connect the two separated halves of the painting “by bringing the line of the branch across so; or break the vacancy in the foreground by an object (James perhaps) so” (73-4). In the end though, Lily’s chosen solution to the problem of the awkward space is both more simple and more radical. In the final paragraph of the novel, Lily has her “vision”: “With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the center. It was done; it was finished” (281). Lily has thus decided against any realist image—a tree, a branch, James—that might fill the void in the middle of her painting, and she has chosen instead what Worringer calls the “simple line” for its “pur[e] geometric regularity” (20).

And Lily’s propensity for “abstraction” does not end there. The ostensible subject of her painting is Mrs. Ramsay herself, or rather Mrs. Ramsay reading to her six-year-old son James; Lily represents them together as a “triangular purple shape” (72). Acting as a rather gentle art critic, William Bankes objects to the image, insisting that “no one could tell it for a human shape” (72). Bankes thus follows Worringer in identifying Lily’s brand of modern art as abstract for the ways in which it forgoes what Worringer calls realism and “empathy” in favour of geometric regularity. Once again, for Worringer, the predictability of the disengaged straight line or geometric figure “was bound to offer the

greatest possibility of happiness to the man disquieted by the obscurity and entanglement of phenomena” (20). Lily reveals that it is not just with regard to men that Worringer’s claim holds true, for it is clear that she is “disquieted” by thoughts of “her own inadequacy, her insignificance, keeping house for her father off the Brompton Road,” not to mention the ever-present issues in the novel of war and mortality. It is in this context, then, that Lily turns to what Worringer and Frank both call a “spatial form” that is valued precisely for its ahistoricism. Lily seeks out both the clarity and the mystification of the geometric line as an answer to that awkward space in the middle, which carries with it troubling implications of the “time-world” of gender, class, and global conflict. That time-world, implicit in any representation of space as that which “links things to one another, which imparts to them their relativity in the world-picture” (Worringer 22), is precisely what her painting rejects. Ironically, then, Woolf goes to great lengths here to stage the very kind of spatial aesthetic with which she is frequently herself associated.

Though of the novel’s characters she may be the most obvious in her manifestation of what Worringer calls a “fear of space,” Lily is by no means alone in either that regard or in her consequent impulse toward spatial abstraction. Like Lily, Mrs. Ramsay feels compelled to “fill up space” (126), whether it be the space of memory, of conversation, or even of her home. And as she looks around her and sees her home as incapable of housing all of her intended guests, as she sees its rooms in various stages of decline and decay, her own particular “fear of space” seems entirely reasonable. Like Lily’s efforts in her painting, Mrs. Ramsay’s spatial orientation frequently directs itself toward de-emphasizing the “time-bound” narrative qualities that are entailed in a realist

representation of space and which remind her all too well of the ephemeral qualities of the real and decaying spaces around her.

Her most salient manipulation of space comes in the novel's famous dinner scene in which she attempts to forge lasting meaning through her careful configuration of the dining room and its guests. As she anticipates the dinner gathering, she values it for the ways in which it counters the dispersed and diffuse private spaces in her home:

But she stopped [. . .] when the great clangour of the dinner bell announced solemnly, authoritatively, that all those scattered about, in attics, in bedrooms, on little perches of their own, reading, writing, putting the last smooth to their hair, or fastening dresses, must leave all that, and the little odds and ends on their washing-tables and dressing-tables, and the novels on the bed-tables, and the diaries which were so private, and assemble in the dining-room for dinner. (112)

As the dinner then begins with its enforced publicity, Mrs. Ramsay fatiguedly insists upon a particular configuration of its guests and their places: “‘William, sit by me,’ she said. ‘Lily,’ she said wearily, ‘over there’[. . .]. ‘Sit there please,’ she said—Augustus Carmichael—and sat down” (112-3). As she tries to forge a lasting image of togetherness and meaningfulness, Mrs. Ramsay is particularly attentive to juxtaposition and relativity in space. Of Lily and William, she thinks, “Foolishly, she had set them opposite one another” (141), and subsequently she notices, “how odd to see them sitting there, in a row, her children” (147). As the dinner begins, she fears her arrangement has utterly failed: “Nothing seemed to have merged. They all sat separately. And the whole of the effort of merging and flowing and creating rested on her” (113).



While many critics have noted the explicit parallel between Mrs. Ramsay and Lily as artists here, few have noted the abstractionist privileging of space over time and narrative that is present in both efforts of “creating.” For Mrs. Ramsay is not so much interested in the dinner as a narrative event which unfolds in time as she is in its relational quality:

So she saw them; she heard them; but whatever they said also had this quality, as if what they said was like the movement of a trout when, at the same time, one can see the ripple and the gravel, something to the right, something to the left; and the whole is held together; for whereas in active life she would be netting and separating one thing from another; [. . .] she would be urging herself forward; now she said nothing. (144)

Narrative as inherently time-bound separates things from one another, thus destroying the merging efforts of Mrs. Ramsay and detracting from the permanence which she sees as a function of relativity and juxtaposition.

As she listens to the conversations around her, Mrs. Ramsay thus does all she can to de-emphasize narrative. She does this through juxtaposing individual words against one another as visual and aural images in ways that echo Lily’s dependence upon the straight line for its merging and harmonizing capacity: “Were they done now? No. That story had led to another story” (148). Purposely distracting herself, Mrs. Ramsay begins to decontextualize and abstract: “The words (she was looking out the window) sounded as if they were floating like flowers on water out there, cut off from them all” (149). Devoid of context, the words, like the people who utter them, gain their significance not from their semantic aspect—“she did not know what they meant”—but from their aural juxtaposition against one another: “she knew it was poetry, from the rhythm and ring of

exaltation and melancholy in his voice” (149). As she listens, Mrs. Ramsay listens not for narrative, but for relations, symmetries, and structural integrity, anticipating in some ways Frank’s reading of the ahistoricism inherent within spatial forms.

And Mrs. Ramsay reads in the same way that she listens: abstractly and relationally. Alone after dinner with her husband, she begins to read one of his books:

[S]he opened the book and began reading here and there at random, and as she did so she felt that she was climbing backwards, upwards, shoving her way up under petals that curved over her, so that she only knew this is white, or this is red. She did not know at first what the words meant at all. [. . .] [S]he read and turned the page, swinging herself, zigzagging this way and that, from one line to another, as from one branch to another, from one red flower to another. (161)

Turning her words into images that they do not necessarily denote, she also turns them into abstractions, her lines and branches serving the same function as those of Lily. Mrs. Ramsay’s reception of the sonnet she reads echoes Woolf’s own reaction to Eliot’s poetry: it makes her feel as if she were tumbling through space. Under her reading, the sonnet thus loses its narrative component and becomes spatial; as Frank wrote of contemporary literature, Mrs. Ramsay’s sonnet “is now striving to rival the spatial apprehension of the plastic arts in a moment in time” (61). And indeed she seems to succeed in her endeavour: “[S]he read, and so reading she was ascending, she felt on to the top, on to the summit. How satisfying! [. . .] And then there it was, suddenly entire shaped in her hands, beautiful and reasonable, clear and complete, the essence sucked out of life and held rounded here—the sonnet” (163). Stripped of its narrative component, the sonnet is now abstract, rather than denotative. It is, in short, in both

Worringer's and Frank's sense, pure spatial form. Having succeeded where Woolf could not, Mrs. Ramsay transmutes the disorienting effect of juxtaposed, seemingly unrelated lines of poetry into something more positive. For her, as for Worringer's abstract artist, such a reading substitutes a formal arrangement of space for a realistic representation that would advertise time and change as a function of space, a relationship of which she and the novel itself are all too aware.

Indeed, at the dinner scene itself, there are signs of the inevitable failure of Mrs. Ramsay's attempt to abstract space from time. While at the onset of dinner, she had worried that all her efforts of merging had been for naught, she is subsequently seemingly vindicated: "Now all the candles were lit, and the faces on both sides of the table were brought nearer by the candle light, and composed, as they had not been in the twilight, into a party round a table" (131). It is their particular configuration in space, and Mrs. Ramsay's slavish devotion to it, that have seemingly brought them their harmony and unity. But arrested in time as in a picture, the group is nothing but an ahistorical abstraction which cannot hold: "for the night was now shut off by panes of glass, which, far from giving any accurate view of the outside world, rippled it so strangely that here, inside the room, seemed to be order and dry land; there, outside, a reflection in which things wavered and vanished waterily" (131-2). Quite clearly, Mrs. Ramsay's is a besieged mentality; her rage for order is predicated upon a distorted view of the outside world. The attempt to arrest time through the careful regulation of space requires "shut[ting] off" the outside world, making this particular interiority immune to, and ironically "outside" of, history and change.

