FICTION ON THE RADIO:
REMEDIATING TRANSNATIONAL MODERNISM

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by
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ABSTRACT

The BBC was the laboratory for major experiments in modernism. Notions of aesthetics, audience, and form were tried out before the microphones of 200 Oxford St., London and heard around the world, often before they were in England. The format of the radio address and the instant encounter with listeners shaped both the production and politics of Anglophone modernism to an extent hitherto unacknowledged in literary studies.

This dissertation focuses on how innovative programming by modernist writers, transmitted through instantaneous radio links, closed the perceived physical, cultural, and temporal distances between colony and metropole. Charting the phenomenon of writing for, about, and around broadcasting in the careers of E. M. Forster, Mulk Raj Anand, James Joyce, and C. L. R. James, the dissertation revises the traditional temporal and geographical boundaries of modernism.

Contrary to the intentions of the BBC's directors, who hoped to export a monolithic English culture, empire broadcasting wreaked havoc on the imagined boundaries between center and periphery, revealing the extent to which the colonies paradoxically affected the cultural scene "at home." The Eastern Service (directed to India), where the abstract idea of a serious, cultural station was put into practice, was the laboratory for the Third Programme, England's post-war cultural channel. Yet the effects of Empire radio are hardly limited to its considerable impact on postwar British broadcasting. The intellectual demands of Indian listeners set the parameters of and bankrolled the literary work performed by modernist writers in England.

Addressing authors and readers in India from a studio in London, Mulk Raj Anand embodied a crucial aspect of the Eastern Service, its treatment of English and Indian culture as mutually influential and coeval. Anand's broadcasts and 1945 novel *The Big Heart* (written during his BBC years) critique imperialism by positing the simultaneity of Indian and English temporality. In so doing, Anand's works offer a rejoinder to narratives of colonial belatedness pervasive both at the time and in the present. When tackling such transnational work, radio studies is uniquely positioned to provide an archive and a radical new model for modernist studies as it grapples with critiques of the western diffusionist model of culture.

Literary production in and around the BBC registers radical cultural upheaval with a diagnostic power that reveals the attenuated ability of hypercanonical modernism alone to illuminate modernity's complex relays. Modernism on the BBC was not an exclusive canon of works, singular set of formal features, or even a unique posture. Instead, writers such as James, Forster, Anand, and Joyce offered complex responses to the pressures of modernity, including disruptions wrought by colonization, immigration, and war.

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For Louise Ann Ryan Morse and William Joseph Morse

“You pulled me up”

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Recovering Voice(s)

In November 1942, the writers George Orwell, Mulk Raj Anand, T. S. Eliot, Una Marson, Venu Chitale, M. J. Tambimuttu, Narayana Menon, and William Empson huddled around a table at 200 Oxford St., London to discuss the influence of India on English literature for the BBC program *Voice*. The instantaneous radio link between London and India on the BBC's Eastern Service was coupled with the program's analysis of how culture "at home" was altered by the colonies, doubling the sense in which the standard narrative of colonial backwardness was here refuted. As part of the program, Eliot incanted *The Waste Land*, a poem published in 1922, the BBC's inaugural year and the supposed *annus mirabilis* of modernism. The poem suggested even then, in its disorienting, polyphonic style, a new relationship between voices that was only later fully activated in its transnational radio performance. That Eliot, who carefully placed *The Waste Land* in little magazines for simultaneous print publication on both sides of the Atlantic, now broadcast his poem for the first time—and to India, not to England or America—reveals a radical reconfiguration of the relationships between print and broadcasting, metropole and colony, literary modernism and technological modernity.[1] "Fiction on the Radio" retunes modernist scholarship to pick up precisely these waves.

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[1] Eliot also contributed a reading of "Journey of the Magi" to an Eastern Service broadcast on 29 December 1942. See Orwell, *Keeping* 267.

This is a dissertation about the BBC as a site of transnational modernism from 1922 to 1947. It analyzes the diverse ways in which writers of the period conceived of representations of modernity through the prism of British broadcasting. By reading the largely overlooked genre of the broadcast contrapuntally with more familiar literary objects like novels, poems, and plays, my project traces the complex relays between modernist literature and radio, unsettling nominal definitions of modernism. Like *Voice*, this dissertation also highlights often-overlooked lines of affiliation between writers subsequently segregated into their respective national literatures. Through comparative readings of texts produced by writers from India, Ireland, Trinidad, and England, my project explores the transnational conversations writers conducted in, around, and between both media. By operationalizing radio's disregard for both generic and geographic boundaries, "Fiction on the Radio" reveals an Anglophone modernism that exceeds any fixed set of formal qualities, works, or attitudes and that was both more public and more political than prevailing accounts have allowed. Grappling with radio's instantaneity also brings to the fore a model of modernity usefully at odds with the European diffusionist model, highlighting coeval developments in metropole and colony.

Modernism on the BBC, without shedding its mantle of difficulty, was emphatically public and even popular. If, until 1922, little magazines were the public face of modernism, shortly afterwards its mouthpiece was the BBC. James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939), often considered one of the least accessible novels of the century, enjoyed lively discussion and passionate promotion over the airwaves. E. M. Forster, whose extensive broadcasting career is explored in chapter 2, completely reversed *The Little*

Review's policy of "making no compromise with the public taste" when he dedicated broadcasts to making intimidating works by Marcel Proust, Joyce, and Thomas Mann more accessible to the common reader. The argument against Crown Colony government contained in C. L. R. James's Hogarth Press pamphlet—part of modernism's non-white, feminist, and queer contestation of normative values and structures—was presented to a vastly larger audience on the BBC than it was in anything that Virginia and Leonard Woolf could print. As these examples reveal, the editorial strategy at the BBC was at odds with print publishers, who—as Lawrence Rainey uncovers—cultivated an air of rarity around modernist texts to justify exorbitant prices and to create a lucrative market of literary-financial speculation (Rainey). The BBC's democratizing maneuvers were, then, all the more disruptive and far-reaching during the period of economic depression in the thirties and the paper shortage during the Second World War.

But in becoming more public, modernism became increasingly engaged politically, and this despite the BBC's best efforts to appear either apolitical or close enough to the government position to avoid serious confrontation. Figures like Forster and Joyce, long considered withdrawn aesthetes interested only in art for art's sake, are revealed through their engagement with broadcasting as public figures eager for the BBC's support and audience while remaining stubbornly skeptical of and downright hostile to the BBC's complicity with the imperial project. Forthright, marginalized figures were welcomed into the halls of Broadcasting House as well. As George Orwell quipped about the ranks in the Eastern Service: "most of our broadcasters are Indian left-wing intellectuals, from Liberals to Trotskyists, some of them bitterly anti-British"

(Orwell qtd. in Briggs, *War* 463). Mulk Raj Anand, an equally vocal proponent of international socialism and Indian independence, and the subject of chapter 3, was a regular contributor to the BBC during the Second World War, despite the fact that three of Anand's novels were banned by the British Government in India.

Commonly regarded—both at the time and subsequently—as a timid institution, the early BBC was surprisingly experimental, though by necessity rather than by design. As a fledgling service, the corporation was willing to tolerate the controversial political positions of writers who could lend it badly needed cultural capital. Writers were often happy to exploit their reputations to reach the BBC's vast audience, to shape public opinion, and to finance their writing careers during years of austerity, while the BBC tapped the celebrity and reputation of writers to build and reinforce its image as a central cultural institution. But while these relationships were mutually beneficial, they were not equal, nor were they always easy. While E. M. Forster successfully used his celebrity—and his connections as a Cambridge man—to challenge censorship, promoting banned works by James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, and Indian writers like Shelvankar, the BBC was bolder with less celebrated authors, censoring Harold Nicholson's talk on *Ulysses* and Mulk Raj Anand's talk on the Spanish Civil War. C. L. R. James was not invited back to Broadcasting House after he proposed an end to Crown Colony Government on the air in 1933.

The airwaves were an active site of contestation on many fronts, but nowhere did the BBC play against its own putative interests more than in its treatment of colonial writing. As Benedict Anderson observes, the spread of vernacular print goes hand in hand

with the spread of nationalism, with radio accelerating and amplifying these movements. In concert with All India Radio (founded in 1936), the BBC identified and promoted a distinctly Indian literature, culture, and geographic space. By absorbing, acknowledging, and repeating Indian literary experiments, the BBC helped to form the imagined community of India. But the BBC did not simply acknowledge Indian literature, it actively *promoted* it, with special enthusiasm for writers with anti-imperial politics and messages such as Mulk Raj Anand and Shelvankar. If the imperial metropolis was a lively center of anti-imperial agitation generally, the halls of Broadcasting House were a hotbed of dissent.