The signs of the ultimate failure of such an endeavour are ever-present in the ominously titled “Time Passes” section of the novel which relentlessly measures the effect of time upon space, particularly Mrs. Ramsay’s domestic space. As the First World War with its drastic alteration of global territory reverberates in the background, the narrator of the section describes the inexorable process of change as it is visited upon the house. One passage in particular, however, stands out as the exception that proves the rule. Here the narrator seems to describe exactly the kind of permanence which Mrs. Ramsay had sought at her dinner, now virtually forgotten: “So loveliness reigned and stillness, and together made the shape of loveliness itself, a form from which life had parted; solitary like a pool at evening, far distant, seen from a train window, vanishing so quickly that the pool, pale in the evening, is scarcely robbed of its solitude, though once seen” (176). Identifying the picture of the abandoned house as “a kind of aesthetic image of natural, self-contained peace” (65), Bowlby sees this “changeliness of the ‘form’” as the “obverse side” to “the linearity identified as masculine” and associated in particular with Mr. Ramsay. But it is also a hopeless vision, bound to vanish, as it indeed will, in the face of time and change which unlike the imaginary train does not simply pass it by but rather shatters and smashes it.

As her dinner scene unfolds, Mrs. Ramsay comes face to face with the signs that her abstractions are bound to fail and collapse. She sits next to Charles Tansley, who is full of condescending, delusional fantasies about his ability to shatter this particular group: “He could almost pity these mild cultivated people, who would be blown sky high, like bales of wool and barrels of apples, one of these days by the gunpowder that was in him” (124). While Tansley never succeeds in fulfilling his threat, Mrs. Ramsay comes face to

face with an especially troubling sense that the spaces around her, far from guarding against time, are actually the repositories of its progression. Reflecting upon her memories of a family with whom she had been friends as a youth, Mrs. Ramsay reveals the importance that space carries in her effort to arrest time:

Oh she could remember it as if it were yesterday—going on the river, feeling very cold. But if the Mannings made a plan they stuck to it. Never should she forget Herbert killing a wasp with a teaspoon on the bank! And it was still going on, Mrs. Ramsay mused, gliding like a ghost among the chairs and tables of that drawing-room on the banks of the Thames where she had been so very, very cold twenty years ago; but now she went among them like a ghost; and it fascinated her, as if, while she had changed, that particular day, now become very still and beautiful had remained there, all these years. (118-9)

Mrs. Ramsay's ability to preserve the sanctity of her memory is here bound up with a static image of a particular drawing-room configured in a particular way. Space, it seems, is the repository of memory and permanence.

It is this investment that explains her seeming overreaction to William Bankes's comment that the Mannings are "building a new billiard room" (119). In an instant, Mrs. Ramsay's faith in space is destroyed: "No! No! That was out of the question! Building a billiard room! It seemed to her out of the question" (119). Confronted with the fact of a changing space, Mrs. Ramsay is uncharacteristically disoriented. "Should he give her love to Carrie?" Bankes asks. "'Oh,' said Mrs Ramsay with a little start, 'No,' she added, reflecting that she did not know this Carrie who built a new billiard room. But how

strange, she repeated, to Mr Banks's amusement, that they should be going on there still" (119). No longer an abstract category which can displace the narrative of a conversation or a poem, space is something real and practical—a billiard room in a house—which manifests transformation and loss. Nostalgic for that earlier, unchanged space in her memory, Mrs. Ramsay is deeply unsettled by the signs of her inability to separate space from time.

This exchange then helps to explain her similar feelings of disquietude at the conclusion of the dinner when she must abandon the dining room along with her pretensions of permanence and stability through time: "With her foot on the threshold she waited a moment longer in a scene which was vanishing even as she looked, and then, as she moved and took Minta's arm and left the room, it changed, it shaped itself differently; it had become, she knew, giving one last look over her shoulder, already the past" (150). The inability to remember a space exactly the way it was, the way it was configured and demarcated, is simply a reminder of the fact that spaces too change over time and that space is indeed the very means by which one measures the effects of time. Like Lily, Mrs. Ramsay had sought to use space as a tool of abstraction, as a way of holding off the time-bound world of narrative with all its troubling implications of decay, loss, and death. Unlike Lily, Mrs. Ramsay's abstractionist impulse and "vision" are shattered before she has even left the room.

The most obvious and crucial instance of abstraction in the novel is Mr. Ramsay's image of intellectual pursuit as an alphabetical progression. It is crucial because of where it occurs in the text: immediately before a sign of the specific geographic anxiety that contextualizes the abstractionist efforts of many of the novel's characters. As Bowlby

argues with regard to Mr. Ramsay's image, "the letters of the alphabet have no meaning at all, but are simply listed, by convention, in one particular order, with each one being defined in terms of its adjacency to two others" (56). For Mr. Ramsay, the alphabet is not just a linear but an explicitly spatial way of conceptualizing thought.<sup>1</sup> Here, abstraction is telling for the deeper anxieties which it so clearly masks. For it is immediately after the alphabetic image that he turns to the image of himself as an embattled polar explorer and/or mountaineer. Thus it seems that Mr. Ramsay's abstractionist use of space occludes his sense of belatedness with regard to the disappearing spaces of the globe. Thus, we now begin to get a sense of exactly what lies behind the recurrent drive to spatial abstraction and control.

As his frequent allusion to Tennyson's *The Charge of the Light Brigade* makes clear, Mr. Ramsay is conscious of space as something that is commodified, territorialized, and fought over. As he remembers Tennyson's heroes "Stormed at with shot and shell" (25), he invokes the context of the Crimean War and Tennyson's questioning of the "imperial impulses of all the great powers behind the war" (Phillips 114). This implicit, half-buried contestation echoes those of the Ramsay daughters and "their mute questioning of deference and chivalry, of the Bank of England and the Indian Empire" (12). That is, both India and Tennyson carry associations of contested territories that are reminders, like Leopold Bloom's Palestine and Marlow's Congo, that the spaces of the world are running out. In her reading of Woolf's essay on the Royal Academy, Phillips accurately characterizes this phenomenon as loss of the exotic and the differentiated:

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<sup>1</sup> In an unintentional confirmation of Mr. Ramsay's abstractionist impulses, David Turnbull invokes an entirely fitting metaphor to emphasize the abstract and "non-iconic" status of maps themselves vis a vis the territories they claim to represent: "Maps employ non-iconic signs and symbols. They are as arbitrary as the letters of the alphabet and are therefore largely conventional" (5).

Unfortunately, the exotic lands to which [. . .] Woolf's gallery-goer want[s] to escape are already occupied and the distant inhabitants do not remain unaffected by their visitors. Whereas conventionality initially may have propelled some of the European adventurers father away from home, by the time Woolf's narrator wants to close out the parrot din, the hypocrisies and rationalizations of Empire have become just another oppressive convention; scarcely any shore remains beyond the reach of Western influence. (xxxvi-ii)

Confronted with all of these reminders that space is a highly sought-after and increasingly rare commodity, it is perhaps no wonder that Mr. Ramsay and others retreat to an abstractionist manipulation of formal space.

For the signs of physical depletion are not always far away. As he reflects upon his desire for "a little solitude," in the context of a house brimming with guests, Mr. Ramsay casts his mind back to the day when that commodity was not so very hard to come by: "Years ago [...] he had walked all day. He had made a meal off bread and cheese in a public house. He had worked ten hours at a stretch; an old woman just popped her head in now and again and saw to the fire" (94). Desperate to regain this lost freedom, Ramsay resituates its absence as a function of space, rather than time. Here on his island, space is full, but not so "over there" on the mainland:

That was the country he liked best, over there; those sand-hills dwindling away into darkness. One could walk all day without meeting a soul. There was not a house scarcely, not a single village for miles on end. One could worry things out alone. There were little sandy beaches where no one had been since the beginning of time. The seals sat up and looked at him. It sometimes seemed to him that in a little



house out there, alone—he broke off, sighing. He had no right. The father of eight children—he reminded himself. (94)

Not only does he have no right, but also he is more than likely romanticizing the notion, even the very possibility of empty space; after all, what he can see of it “dwindle[s] off into darkness.” Too, Mr. Ramsay reminds us that space, particularly empty space, is always relative. It is always over there, and some of his own guests upon arrival from London might well envision his home and grounds as relatively empty.

Lily for instance characterizes the lawn as a “vast space” and those upon it as “divided by great distances” though this is after all only a fantasy brought on by watching Prue Ramsay toss a ball in the air: “[S]till for one moment, there was a sense of things having been blown apart, of space, of irresponsibility” (99). In the end, control over space is reasserted, causing Lily to respond ambivalently as she watches “Mrs. Ramsay, brin[g] Prue back into the alliance of family life again, from which she had escaped” (100). The subsequent loss of vast spaces and freedom causes Lily to reflect back upon this “one moment” nostalgically. Sitting at the still incomplete dinner table, Lily notices an echo of that earlier instant:

[N]ow they must come, and Lily Briscoe, trying to analyse the cause of the sudden exhilaration, compared it with that moment on the tennis lawn, when solidity suddenly vanished, and such vast spaces lay between them; and now the same effect was got by the many candles in the sparsely furnished room. Some weight was taken off them; anything might happen, she felt. (132)

Lily’s express hope will prove to be as fleeting and as fruitless as that of Mr. Ramsay. The vast spaces of the room and the lawn are filling up, are coming under renewed

surveillance, just as are the remote locales of polar regions and mountain-tops. The liberatory aspect of the empty room and the remote cabin prove to be mere vestiges of the past.

Like Lily, Mrs. Ramsay searches the confined space of the dining room for an antidote to the loss of vast spaces “over there” and out there. She makes the paucity of exotic stimuli in her native environment rather explicit, as she gazes longingly at the “yellow and purple dish of fruit” that sits on the dinner table: “What had she done with it, Mrs Ramsay wondered, for Rose’s arrangement of the grapes and pears, of the horny pink-lined shell, of the bananas, made her think of a trophy fetched from the bottom of the sea, of Neptune’s banquet, of the bunch that hangs with vine leaves over the shoulder of Bacchus” (131). If in her first vision of the fruit she thus turns to myth to capture a sense of the wondrous and the exotic, she next turns to a more material, embodied image: “Thus brought up suddenly into the light it seemed possessed of great size and depth, was like a world in which one could take one’s staff and climb up hills, she thought, and go down into valleys” (131). Mrs. Ramsay’s alchemical treatment turns the relatively mundane into the exotic and is perhaps an example of Woolf’s vaunted focus on the everyday and the ordinary.

But the fact that a bowl of fruit can conjure up such fantasies of escape into another “world” is also a sign of a yearning for the exotic. As Phillips has noted with regard to Mr. Ramsay, the domestication of the exotic and of the grandiose points to signs of an unassuageable loss (105). Fantasies of the exotic have now replaced the real thing. The signs of this loss are equally evident in the fantasies of Mrs. Ramsay’s daughter, Nancy. Alone on the beach, she gazes into a pool of water, refashioning it “into the sea.”

Further, she “made the minnows into sharks and whales, and cast vast clouds over this tiny world by holding her hand against the sun, and so brought darkness and desolation, like God himself, to the millions of ignorant and innocent creatures” (102). Nancy’s act of creation is here a sign of a child’s desire for empowerment in a world that is, from her perspective, too big at times, but it is also, like her mother’s reverie, an attempt to expand space. But it is an effort that is as fruitless as it is fleeting; mere moments later, “the pool had diminished again” (103). Thus, Nancy, like her father and mother, dreams of manufacturing new spaces or refashioning old ones to substitute for the contemporary world inhabited by “millions” and seen by all.

Indeed, Mrs. Ramsay’s imaginary trip into the fruit-bowl differs from that of her husband’s fantasy of an aimless walk “over there.” For hers partakes more of a sight-seeing agenda—while there, one must take in Neptune’s banquet and Bacchus’s vine-leaves. That is, the exotic is domesticated not only by virtue of its containment and miniaturization, but also by its redesignation as a tourist destination. And Mrs. Ramsay is not the only of the novel’s characters to view the world, rather resignedly, as a collection of tourist sites. William Bankes details his travel experiences to Lily in the formulaic and formal terms of a guide-book:

He had been to Amsterdam, Mr Bankes was saying as he strolled across the lawn with Lily Briscoe. He had seen the Rembrandts. He had been to Madrid.

Unfortunately it was Good Friday and the Prado was shut. He had been to Rome. Had Miss Briscoe never been to Rome? Oh she should—It would be a wonderful experience for her—the Sistine Chapel; Michael Angelo; and Padua with its Giotto. His wife had been in bad health for many years, so that their sight-seeing

had been on a modest scale. (98)

The formality here, the address to Miss Briscoe, only emphasizes Bankes's detachment from the places he has "taken in." The parallel syntax—"he had been"—establishes the homogeneity of these far flung places for Bankes. And the possible double meaning of the first sentence—does Bankes almost literally go to Amsterstam as he "stroll[s] across the lawn"?—highlights the domestication of the exotic. As Bankes is quick to point out, health issues have unfortunately interfered with the taming of any more exotic locales. Bankes's putative capacity to predict Lily's response to Rome reinforces the sense that the world's spaces and places no longer hold any surprises. Thus, Mr. Ramsay's noble solitary "expeditions" have been reconfigured as "sight-seeing" excursions embarked on as a sign of domestic bliss and stability.

Part of the reason for this domestication and emptying out of the exotic lies in its perceived inability to affect the modern individual in any meaningful way. Lily herself ascribes this failure to both the homogeneity of global space and the anonymity of its inhabitants:

How then, she asked herself, did one know one thing or another thing about people, sealed as they were? Only like a bee, drawn by some sweetness or sharpness in the air intangible to touch or taste, one haunted the dome-shaped hive, ranged the wastes of the air over the countries of the world alone, and then haunted the hives with their murmurs and their stirrings; the hives which were people. (71)

For Lily, global space is relatively undifferentiated, made up simply of "countries of the world," whose inhabitants are drones. The increased capacity for travel that accounts for the ennui of William Bankes here fails to enhance inter-personal, or inter-continental

communication. By contrast, Mrs. Ramsay imagines a certain liberation inherent in the experience of modern, anonymous travel: “Her horizon seemed to her limitless. There were all the places she had not seen; the Indian plains; she felt herself pushing aside the thick leather curtain of a church in Rome” (86). But Mrs. Ramsay is no modernized, globalized version of Baudelaire’s *flâneur*, for it is only as a “core of darkness [that one] could go anywhere” (86). Her reflections thus capture the multiple paradoxes of contemporary life: given advances in traversing the far flung spaces of the earth, one can go almost anywhere, even to places “she had not seen,” but in some ways she has already been there, having heard about them from the likes of William Banks. And like Lily, the anonymity inherent in such a modern kind of globe trotting makes it impossible to be oneself, or any kind of engaged participant. Only as bees and “core[s] of darkness” can we truly see anything new.

The diminishment and homogenization of global space, the increased sense of proximity, is present even to Nancy, the Ramsays’ daughter, as she imagines what Minta Doyle’s life will be like after she marries Paul Rayley. For Nancy, such imagined marital bliss carries with it a feeling of ennui and sterility that is best expressed through a particularly modern relationship to geography: “There was something of course, that people wanted; for when Minta took her hand and held it, Nancy, reluctantly, saw the whole world spread out beneath her, as if it were Constantinople seen through a mist, and then, however heavy-eyed one might be, one must needs ask, ‘Is that Santa Sofia?’ ‘Is that the Golden Horn?’” (100). Modern day Constantinople is no longer the exotic locale which Yeats imagined it once was in his contemporary poem, “Sailing to Byzantium.” Instead it is a place of picturesque views covered in mist, which inspires only stock

responses to its noteworthy landmarks. Phillips observes that “marriage seems to have tamed sexuality itself into a tourist landscape of uniformity for all” (103), but the process is perhaps more interwoven than she suggests. For it seems that geographic uniformity is itself partly produced out of conventions associated with marriage, honeymoons, and the guided tour. Even though Nancy is aware that the Constantinople she “sees” remains hidden beneath a mist of predictable views and responses, it seems highly unlikely that that veil will ever again be removed.