Well before radio waves were harnessed for the transmission of sound, the verb "broadcast" was used to suggest the wide geographic distribution of seeds, reminding us that broadcasting planted changes at home as well as abroad. Contrary to the intentions of the BBC leadership and subsequent received wisdom, international broadcasting shows the extent to which the colonies affected the homefront.[2] As the first half of the dissertation demonstrates, the Eastern Service was a laboratory for the Third Programme, England's post-war cultural channel. Historians of the BBC have been quick to point out that such a minority station was imagined well before the war, but they have largely overlooked the extent to which the Eastern Service was its first realization, the place

[2] C. G. Graves, in a 1933 lecture on "Dominion and Empire Broadcasting" sums up the objective to project England as a beacon of culture and a centrifugal cultural force when he speculated that empire broadcasting would "keep us in touch with the isolated man in the back of beyond to whom any contact with this country would be a very good thing" (Graves, qtd. in Briggs, *Golden* 372).

where the abstract idea of a serious and cultural service was put into practice.[3] In Kate Whitehead's literary history of the Third, for example, the importance of the overseas service emerges only by implication, through frequent quotation from the Eastern Service's George Orwell and the identification of innovative programming, including *Voice*, "the first broadcast 'little magazine' on the Indian Service" (Whitehead 159).[4] In addition to drawing on the innovative programming of the Eastern Service, the founders of the Third either came from or sought the advice of Empire Service employees. E. M. Forster exerted what one BBC employee called "considerable influence" on George Barnes as Barnes was organizing the Third (qtd. in Forster *BBC* 5).

Yet the effects of Empire radio are hardly limited to its considerable impact on postwar British broadcasting. It was also a significant player in British interwar and war-time culture. One gets a sense of the reach of the Eastern Service, for example, from the extent to which even things seemingly unconnected to India, like James Stephen's obituary for Yeats or T. S. Eliot's critical work on Edgar Allan Poe were written for, and channeled through, the Eastern Service (and only subsequently reprinted).[5] In these and

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[3] Both Briggs and Carpenter overlook the importance of overseas broadcasting to the establishment of the Third Programme. In 1930 J. C. Stobart proposed the creation of a "venus programme" featuring the likes of "Schonberg [sic], Strindberg, the Sitwells and James Joyce" (qtd in Whitehead 9).

[4] Two of three central figures in the formation of the Third, Leslie Stokes and Etienne Amyot, both worked for overseas services during the war; John Morris, who later ran the Third, had first helmed the Far Eastern Service.

[5] Eliot's talk, "Edgar Allan Poe," was broadcast 12 February 1943 over the Eastern Service. It was reprinted in *The Listener* and again in a BBC pamphlet, *Landmarks in American Literature* (1946), issued by Oxford University Press in Bombay. For more on the BBC's role in situating the empire in English interwar culture see MacKenzie.

many other examples, the intellectual demands of Indian listeners set the parameters of and bankrolled the literary work performed in England.

The oeuvre of the best-known English novelist, E. M. Forster, was significantly altered by his engagement with the Eastern Service, with roughly half of *Two Cheers for Democracy* (1951) deriving from his BBC work.[6] Mulk Raj Anand's extensive war-time broadcasting sustained him financially, allowing him to publish two novels in England during his BBC years. And as chapter 3 demonstrates, *The Big Heart* (1945) was heavily influenced by his experiences there.[7]

But if empire radio was surprisingly literary, granting the likes of Forster and Anand remarkable autonomy, it appears so in sharp contrast with the interwar years. The second half of the dissertation pivots from the heady environment at the Eastern Service to more constricted spaces, when the BBC was self-censoring as well as "a willing, even evangelical, propagandist of empire" (Nicholas 208). Any mention of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) was explicitly banned and Joyce's many efforts to broadcast came to nothing. Instead, Joyce's obsessive listening habits are explored in chapter 4, which uncovers the significant effects of the BBC and 2RN (Irish radio) on the construction,

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[6] Thirty-one out of sixty-nine chapters first appeared in the BBC's periodical, *The Listener*. For more see the next chapter.

[7] As I point out, all four of the writers in my study benefitted from their association with the BBC in ways that were both strictly economic (they were paid for their appearances, for the rights to broadcast their work, etc.) but also in less tangible ways that tie into cultural economics. These writers were not remunerated lavishly but they earned a valuable kind of prestige through the recognition of their work on the BBC. In this sense (but also more concretely in its own literary awards), the BBC participates in an economy of prestige that exists alongside that of cultural prizes. For more see James English, *The Economy of Prestige* (2005).

serialization, and editing of *Finnegans Wake*. For C. L. R. James, whose one BBC broadcast raised immediate protests from the Colonial Office, the BBC was a space of failure and disappointment, spurring the radical formal innovations in *The Black Jacobins* (1938).