Woolf’s choice of Constantinople also obliquely alludes again to the simultaneous refusal of spaces to remain static, since the city had already been renamed Istanbul between the time of Nancy’s utterance and Woolf’s novel. Like the streets of Joyce’s Dublin, the city’s name-change points to the ways in which spaces are always political, even when they seem to have been emptied out of all but the most conventional of experiences. This connotation of contested territories and locales is substantiated by Phillips’s argument that Woolf may have been influenced by her husband’s 1916 work *The Future of Constantinople*, which had “focussed on the rivalry for that city as typical of the dangerous competition among imperial powers” (103). For Woolf then, the sense of the dreamed-of exotic spaces which both lie behind and motivate the spatial abstractions of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay is fraught with notions of homogenization, diminishment, commodification, and frenzied competition. Phillips argues that Woolf’s reading of empire was bound up with a sense that that entailed “a gigantic ‘taking’ of somebody else’s ‘air’ and space” (xxxix). Such an awareness was part of her larger perception that the globe itself was constituted by the still innumerable “countries of the world” with millions of inhabitants all of whom were getting closer together and less

exotic by the year. As adventurers like the self-deluding Mr. Ramsay became domesticated and reconfigured as the sight-seeing, sedentary William Bankes, the world did indeed seem a smaller, less differentiated, place.

But if the characters of the novel are intermittently conscious of the changing global landscape, of increased proximity and homogeneity, they are far more preoccupied with spaces closer to, and encompassed by, home. Not at all surprisingly, the domestic is the predominant locale within which individuals can articulate and even acknowledge anxieties that are more vaguely global. That is, proximity, fullness, sameness—all of these globally oriented phenomena are variously worried over, resisted, and very occasionally celebrated within the local and domestic spaces over which the novel itself jealously presides. Moreover, as global space threatens the island-home within which the novel is set, and as the characters become aware of that threat, they also become aware of those local spaces as sites of resistance to compression and homogeneity. These sites are, however, almost always inadequate to the task. The frequent images of the domestic space under siege are thus subtle inflections of, and overt manifestations of, a changed globe whose spaces are both less vast and more similar.

The most obvious signs of the impingement of the global on the local are the frequent allusions to the island, and the home perched upon it, as besieged spaces. But these images signify something more than just a character's awareness of global contraction and incursion. Rather, they signify the home as the last site of resistance. They thus represent both an attempt to mask a global reality as well as a somewhat desperate effort to reassert heterogeneity and plenitude in the face of their opposites. Most often the threat of inundation is, as the metaphor suggests, masked as a natural phenomenon, a

subsumption of the material world of the home by the timeless forces of the sea. Early in the novel for instance, Mrs. Ramsay listens to “the monotonous fall of the waves on the beach, which for the most part beat a measured and soothing tattoo to her thoughts” (23). As she listens, however, the sound becomes much more ominous, “like a ghastly roll of drums remorselessly beat[ing] the measure of life, [that] made one think of the destruction of the island and its engulfment in the sea” (24). Though the sound is figured as a natural one, its drum-like quality anticipates the “ominous sounds like measured blows of hammers dulled on felt” that are, in “Time Passes,” directly associated with the First World War. What Mrs. Ramsay thus experiences as the threat of annihilation of difference is obliquely connected to the war and its remorseless reinscription of global space. The emergence of this phenomenon is as sudden and precise as Lefebvre’s shattered spaces of 1910: “[T]his sound which had been obscured and concealed under the other sounds suddenly thundered hollow in her ears and made her look up with an impulse of terror” (24). All of a sudden, it seems, even the most remote spaces of the globe are being engulfed.

The threat is specific neither to Mrs. Ramsay nor to her particular island itself. As she worries about the residents of the lighthouse, she asks herself, “For how would you like to be shut up for a whole month at a time, and possibly more in stormy weather, upon a rock the size of a tennis lawn?” (9). Again then, the weather is seen to be the cause of this entirely natural phenomenon. Too, the predicament of the lighthouse keepers seems to entail both the threat of a lost particularity and, paradoxically, increased isolation and confinement. The situation on that especially besieged space reveals one of the predominant associations of global inundation even as it highlights one of the more



common responses to that threat: namely a retreat into ever more confined and contained locales.

And if Mrs. Ramsay here tacitly romanticizes the figure of the lighthouse keeper for his lonely struggle against the forces of homogenization, Mr. Ramsay goes even further in arrogating this noble characteristic for himself. Looking out from the house to the expanse of water beneath him, he reflects:

It was his fate, his peculiarity, whether he wished it or not, to come out thus on a spit of land which the sea is slowly eating away, and there to stand, like a desolate seabird, alone. It was his power, his gift, suddenly to shed all superfluities, to shrink and diminish so that he looked barer and felt sparer, even physically [. . .] and so to stand on his little ledge facing the dark of human ignorance, how we know nothing and the sea eats away the ground we stand on. (61)

Not surprisingly, given his penchant for abstraction, Mr. Ramsay employs several tropes here to disguise what is going on. He figures the process of homogenization and his part in it as entirely natural as he invokes the biological function of digestion. Both inundation and his resistance to it are fated, and the end result of the struggle seems to be inevitable—the depletion of the physical world. No matter how they mask it, the fact of global contraction is present in the rhetoric of both the Ramsays. It is present in their preoccupation with characterizing the loss of difference through spatial metaphors, and in Mr. Ramsay's telling characterization of himself as a shrinking and diminishing figure. While at times he alludes directly to “the poor little universe,” with its “land dwindling away” (94), more frequently these anxieties are troped through references to natural

forces and the romantic figure of the solitary, miniaturized human figure. The reaction, and imagined resistance, to global incursion thus often bears only a trace of the originating source of disorientation and reconfiguration.

The threat of inundation and homogenization is present everywhere within the spaces of the Ramsays's actual home. Indeed, it is here that the threat posed by global incursions is both most strongly felt and most vigorously resisted. If the world is becoming, simultaneously, too undifferentiated and too full, this is certainly true of the house itself. Mrs. Ramsay's chief complaint regarding the house is its porousness, its inability to keep the outside out. Partly, this shortcoming is due to a lack of vigilance on the part of its inhabitants: "That windows should be open and doors shut—simple as it was, could none of them remember it" (39). While she does not advocate the kind of parochialism of say the citizen of Joyce's "Cyclops," Mrs. Ramsay is bent upon the careful regulation of her "window on the world." Too, increased access to the world is bound up with a sense of regionalism: "Still, if every door in a house is left perpetually open, and no lockmaker in the whole of Scotland can mend a bolt, things must spoil" (39). In the less regulated spaces of the remote provincial districts, Mrs. Ramsay and her home are more susceptible to incursions from the outside, suggesting that perhaps the metropolis, with its more clearly defined and regulated spaces, is the safest place to weather the onset of global incursions. Sometimes, too, the threat posed to domesticity is couched in terms of structural fragility and inadequacy; both are manifested in an image of the home where "the sun pour[s] into those attics, which a plank alone separated from each other so that every footstep could be heard" (14). The openness of the house to the outside world is here bound up with a concomitant loss of privacy and differentiation.

Many of Woolf's critics have commented on her imbrication of the private and the public, often viewing it as something that she celebrates. After all, as we have seen, Mrs. Ramsay herself often advocates a "merging" and "dissolving" that would subsume the parochial and the private into a homogenized whole. Thus Janis Paul argues that the novel consistently privileges "moment[s] of unity" that double as "moment[s] of transformation" (170). Bazin and Lauter concur, claiming that unity and homogeneity are mourned in the ways the novel foregrounds their irrevocable loss. "Despite some moments of unity and harmony in part 3 of *To the Lighthouse*," they argue "[a] feeling of security that could be found in the Victorian Age has been shattered [. . .]. Just as *The Waves* depicts the loss of psychological wholeness in the twentieth century, Woolf's subsequent novel, *The Years*, laments the absence of communal oneness formerly found in the family or the nation" (22). For Bazin and Lauter, as for Paul, spaces such as the nation and the home are mourned for the ways in which they foreground and foster disunity and differentiation rather than harmony and homogeneity. Others stress that this same collapse is deployed more critically as a way of examining and questioning the politics of one locale through the practices of another. For instance, Phillips claims that the novel "lampoons 'scientific' (i.e., commercial) expeditions and 'heroic' (i.e., barbaric) battles by describing these public activities in terms of the most trivial childhood games in the private house" (94-5). Elsewhere, Bowlby argues that Woolf's image of the train compartment is "a public space superficially identical to a private one, so that the anonymity of the passengers is all the more significant from its contrast to the scene of intimacy it resembles" (5). While these latter two characterizations are closer to the mark, it remains to be said that, notwithstanding the potential for a spatially located

critique of culture, *To the Lighthouse* frequently marks such a collapse of difference as an entirely negative phenomenon, as something that is resisted by the novel's characters.

Indeed, homogenization and lack of spatial differentiation are deplored for their consequent effacement of the individual, a debilitating phenomenon associated with spaces that are at once too open and too full: "Disappearing as stealthily as stags from the dinner-table directly the meal was over, the eight sons and daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay sought their bedrooms, their fastnesses in a house where there was no other privacy to debate anything, everything" (13). That hope proves futile given the flimsiness of the house and its overpopulation. Reflecting on her large family, Mrs. Ramsay wonders "how they managed to contrive it all. Eight children! To feed eight children on philosophy" (32). Impoverishment on all fronts—financial and spatial—is the result of this anti-Malthusian dilemma, as the Ramsays are forced to colonize other spaces. Many of the guests "had rooms in the village" (26), as if to suggest that the home, like the globe which it displaces, suddenly seems too full. Even more than the interior spaces of *A Room of One's Own*, which Hoban finds as "cluttered as a Victorian parlour" (152), the rooms of the Ramsays' household are overfilled and in short enough supply that no one, it seems, has a room of one's own. The domestic space of the "little island" and the besieged, porous, overpopulated home thus stands as the most visible scene upon which the realities and anxieties associated with a renewed sense of the global manifest themselves. As conscious as they are of the short supply of exotic, far-off spaces, the Ramsays and their guests are even more aware of the domestic scene and its vulnerability to inundation and homogenization. After all, it is really ever only at the site

of the domestic and the local that the Ramsays can experience the sense of any kind of epistemic shift, however subtle or momentous it may be.

Occasionally, the awareness of global compression and realignment makes itself felt in particularly indirect, mediated, ways. For, as in *Ulysses*, *To the Lighthouse* reveals that a reoriented sense of global space changes the way other spaces—colonial, national, regional—in addition to the local are experienced. What we might call the primary mediating locale in Woolf's novel is regional space; as we have seen with regard to the Scottish lockmaker, it is the regional which is supposed to protect the local from the global, and it is the collapse of the regional that reveals the extent of the threat of proximity. Thus, in the "Time Passes" section, we primarily see the effect of global conflict measured in direct terms, as the remote house of the Ramsays feels the effect of war. As the sounds of war reverberate in the background, the sanctity of the domestic space is almost recolonized by nature: "the lawn waved with long grass; giant artichokes towered among roses; a fringed carnation flowered among the cabbages; while the gentle tapping of a weed at the window had become, on winters' nights, a drumming from sturdy trees and thorned briars" (187). Too, the narrator draws our attention to the newfound fragility of the private space which the not-so-far-off war threatens to completely efface: "One feather, and the house, sinking, falling, would have turned and pitched downward to the depths of darkness. In the ruined room, picnickers would have lit their kettles; lovers sought shelter there, lying on bare boards; and the shepherd stored his dinner on the bricks; and the tramp slept with his coat round him to ward off the cold" (188). The narrator stresses that this collapse is only imagined, conditional, as the word "would" emphasizes. And yet the threat of a complete collapse of domestic space, its

subsequent reconfiguration as the illicit space of sexual and proprietary transgressions, is very real in the context of a war which is radically redrawing the maps of the world.

But the war and the compressed globe affect domestic space in a more indirect way as well. As the Ramsays prepare to return to their house after the war's cessation, they send orders to Mrs. McNab, a local woman whom the novel suggests is well-known to the family, to put the house in order. But in some senses, the house will never be the same. The war has permanently shattered the lives of the Ramsays, a point that is tragically literalized in Andrew Ramsay's death as one of "[t]wenty or thirty men [who] were blown up in France" (181). Moreover, and much more subtly, another kind of shattering has taken place, a by-product of both the war and of an increased sense of proximity which the passage of ten years has effected. For after the war, Mrs. McNab enlists the help of Mrs. Bast to help her restore the house. Unlike Mrs. McNab, however, Mrs. Bast "had never known them [the Ramsays];" during the time they summered in Skye, she "had lived in Glasgow" (191). Mrs. Bast and her son who also helps with the restoration both represent a puncturing of the regional, perhaps evidencing a new ease of mobility from one region of Scotland to another that is itself partly a function of recent technological advances.

This is not the first time the novel has foregrounded the ease with which one of its characters can traverse regional space. When Minta Doyle loses her grandmother's brooch on the beach, her fiance, Paul Rayley regards such mobility as the answer to the problem of loss, though he is careful to conceal his plans to replace the brooch: "He began telling her, however, that he would certainly find it [. . .]. And secretly he resolved that he would not tell her, but he would slip out of the house at dawn when they were all

asleep and if he could not find it he would go to Edinburgh and buy her another, just like it but more beautiful" (106). After the war, the interchangeability of the Glaswegian Mrs. Bast for the Skye native Mrs. McNab is hardly noticed, referenced only in a parenthesis. In contrast, before the war, regional travel, while certainly easy enough, is something associated with secrecy and transgression. In a process we might equate, following Benjamin, with the loss of "aura," Paul imagines himself substituting one brooch for another "just like it." And, it is not just objects which are easily substituted, their differentiation having been effaced by the mechanical reproduction inherent to modernity, but also spaces, as regional difference and self-sufficiency collapses, a casualty of a new found capacity for easily travelling from one far flung region of Scotland, or Britain, from another. Thus it is that the Ramsay daughters despise the ease with which Charles Tansley can "chase them all the way up to the Hebrides when it was ever so much nicer to be alone" (10). The loss of the regional is thus both a part of, and a product of, an increased global proximity in which all spaces are more easily traversed. While Tansley's regional incursion is the object of scorn, and Paul Rayley's must be kept secret, that of Mrs. Bast is barely noticed. Her migration from the urban center of Glasgow to the bucolic summer home of the Ramsays takes place in the context of a war which has at once decimated the Ramsay family, increased their need for outside help, and made the traversal of larger distances more possible than it ever was before. The domestic is thus once again the site upon which global change and compression is felt, but in this instance that effect is inflected through, and magnified by, the changes it has wrought in the mediating space of the regional.

If the domestic is the primary site at which individuals articulate their awareness of, and anxieties over, global diminishment, it is also the place in which resistance to that phenomenon is most commonly examined and expressed. Remarking on Lily Briscoe's expressed distaste for Mrs. Ramsay's attempt "to preserve the spectacle of feminine and masculine relationships," Bowlby argues that Lily is "placed outside this novel, fascinated by it, but resisting incorporation into it" (63). The domicile functions here as both the scene of, and the metaphor for, Lily's resistance to the homogenizing impulses of Mrs. Ramsay. What Bowlby's observation emphasizes is the way in which resistance to homogeneity is spatially conceived and expressed in the novel, even when the invocation of space remains purely metaphoric.

But frequently in the novel resistance to "incorporation" finds expression in a more literal attempt to reassert the space, even the expansiveness, of the domicile in the face of threats from without. For instance, if Tansley, Paul, and Mrs. Bast foreground the impending collapse of the periphery, Mrs. Ramsay occasionally tries to reassert it, stressing the remoteness of her island home. As she anxiously observes the "fearfully shabby" state into which her home has deteriorated, perforated as it is by the outside world, she assuages that anxiety through a curious and willfully disingenuous enlargement of the spaces around her: "Never mind: the rent was precisely twopence halfpenny; the children loved it; it did her husband good to be three thousand, or if she must be accurate, three hundred miles from his library and his lectures and his disciples" (38). In a rather different instance of what Cuddy-Keane has called Woolf's "liberating expansion of space" (76), Mrs. Ramsay here reasserts the remoteness of the periphery as a way of shoring up the protective space of the private domestic sphere. Mrs. Ramsay's



reluctant correction of her willful inaccuracy makes clear that she is all too aware of how close London is becoming to Skye; that awareness does not stop her from trying to marshal peripheral distance and domestic stability in support of one another.