Retuning Anglophone modernism to the wavelengths and history it shared with the early BBC produces an estranging effect that is as productive as it is unsettling to contemporary critical practice, calling into question the traditional temporal and physical boundaries of modernism. Rather than concluding with thirties literature or the start of the Second World War, modernism on the BBC was very much alive, unfolding and proliferating before, during, and after the war.[8] Neither modernism nor radio required the other in order to materialize but each mutually influenced the unfolding of the other. Modernism was extended, popularized, and launched by the BBC. In turn, the BBC learned how to create cultural programming from modernist writers. This dissertation plots some of the different ways authors experienced and narrated the century's ruptures through and alongside the BBC.

The following sections map the theoretical and methodological arguments of "Fiction on the Radio." The first two work through the fluid, dynamic relationships between modernism as an aesthetic and its conditions of possibility, namely modernity and colonialism. In the third, I identify and critique the long-standing division and hostility between literature and radio.

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[8] This is a very different account than that given in Tyrus Miller's influential *Late Modernism*. The Third Programme radio plays of Samuel Beckett, one of very few Late Modernists identified by Miller, are striking examples of the increasing public engagement identified in my dissertation.

Modernism and Modernity

As the participants in *Voice* made clear, modernism on the BBC was not a singular or exclusive canon of works, set of formal features, or even a unique posture. The inclusion of a work in *Voice* was a kind of canonization, but in discussions before and after the recitation of each piece, the contributors debated its merits, its construction, and the stance of the author. Instead of curating and presenting what the participants thought to be the best works in a given genre, the process of selection hinged on exploring representation as a problem without a singular solution. Here *The Waste Land* was considered alongside Una Marson's "The Banjo Boy" and contemporary Indian writing recommended by Mulk Raj Anand.[9] Shuttling between widely different works, *Voice* revealed a host of complex responses to the myriad pressures of modernity, including disruptions wrought by technology, colonization, immigration, and war.

Eliot's poem was, of course, subsequently held up as a touchstone in the particular narrative of modernism that proliferated in the academy after the war. As Ann Ardis argues, hypercanonical modernism—a laundry list of texts, formal features, and myths of transcendence over politics, mass media, and the everyday—emerged as a coping mechanism for rapidly expanding departments of English wed to the practice of formalist criticism. Under this dispensation, *The Waste Land* was widely anthologized, studied, and treasured, whereas the work of Anand and Marson was largely forgotten. In the academy, English modernism was whittled down to the three "Men of 1914" or,

[9] For more on Marson, see Snaith and Jarrett-Macaulay.

further, to just one of them in *The Pound Era*. But as "Fiction on the Radio" demonstrates, this version of modernism obscures much more dynamic conversations and debates.

Returning *The Waste Land* to its radiophonic context is a salient reminder that the poem's monumentality was not always self-evident and that the poem was instead one response among many possibilities to forces of modernization that were themselves differently articulated at various times and in assorted locations. Joining both a new push within modernist studies as well as a critical procedure modeled by *Voice*, this dissertation argues for and employs a more capacious understanding of modernism. Rather than simply expanding existing definitions, however, I follow Susan Stanford Friedman in instead employing a relational model that "stresses the condition or sensibility of radical disruption and accelerating change wherever and whenever such a phenomenon appears, particularly if it manifests widely" (Friedman, "Definitional" 503). In place of the stubbornly persistent nominal definition of modernism, in which a text must exhibit a certain number of formal traits in order to be included, a relational model ends the practice of using the works of hypercanonical modernism as yardsticks, even while maintaining their position as valuable literary objects. Shifting our rubric to one of disruption and change allows for the consideration of texts outside of temporal and geographical boundaries erected through and pre-supposed by the study of Anglo-American or European modernism.

Modernist studies has grappled with postcolonial theory and entered into more extensive conversation with the social sciences in the past two decades, advancing a wide

variety of strategies to overcome the problems of an exclusionary modernism. Ardis proposes leaving the traditional, exclusive canon of modernism intact and engaging instead with works that fall outside their purview. Kristin Bluemel created a new term, intermodernism, to refer to the engaged writing of authors like Anand and George Orwell, which she sees as both similar to yet sufficiently different from modernism proper to deserve a neologism. A third possibility, and the one most widely practiced in criticism and in the construction of course syllabi, is to adopt texts that share a sufficient number of formal qualities with established modernist texts. This allows for the inclusion of novels such as Anand's *Untouchable* (1935) or Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* (1966) in projects otherwise focused on the Anglo-American canon.[10]

Despite their significant differences, all three approaches maintain an underlying Euro-centric standpoint, and always exclude some things based on the perspective of the definers—the Anglo-American canon remains at the center and the newly admitted texts maintain their position on the peripheries. The best that newly canonical texts could hope

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[10] Even Susan Stanford Friedman admits to the pull of the old definition and the ease with which it can accommodate certain postcolonial texts: "The power of those early concepts of modernism as the crisis of aesthetic representation, with a repudiation of nineteenth-century realism, remains very strong within me. It is one thing to claim, as I have, that texts like Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* (1966) and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997) are "modernist," defining a postcolonial modernism both interlocked with and yet distinct from Euro-American modernism. The formalist experimentalism of these texts makes them philosophically, psychologically, and aesthetically attuned to writers like Conrad, Joyce, Woolf, and Faulkner, however different their modernities" (Friedman, "Planetarity" 476). In *Against World Literature* (2013) Emily Apter returns the problematics of translation to the center of emerging conceptions of World Literature and provides a timely warning against more nefarious "flaccid globalisms that [pay] lip service to alterity while doing little more than to buttress neoliberal 'big tent' syllabi taught in English" (Apter 8-9).

for would be to come as close as possible to hypercanonical works, but they can never equal or surpass the literary monuments deployed as benchmarks. As Aamir Mufti points out, according to this ideology "cultural objects from non-Western societies can be grasped only with reference to the categories of European cultural history, as pale or partial reflections of the latter, to be seen ultimately as coming late, lagging behind, and lacking in originality" (Mufti 474). Abandoning the practice of defining modernism metonymically, and instead positing it as a wide range of responses to modernity, goes a long way in overcoming these perceptual problems. But as the lively debates in the social sciences have demonstrated, the concept of modernity is in as much flux as that of modernism.

The traditional narrative of international modernist aesthetics, with the West coming first and the "rest" lagging behind, mirrors closely those of modernity *tout court*. Critics as different as Immanuel Wallerstein, Anthony Giddens, and Thomas Friedman all assume that modernity spreads from the West outwards. Many of these critics are well intentioned and seek to identify and analyze structural economic imbalance. But while this is a noble goal, it tends to form over-simplified models of how cultures interact. The problem is not simply with the Manichean thinking of works like *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, but extends to practitioners of World-Systems theory as well.[11] Bruce Robbins argued recently, in *Immanuel Wallerstein and the Problem of the World* (2011), that the proposition that the colony leaves an imprint on the culture of the metropolis is a

[11] A notable exception is Franco Moretti's simple but elegant insight, adopted by proponents of world-systems theory, that there is one global market for literature, and specifically the novel. For more, see Moretti, "World-Systems."

"questionable hypothesis" and "contrary to fact" (Robbins 7). Thus even in contemporary critical practice, the centrifugal model of modernization and cultural diffusion remains remarkably persistent and wide-spread.

Dipesh Chakrabarty provides an incisive critique of such thinking in *Provincializing Europe*:

> Historicism thus posited historical time as a measure of the cultural distance (at least in institutional development) that was assumed to exist between the West and the non-West. In the colonies, it legitimated the idea of civilization. In Europe itself, it made possible completely internalist histories of Europe in which Europe was described as the site of the first occurrence of capitalism, modernity, or Enlightenment…This move of historicism is what Johannes Fabian has called 'the denial of co-evalness.' (Chakrabarty 7-8)

According to the Hegelian developmentalist plot described here, the main difference between center and periphery was one of chronology, with the non-West belatedly experiencing processes of modernization already familiar in the West. In addition to serving as the justification for European imperialism in the past, this historicist narrative continues to inform understandings of modernity, Enlightenment, and capitalism, from the neo-liberalism of Thomas Friedman to the Marxist critiques of the free market by Wallerstein and his followers.

Joining Chakrabarty in working to counter discourses of developmentalism, Arjun Appadurai, Nestor Garcia-Canclini, Dilip Gaonkar and others have explored how modernity unfolded in unique ways in various locations. Summarizing the different orientation of critics exploring what they call alternative modernities in "culture-specific and site-based" analyses, Gaonkar posits a different theoretical orientation that would "destabilize the universalist idioms, historicize the contexts, and pluralize the experiences

of modernity" (Gaonkar 15). In place of western universalism, scholars have produced ideas and examples of alternative modernities that are culturally specific, registering and theorizing the particularities of various sites of modernity.

Yet, as Jed Esty points out: "The spatial turn, with its ongoing call for methods that recognize cultural difference and alternative modernity by the hygiene of geographical rather than historiographical inquiry does, however, carry its own specific intellectual risks: it risks turning comparative analysis into an exotic catalogue of pure differences and it risks an inadequate historical reckoning with the facts and legacies of European/Western power" (Esty, *Unseasonable* 198).[12] The proliferation of alternative modernities, according to this critique, presents two major problems, one (less widely realized) the "revalorization of tradition and ethnic particularity," and the second, an inability or unwillingness to see larger structures of oppression (Feenberg 129). Appadurai reminds us that there are many kinds of disjunctive flows, not just cultural ones, and though overthrowing the idea that some cultures are inferior or belated is good, it can also mask economic, social, and political imbalances. Esty's proposal, that there should be a middle ground between countless alternate modernities and a singular modernity, is one that the present study engages by delineating the ways that a central institution—the BBC—figured in different cultural contexts.