Mrs. Ramsay is not alone in this regard. As we have seen, others like Lily and Tansley fantasize about a sudden anarchic shattering of space whereby domestic boundaries are both eliminated and expanded. Lily on the lawn imagines things having been “blown apart” to create a “vast space” (99), while Tansley dreams of the house that encloses him “blown sky high [. . .] by the gunpowder that was in him” (124). Together Lily and Tansley situate the domestic as the site of a reappropriated and re-expanded universe, though the violent eradication of all boundaries inherent to the process makes clear the futility of resistance to global impingement. For the only resistance to compression and undifferentiation seems to be the substitution of a domestic space which simply substitutes homogenizing expansion for homogenizing contraction. If the domestic simply becomes the obverse image of the vast spaces of the globe, the reappropriative effort dissolves into a mirror reproduction of the original dilemma of a vast space which is always threatening to collapse. Hence, the brevity of both visions as Lily’s sudden liberation is canceled by Mrs. Ramsay’s reassertion of enclosure, and Tansley’s anarchic explosion is impotent, forever forestalled by his inability to act.

Not all attempts to reassert the vitality and integrity of the domestic and the local are as doomed as these, however. On occasion, Mrs. Ramsay actually seems to succeed in liberating the domicile as a site of expansion and a non-debilitating kind of inclusion. Immediately after the dinner scene, having realized the impossibility of suppressing the “time-bound” quality of space, she articulates a complex vision of a domestic space

which is both liberating yet incorporating, evolving yet preserving. Thinking back to the dinner she realizes, “Yes, that was done then, accomplished; and as with all things done, become solemn. Now one thought of it, cleared of chatter and emotion, it seemed always to have been, only was shown now, and so being shown struck everything into stability” (152). As always in the novel, space is not merely a metaphor for time. For it was both the time and the space of the dinner that were cluttered with “chatter and emotion.” In place of that overpopulated space, Mrs. Ramsay reconfigures the room as liberatingly empty and expansive while reassuringly stable. Thus it is a space which she can now furnish with her own imaginings for the future and slightly skewed memories of the past:

It flattered her, where she was most susceptible of flattery, to think how, wound about in their hearts, however long they lived she would be woven; and this, and this, she thought going upstairs, laughing, but affectionately at the sofa on the landing (her mother’s) at the rocking-chair (her father’s); at the map of the Hebrides. All that would be revived again in the lives of Paul and Minta; “the Rayleys.” (153)

Pringle calls this “[t]he closest Mrs. Ramsay comes to connecting house space to something positive” (310). What is positive about this particular vision is the way in which that house space expands over time and space—to include both the memories of the past and the hopes for the future, and both domestic artifacts and an outside world that is symbolized by the map of the Hebrides. Interior space is no longer a static, atemporal landscape which is hopelessly inadequate to resist the ravages of time; instead it is a locale in which time literally passes, its effects registered in such things as material

deterioration and the changes in fashion which cause Mrs. Ramsay to chuckle at her parents' belongings.

As her vision incorporates the Hebrides into "one stream" in which the "chairs, tables, maps, were hers, were theirs," it evidences a kind of reverse appropriation which resists encroachment and preserves privacy; after all the belongings are still tied closely to the "lives of Paul and Minta" (153). As Pringle notes, the association of the space with the future of a united Paul and Minta undercuts its power: "Given the doubts cast in 'The Lighthouse' about the quality of Paul and Minta's marriage, this passage about human connectedness seems more ironic than hopeful" (319). And yet, it is positive in the way it imagines a re-expanded domestic space as both porous and stable, as the site of something resembling potential. Unlike Kurtz, Mrs. Ramsay does not try to swallow the "whole earth"; her gesture of incorporation takes as its limit the regional, marked here as the Hebrides. Unlike Lily's vision in which all spaces are shattered and collapsed into one vastness, Mrs. Ramsay's conquest of territorial inclusion, purely imaginary and non-violent, is limited in its expansiveness. It preserves, indeed it is predicated upon, a sense of the "in here" even as it arrests and resists the incursion of the "over there."

If the domestic space is refigured as expansive, it is also sometimes seen as liberatingly empty and refreshingly refillable. As she reflects upon the connections between the house and its objects and Mrs. Ramsay, Pringle observes the prominence of "empty containers" within her home. Pringle argues that "given how Mr. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe use Mrs. Ramsay as a container for their idealized images of domesticity, the empty pots, hats, and skulls in the bedroom take on frightening significance" (309). If the domestic ideal of Mrs. Ramsay is indeed hollowed out through this association, the

images of emptiness also position the home as a site of spaces yet to be filled. This figuration thus stands in direct contrast to, and is resistant to, the evidence that the home is too full, that it cannot comfortably house all its guests. If global proximity and encroachment are visited upon the domestic scene, the process is as yet incomplete since many “blank spaces” of the home remain.

And because they remain, they are capable of being filled up in ways that, far from being threatening, reassert the power of the domestic space to inculcate harmony and inclusiveness. One point at which this impulse reaches a kind of fruition is of course the dinner scene where Mrs. Ramsay and the others are “composed” by the candle light “into a party round a table,” in direct contrast to the undifferentiated world which they resist (131-2). As we have seen though, this resistance comes only by imagining itself as besieged and by distorting the outside world so that in some ways this reassertion of the domestic in its parochialism is as debilitating as global encroachment. Paul Rayley’s exterior vision of the dinner scene manifests a similar mixture of anxiety and potential. As he approaches the house,

he could see lights moving about in the upper windows [. . .]. People were getting ready for dinner. The house was lit up, and the lights after the darkness made his eyes feel full, and he said to himself, childishly as he walked up the drive, Lights, lights, lights, and repeated in a dazed way, Lights, lights, lights, as they came into the house, staring about him with his face quite stiff. (107)

The manichean imagery here is hard to miss: the lightness of the house as civilization stands in opposition to the engulfing darkness which threatens to consume it. But the movement within the space of the house suggests a healthy plenitude, a sign that the

empty spaces of the houses are being lit up and filled up—just as one by one the lights will be extinguished in “Time Passes”—but not overfilled. But Paul’s incessant repetition of the word “lights” and his stiffened, dazed face suggest that as a place of resistance, the domestic space is once again arrested and even sterile. Its empty spaces now filled in a rearticulation of domestic plenitude, stability, and differentiation, the house is outside of time, a hopeless vision inadequate to resist a world of change in which time invariably passes.

In this way, Paul’s static vision echoes Mr. Ramsay’s spatialized fantasy of marital fulfillment. Like Paul, Mr. Ramsay imagines a plenitude that is empowering and enclosing. Even as it advertises expansiveness, then, Mr. Ramsay’s vision looks a lot like a painting:

It was sympathy he wanted, to be assured of his genius, first of all, and then to be taken within the circle of life, warmed and soothed, to have his senses restored to him, his barrenness made fertile, and all the rooms of the house made full of life—the drawing-room, behind the drawing-room the kitchen; above the kitchen the bedrooms; and beyond them the nurseries, they must be furnished, they must be filled with life. (52)

Out of Lily’s and Mrs. Ramsay’s efforts to preserve empty spaces safe from global incursion, comes the possibility of renewal and replenishment that Mr. Ramsay can then arrogate to himself as signs of his own intellectual vigor and sexual virility. Indeed, his specific sense of himself as an imperiled individual explorer is unthinkable outside a context in which the spaces around him are becoming more proximate and less differentiated. His acute awareness of the architecture around him and its relational

structure is simply a sign that he, like his wife and Lily Briscoe, is attentive to the larger and smaller spaces in which and through which he articulates his identity. In the end, it is to a scene of domestic plenitude—its rooms and inhabitants literally piling up on one another—that Mr. Ramsay returns in order to resist an image of himself as a belated explorer of the world's shrinking spaces. If his image of the static house represents, like Paul's repetition of "lights lights lights," a kind of atemporal abstraction, it also stubbornly asserts the power of domestic space to reassure and reinvigorate the diminished individual.

Thus for all its vaunted focus on a depoliticized "interiority," *To the Lighthouse* remains resolutely exterior, and it is through those exteriors that it engages with the ways in which the spaces of the world, the region, the local, and the domestic were being rearticulated. The global, that is, provides one further context in which we can understand Woolf's interest in the political dimensions of space. If the novel's central characters resist and deny their awareness of these changes through various strategies of abstraction, they also, though not as often, resist global incursion through a redeployment, reorganization, reassertion of the domestic. In his reading of *A Room of One's Own*, Hoban argues for Woolf's "exploration of places" as that which "provide[s] her narrator with "ideas, images, and strategies" (150). Space, in that essay, is integral to resistance in that "a room of one's own is first and foremost a setting for creativity" (150). Here then, the shattering of a patriarchal space and the substitution of a subversive feminine one is imagined as an act of political resistance and empowerment. In her reading of *The Years*, Susan Squier concurs, arguing that that novel manifests a "spatial enactment" of "otherness" that is both historically contingent and politically self-

conscious (224). What Squier calls Woolf's "politics of space" retrieves the political function of various locales and reinscribes them with revolutionary potential (225). In its similar investment in all of its spaces—here and there, center and periphery, exotic and domestic—*To the Lighthouse* thus shares a preoccupation that is common to much of Woolf's writing. As it documents the efforts of its characters to come to terms with the ways in which global compression redefines, directly and indirectly, the space of the domestic, *To the Lighthouse* argues that as time passes, so too does space. And as it foregrounds a nostalgia for a time in which everything remains, it again emphasizes the absolute inseparability of time and space. In the end, the novel reveals that for all the rearguard efforts of its characters, the spaces of the globe and the experience of traversing them had been, and were in the midst of being, irrevocably changed.

## CONCLUSION

### NEGOTIATING THE FINAL FRONTIERS OF MODERNISM

When Felix's name was mentioned, three or more persons would swear to having seen him the week before in three different countries simultaneously.

—Djuna Barnes, *Nightwood* (7)

And so in the late twentieth century the imperial cycle of the last century in some way replicates itself, although today there are really no big empty spaces, no expanding new settlements to establish.

—Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (36)

It may seem a million miles away but it gets a little closer every day.

—The Police, "One World (Not Three)"

For Djuna Barnes, mobility across national, regional, and urban frontiers was a given. Like so many of her contemporaries—Joyce, Conrad, even Woolf in her newly minted automobile—Barnes moved readily across boundaries of all sorts. Thus it is no surprise that the characters of her 1936 novel, *Nightwood*, should traverse space with such remarkable ease that Barnes rarely narrates the transition from one locale to another. Felix Volkbein, Robin Vote, and Nora Flood often simply "turn up" in whatever setting the narrative is taking place: Berlin or New York, Paris or San Francisco. Indeed it is only within such a nomadic community that Felix's putative ubiquity in time and space could be noticed and remarked upon. Of course the link between migration and modernity has itself become a critical commonplace given its high visibility within both modernist fiction and biography. It is indeed just this idea of migration which Michael North, following a long line of critics, has again recently identified as being central to our understanding of modernism (11).

But for Barnes, modernity is about something more than simply porous spaces that are easily traversed. It is, more precisely, about the "sameness" and contraction of those



spaces. In *Nightwood*, Felix's lack of identity or difference is tied to his archetypal familiarity as the wandering Jew who "seems to be everywhere from nowhere" (7). But it is not just Felix who is anonymous; the "three or more persons" who claim to have seen him are just as nameless and indistinguishable as he. And the places to which they have traveled are also, partly by virtue of his presence, homogenous, "nowhere" and "everywhere" at the same time. Like Marlow's Congo, Bankes's Rome, and all of the globetrotting Bloom's itinerant stops, these places are in the process of becoming homogenized and more proximate, both to one another and to an increasingly indistinguishable "here." And just like Kurtz, Felix seems to come from "some country that he has devoured rather than resided in" (7). The empty spaces of his globe are as imperiled as those on the fading map which have become but a distant memory for Marlow.

But as we have seen across the fictions of Conrad, Woolf, and Joyce, the modernist response to global diminishment and compression was as varied as the spaces through which it was inflected. Barnes's characters respond by making frenzied travel plans to which any actual experience of mobility or traversal can never do justice. In his 1915 novel, *The Good Soldier*, however, Ford Madox Ford staged a very different response to proximity. In a novel populated by world travelers such as Edward and Leonora Ashburnham, the narrator, John Dowell, is exiled on the European continent for nine years because his wife's alleged heart condition curtails extensive travel of any sort. Despite having the money and leisure to go anywhere in the world, Dowell admits that until "[s]ix months ago I had never been to England" (5). While Barnes's characters embrace their remarkable ability to traverse space, Dowell fears it; as he puts it, he and his wife are

“tied to Europe” for fear that crossing the English channel might aggravate his wife’s “condition.” For Dowell, as for Marlow and Mrs. Ramsay, increased access to previously remote regions is associated with the threat of contamination and disease. Confronted with this threat, Dowell turns to insularity and confinement in an attempt to reassert distance and difference.

In such a context, Dowell’s subsequent revelation that his wife’s illness was in actuality a fabrication, and one, moreover, that he himself has participated in, is telling. His admission of duplicity emphasizes the fact that such insular responses to an increased sense of global proximity were frequently self-deceiving; they were in fact a kind of spatialized false consciousness. It is not surprising, then, that Dowell should turn to a familiar metaphor in order to characterize the particular moment at which self-deceit in this regard is no longer an option. Reflecting on his marriage and his social life with the Ashburnams as a “goodly apple” that is in fact “rotten to the core,” Dowell wonders: “isn’t it a little odd that the physical rottenness of at least two pillars of our four-square house never presented itself to my mind as a menace to security” (9). Confronted with a world which is all too easy to traverse, Dowell thus realizes what many of his fictional counterparts do—that his retreat to the confines of a smaller space, while alluring, is rarely effective. In the end, all he is left with is yet another shattered interior.

The trope of shattering returns us, one final time, to Lefebvre and to all those many modern expressions of the breakage, bifurcation, and collapse. Each novel I have here surveyed contains particularly memorable instances of such smashing: as Kurtz threatens to “kick the earth to pieces,” so Charles Tansley imagines blowing the Ramsay household “sky high,” and Stephen Dedalus foresees the “ruin of all space.” I have suggested that

this recurrent idea of a shattering space expresses and masks a more specific set of anxieties tied to the perception that the world was becoming both smaller and less differentiated. If the New Critics and their followers tended to distort preoccupation with space and to displace it onto a series of metaphors, the modernists themselves were directly engaged with the ways in which the physical and material spaces around them were changing. While that engagement was often necessarily staged as an issue of aesthetics, writers like Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf were thoroughly aware of the political implications of spaces of all shapes, sizes, and dimensions. Frequently, as I have argued, the range of responses entailed a kind of physical displacement, in that modernists mapped their anxieties over global space onto a series of smaller locales: a continent, a region, a city, an island, a house.

Such a reorientation from “out there” to “in here” is not surprising; after all, one of the most accessible sites in which global proximity and homogeneity could be registered and measured was the local. For Leopold Bloom, the most visible evidence for global depletion is a crowded local cemetery, not an advertisement for the disappearing spaces of 1904 Palestine. Similarly, Mr. Ramsay looks first to his island as a besieged locale and only obliquely to the remote and exotic spaces of the polar region. Still, it seems those far-off climes are disappearing just as certainly as they become “a little closer every day.” The dimensions and proportions of that encroaching threat were truly global in scope, even in spite of, or perhaps because of, the obsession with reorienting and assuaging spatial anxiety within the as yet more confined spaces of the local. Indeed, the trajectory of the dissertation suggests that as globalization gained momentum in the years spanned by these three novels, its effects were felt in increasingly circumscribed

locales: Africa, Dublin, an island in the Hebrides. This development may well suggest globalization's extending reach into peripheries that are thus in the process of becoming less peripheral. Or, more provocatively, it may indicate that those ever more remote and localized spaces held a certain attraction for authors who resisted acknowledging the unstoppable advance of a global modernity.