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[12] Other critics take up this problem too. John Kraniauskas provides a narrative of alternate modernities contesting Hegelian developmentalism. Jameson, in *A Singular Modernity*, critiques alternative modernities in the form of "Disneyfied cultural revivals springing up all over the world in postmodernity" but registers the need for comparative study of "the alternate historical paths to modernity (or capitalism) in all the countries of the world" (Jameson, *Singular* 218 n.12).

Each chapter examines a different formulation of Fabian's concept of the coeval, as each writer I examine coined different (but related) narratives of modernity.[13] While I agree with the need articulated by the new modernist studies to extend the temporal boundaries of modernism, it would also be beneficial to develop a more thoroughly historicized understanding of the period traditionally understood as that of late modernism.[14] The instantaneity of radio serves as an invitation and spur to think through the coeval development of radio technology, broadcasting programs and practices, and—by extension—modernities in different global locations.

(Wireless) Culture and Imperialism

As the installment of *Voice* with which I open makes clear, modernism was irrevocably tied to colonialism. The title of this section alludes to Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, signaling the debt this project owes not only to Said's methodology of contrapuntal reading but also to his conception of a "global history of modernism" that takes stock of the influx of non-European cultures into metropolitan capitals (Said, *Culture* 243). As Said shrewdly argues: "A common anti-imperialist experience was felt, with new associations between Europeans, Americans, and non-Europeans, and they

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[13] Though Stephen Kern limits his discussion to European modernism in *The Culture of Time and Space*, he nevertheless perceived the global implications of wireless technology in creating "the reality of a present that embraced the entire globe" (Kern 88).

[14] In a longer version of this project, I plan to extend my inquiry into modernism and radio to the close of the century by analyzing Salman Rushdie's use of radio as a metonym for the state. Radio frames, and is coterminous with, the vision of a secular, democratic nation in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1980). By the close of the century, however, state broadcasting is increasingly displaced by the rise of multinational capital in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999).

transformed disciplines and gave voice to new ideas that unalterably changed that structure of attitude and reference which had endured for generations within European culture" (Said, *Culture* 242-3). "Fiction on the Radio" identifies and analyzes the BBC as a particular site where these conversations and contestations took place.

Said's promising model of cultural interaction has subsequently been eclipsed in modernist studies. In an influential reading of Forster's *Howards End*, Fredric Jameson argues that the existence of the colonies had a significant but oblique relationship to British literary modernism, taking the form of an inability of metropolitan subjects to see and understand the social and economic totality of empire. This limitation was then embraced by the late modernists, argues Jed Esty, when English writers revived an insular national image and—in the oeuvre of Forster—"insular rites displace[d] metropolitan fictions" (Esty, *Shrinking* 79). A major contributor to this recurrent image of an insular, benighted Forster is the exclusive focus on print media. Looking at Forster's broadcasting career and interactions with actual Indians—rather than at India as a philosophical construct in *A Passage to India*—reveals not simply a different Forster, but a different image of English culture. In highlighting this transnational or cosmopolitan strand in Forster, Anand, Joyce, and James my project contributes to a small but growing movement to revise accounts of modernism's internationalism, as recent books by Jessica Berman and Rebecca Walkowitz have done.

The writers included in my dissertation all worked to reverse the predominant colonial narrative of innovation and culture moving from center to periphery but my project departs from other accounts by stressing the contributing role that wireless

technology played in the development of transnational connections. Broadcasting technology itself followed a path similar to the cultural products studied here. Though this dissertation focuses on the transmission of voice, which began regularly in England in 1922, and short-wave technology developed in the 1930s—which allowed London to address India—radio had a relationship with modernism and colonialism from the start.[15]

Many developments in wireless, both technological and social, were generated in the imperial backwater of Ireland, not in the metropolis. Wireless telegraphy, though open to eavesdropping, assumed a dialogue between two known communicants. During the Easter Rising in 1916, volunteers seized the General Post Office and broadcast the establishment of the Irish Republic to whoever could pick up their signal, rather than to a specific interlocutor. In addition to changing how wireless was employed, Ireland was also instrumental in its commercial exploitation. Gueglielmo Marconi, the son of an Irish mother whose family controlled the Jameson distillery business, conducted significant experimentation in Ireland, starting in 1898 and culminating in the first westward transmission of a human voice over the Atlantic, from Ballybunion (Cathcart 13-14). From 1905 to 1922, Clifden (in Galway) was the sending and receiving station for all of Marconi's transmissions from Europe to North America. As the work of Timothy