If the kind of thorough-going economic integration with which globalization would come to be identified was not yet present in modernism, the signs of its imminent arrival were certainly already there to be seen if one looked hard enough. The utterly useless loops of brass wire with which Conrad's Africans are paid for their services and Paul Rayley's substitution of a made-in-Edinburgh brooch for Minta's lost heirloom point to the kind of alienating and homogenizing systems of exchange that are now seen to be one of the lasting effects of globalization. The kinds of territorial incursions and compressions with which Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf were more frequently preoccupied were the necessary precursors to this even more modern form of homogenization and integration.

Turning briefly to the last of the three opening epigraphs, I argue that the modernists conceived of their contemporary "One World" as both a real space "out there" and as an advancing process of spatial reconfiguration that was not yet fully "here." For the Police, the writers of a contemporary popular song that celebrates an emancipatory brand of global integration, an impending momentous shift in global spatial relations is imagined as a historical event that is itself best expressed spatially. That is, the realignment is itself a "million miles away" and getting closer by the day. Both the globe itself and the reorientation of global territory are "spaces" that are quickly becoming more proximate.

While they may not have shared this politically charged optimism over a homogenized, more proximate globe, Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf did share a sense of that emergent phenomenon as foreign and external, as something which was itself irrevocably altering local spaces and local identities. Sometimes the impact of the global upon the local was direct, while at other times its effect was muted, filtered through a medial space like the regional, the national, or the colonial. But for these three writers, as for many of their contemporaries, it was most often global space whose complex vicissitudes were conceptualized through tropes of shattering, smashing, and disintegration, the rhetorical effect of which was further magnified by virtue of a contrived momentousness.

In other words, while global diminishment was frequently reread and remapped as a kind of shattering experience, the disorientation inherent in the process was frequently further exaggerated and masked through recourse to a rhetoric of instantaneous and momentous transformation. And more broadly, the entirely understandable effort to read space in terms of time and vice versa is repeated throughout modernism and throughout accounts of modernism. This conjunction certainly figures prominently in Lefebvre's famous account, but the connection between time and space is forged most memorably perhaps in the "Time Passes" section of *To the Lighthouse*. It is there that space is seen as the register of temporal change and contingency. In the interpenetration of the not-so-far-off spaces of World War One and the rooms that are no longer the Ramsays' own, we see a fusion of time and space that has as many implications as does Einstein's theory of time-space relativity. This modernist linkage of time and space is itself a sign of the inadequacy inherent in any attempt to bracket off modernism's indisputable preoccupation with time from its interest in space. For not only do modernists like

Conrad, Joyce and Woolf measure time in terms of the changing spaces around them, but also they react to those changes in temporal terms. In the end, their responses to global proximity and homogeneity are bound up with nostalgia and a sense of belatedness. For Conrad's Marlow, as for Joyce's Conmee and Woolf's Mr. Ramsay, the empty spaces of the earth exist only in childhood, and global homogeneity is a particularly modern problem. In the ways in which it is experienced, displaced, and responded to, the "shattering" of global space is thus inflected with an equally complex set of reactions to time.

The traditional critical identification of a modernist preoccupation with time is thus by no means inaccurate; it is simply only one part of the picture. And if postmodern cultural geographers such as David Harvey, Derek Gregory, and Edward Soja are perhaps too quick to schematize the great divide between modernity and postmodernity in terms of a time/space bifurcation, their recovery of a politicized sense of space is central to any attempt to heal that division, to see modernity's temporal obsession as inseparable from its reflections upon, and its participation in, a reoriented and disoriented sense of space. If momentous events were afoot in 1910, or 1915, or 1922, it is not at all surprising that they should be experienced in terms of contraction, collapse, and disintegration. For perhaps the reality of a diminished global change could be most fully experienced in temporal terms. The obsession with shattering derives, then, from the inevitably temporal dimension of the experience of living through what is of course a much more drawn out process of spatial contraction and diminishment. At the same time, the by now familiar trope of dispersal and disintegration, itself a time/space compression, suggests that the most common reactions to that process—nostalgia, belatedness,

commemoration—are, just as inevitably, temporal. The recovery and recolonization of a threatened and soon-to-be-lost local space is thus simultaneously a reclamation of an already lost time.

But as bound up as they are with the modernist perception of, and reaction to, changing spaces, the concepts of nostalgia and belatedness are more commonly thought to be the province of postmodernity. And, as we have seen, it is to postmodernism that critical theory has tended to look for any kind of sustained “spatialized cultural critique.” Postmodernism, by its very name, claims a close association with both temporal and spatial eccentricity—priding itself on being both after and outside. In their titles, Harvey’s *The Condition of Postmodernity*, and Soja’s *Postmodern Geographies* stake a claim for the absolute centrality of a spatial mode of thinking to postmodern culture. Certainly Harvey, Soja, and Gregory ably demonstrate this link through their attentiveness to diverse contemporary cultural practices within literature, architecture, historiography, and film. And the kind of preoccupation with changing spaces which these critics note within “higher” postmodernity is also there in its more ubiquitous popular forms as well. Judging by most accounts, postmodernity can be said to be almost exactly contemporaneous with, even synonymous with, the Space Age. If Hubble’s discovery of distant galaxies and Eddington’s book *The Expanding Universe* had made Woolf aware of global space as a limited commodity, forty years later that realization was pressed home all the more, as astronauts relayed the first images of the Earth against the black backdrop of space. Such images helped to give rise to the by now banal perceptions of the globe as fragile and infinitesimal. Those perceptions, in turn, found expression in a variety of forms: Marshall McLuhan’s famous notion of an emergent

“global village,” Disney’s self-fulfilling prophecy of a world that is “always already” small, the Police’s celebration of a fully integrated “one world,” and even William Shatner’s already somewhat nostalgic trumpeting of outer space as “the final frontier.” All of these expressions are predicated upon a new sense of global space that emerges out of post-Second World War economics and politics, technological advances, and cultural productions.

Thus, following both Harvey and Jameson, the “cultural logic of late capitalism” out of which postmodernism may be said to emerge is undeniably inseparable from a time/space compression that occurred around the time of its origin. However, in light of modernism’s similarly shattering emergence, postmodernism must once again be said to be belated. Postmodernism, that is, was not the first era to witness anxiety over contraction and proximity. If the specifics of global diminishment in the 1960’s and beyond were undoubtedly historically specific, the range of reactions, and even the reactions themselves were not all that different from what had come at least a generation earlier. Like their popular descendants, modernists like Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf responded anxiously, ambivalently, complacently, or even embracingly, to the fact that both the empty spaces around them were diminishing, and, consequently, that the modern world seemed to be becoming less differentiated than it had ever been before. Modernist space is thus far from being a mere metaphor, or the means of aesthetic disengagement which its readers have traditionally made it out to be.

Together, Jeffrey Perl and Sanford Schwartz have recently called for an uncoupling of modernism from its New Critical constructions and constrictions, in favour of a reexamination of the links between modernity and postmodernity. Certainly my own



attempt to repoliticize modernist space is indebted to the recent efforts of postmodern critics to recover space in general as both a category and a locale of potential critical engagement. For if we look beyond the notion of modernist spaces as closed off formal enclaves, we rediscover a group of authors who share a preoccupation with the destabilized, shifting material spaces around them as potential sites of cultural analysis, and, more rarely, intervention. The sustained yet nuanced responses of Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf to global encroachment allowed for, even structured, readings of the smaller, more immediate spaces that surrounded them—the colonial, the urban, the domestic. While attempts to pin down a moment at which modernism can be said to have begun are thus hopelessly reductive, it seems much safer to say that the age of modernism was itself also a “space age.” That modernity and postmodernity share in reflecting upon the political and cultural implications of the spaces within which they emerge is further evidence of the need to continue to complicate the distinction between these two “moments” which are only putatively distinct from one another. If the modernist response to global encroachment was not so explicit as that which would follow it, neither was it so routinized as to be banal. For Conrad, Joyce, and Woolf, the formerly limitless category of global space was itself shattered for the first time. As participants within worldwide networks of exchange, they could now visualize the entire planet in one telescopic view. But if the recognition of a finite globe was now unavoidable, its full range of implications could be acknowledged and contested only over time.

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