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[15] Many amateurs experimented with wireless telephony but by 1915, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company completed a trans-Atlantic transmission, from Arlington, Virginia to Paris (Crisell 11). Medium waves were not reliable for long-distance communication, however. The super heterodyne circuit, developed and deployed in the 1930s, allowed three different wavelengths to be combined into a fourth signal, opening previously untapped areas of the electromagnetic spectrum to transmission and reception. The super heterodyne allowed for transmission on wavelengths that could travel further and with less interruption (i.e. shortwaves, which bounce between the earth and the ionosphere, taking advantage of the curvature of the earth) and the subsequent tuning of these inaudibly high frequencies back down to an audible range by the receiver.

Campbell reminds us, "wireless" was first used to refer exclusively to this form of electric wireless telegraphy—a major inspiration to the Italian Futurist F. T. Marinetti, whose writing made much of wireless imagination (*immaginazione senza fili*) and the colonization of Africa. Sensing the importance of wireless to the maintenance of the colonies, an Imperial Wireless Chain was constructed by the UK from 1902 well into the 1920s.

Over and above radio programming, radio as a technology gives a sense of the coeval unfolding of modernity in England and the colonies. The existence and success of amateur operators in India, Ireland, and England before 1922 undermine narratives of the BBC's precedence. Within the space of two short years, the BBC began regular transmission in London, the BBC established 2BE in Belfast, and in India, broadcasters offered regular transmissions in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras (Chatterji 39).[16] Though I track the extension of the BBC most thoroughly, broadcasting in India underwent dramatic expansion through the interwar and war years. From a few amateur stations in the early twenties, by Independence in 1947 there were nine All India Radio (AIR) stations and another five controlled by princely States (Awasthy 10-11).[17] And just as the BBC ramped up international broadcasting in the late 1930s, AIR started broadcasting in

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[16] For more on broadcasting in Northern Ireland, see Cathcart and Bardon. Damien Keane provides a more nuanced take on the "mediated location" of the north / south border in his unpublished typescript, "Contrary Regionalisms and Noisy Correspondences: The BBC in Northern Ireland circa 1949."

[17] AIR more than doubled the number of stations, to twenty-one by 1950, contributing to Rushdie's sense of AIR's centrality to the newly independent India of *Midnight's Children*.

Pushto to listeners in Afghanistan in October 1939 and maintained a far-eastern service during the Second World War.[18]

Though the technology of broadcasting spread quickly in metropole and colony alike, its use was subject to structural imbalances between the two locations. The BBC had an outsize influence on broadcasting in the then current and former colonies, with Ireland and India sharing a vision of public broadcasting at odds with the American commercial model.[19] Under Reith's guidance, the BBC was committed to maintaining its vision of broadcasting as a public service rather than a private enterprise. Echoing Matthew Arnold, Reith argued: "our responsibility is to carry into the greatest possible number of homes everything that is best in every department of human knowledge, endeavor and achievement, and to avoid the things which are, or may be, hurtful" (Reith, *Broadcast* 34). In financial terms, Reith's vision translated into commercial-free broadcasting with funding derived from government grants and license fees paid by users. This model was replicated in both Ireland's 2RN, later RTE, and India's AIR. The BBC was a frequent consultant to both services as well. In his history of broadcasting in

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[18] Ireland hoped to establish a shortwave service to connect to the Irish diasporia in the US but, short of funds, it was never realized. BBC print publications like *Radio Times* and the *Listener* had analogs in India as well. The English-language *Indian Radio Times* was introduced in 1927, and had a circulation of 2,750 from 1930-32; by independence, there was an estimated circulation of 30,000. Interest in radio was greater than these figures indicate, however, with radio publications in other languages as well.

[19] Nonetheless, neither the BBC nor 2RN enjoyed true monopoly status for long, as both Radio Normandie (founded in 1931) and Radio Luxembourg (1933) were established on strictly commercial lines to serve Anglophone listeners. These stations were precursors to the "pirate" radio stations that profited from the BBC's refusal to play rock music in the 1960s, one of which is fictionalized in Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999).

India, G. C. Awasthy credits Lionel Fielden, sent by the BBC to AIR in 1936, for realizing "the potentialities of radio as an art form" (Awasthy 59). Similarly, Maurice Gorham's *Forty Years of Irish Broadcasting* is replete with admiration for and thanks to the BBC, where he was sent for training.

While the BBC was important to other national broadcasting organizations, it was also a significant player in the lives of listeners abroad, thanks to its Empire Service. A shift in how the BBC conceived of and practiced empire broadcasting is another, not strictly technological, modification that is central to the story I unfold here. The Empire Service functioned in the 1930s as a centrifugal force relaying programming designed for the domestic audience, but this changed radically during the war. John Reith's 1923 plan "to organize Indian broadcasting from here" was tenable for a few years—by 1932 the BBC offered limited Empire broadcasting, directed at keeping expatriates in touch with the homeland by replaying material developed for the domestic audience (qtd. in Awasthy 1). This was not the case for long, however.

British colonial administrators raised increasingly strident complaints about the broadcasting practices of Italy and Germany, causing the BBC to reconsider its model. Both Italy and Germany extended the range of their shortwave transmissions during the interwar years and broadcast customized propaganda to the Middle East, India and other areas in languages native to the destination of their broadcasts. Italy's Arabic service in particular disquieted the British, prompting the establishment of the BBC Arabic service

in 1937.[20] Not only was the language of transmission reconsidered, but the BBC's concept of audience was significantly altered as well. No longer aiming exclusively at the British expatriate, Arabic programmer S. H. Perowne describes the new audience as "drawn almost entirely from the executive class. That is to say, government officials, school teachers, students and men and women of leisure and means. . . . It is in the hands of this class that the destinies of their countries must lie for some time to come" (qtd. in Briggs 143). The establishment of the BBC Arabic Service was exemplary of the re-conceptualization of overseas broadcasting in the late 1930s, as other customized programming was broadcast to Latin America, Canada, China, Australia and India.

In order to appeal to this native elite, the BBC hired Indian intellectuals to work for the Empire Service, recruiting, for example, Zulfiqar Bokhari from AIR to head the Eastern Service. Bokhari enjoyed considerable authority, personally checking and approving most of Forster's broadcasts, in addition to overseeing George Orwell's work. Other Indian writers and intellectuals at the Eastern Service included Mulk Raj Anand, Ahmed Ali, Cedric Dover, J. M. Tambimuttu, Venu Chitale, and R.R. Desai, among others. The Indian writers at the Eastern Service were supplemented by names thought to appeal to listeners in India including literary giants like Eliot, Forster, and Cyril Connolly. The practice of having all contributors to a broadcast sit around the same table and shift seats to address the microphone reinforced the sense of communal production that permeated the halls and offices of the Eastern Service.

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[20] French imperial broadcasting followed on similar lines: although established in 1931, it was not until 1939 that the service was revamped, re-branded and reinforced, with additional transmitters erected in Tunis and Algiers (August 96).

There were significant limitations to the freedom offered by the BBC even though broadcast programs put English and Indian contributors on even footing. While my project is interested in complicating the story of the powerful colonists and the powerless colonized, this is not to say that the relationships were equal. By "referring back to the colonial and postcolonial matrices of violence, inequality and oppression even as it reveals the cultural interchange across the colonial divide," my dissertation joins Jahan Ramazani's work in avoiding a model of cultural hybridity that creates "the false impression of symmetry between unequal terms, cultures, or nations" (Ramazani 180). One of Anand's broadcasts, on the Spanish Civil War, was censored altogether, a fate that Forster never faced despite his insistence on pushing boundaries. The idea of an English writer like Forster telling Indians about their own literary scene smacks of paternalism and the fact that Forster, Anand, and Orwell were drawing checks from the BBC to support the war effort that included the postponement of India's independence must be acknowledged. And inequalities were much more pronounced outside of the BBC, with the famine in Bengal—the subject of a play by Anand discussed in chapter 3—serving as one particularly devastating example of British callousness. The famine found its way to England, however, when Anand worked with the working-class Unity Theatre to perform his play "India Speaks" and when Forster reviewed a novel about the crisis. To ignore these contributions would be to perpetuate (even with a reversed value judgment) the narrative of the passive natives.

Radio and Literature

As I hinted earlier, in suggesting that reading the English modernist novel for oblique signs of empire provides an inadequately robust account of twentieth-century culture, the dynamic relationship between radio and literature has long been overlooked. Many writers at the time, even those who broadcast, held a distinction between broadcasting and serious writing that has stubbornly persisted. Cyril Connolly's prescient warning that broadcasting is a "remunerative substitut[e] for good writing," and specifically at odds with achieving posterity, has proven true (Connolly 86). Alduous Huxley, channeling D. H. Lawrence in *Point Counter Point* (1928), characterized wireless as a thoughtless anodyne for the industrial worker who should strive instead to be: "a real complete human being. Not a newspaper reader, not a jazzer, not a radio fan. The industrialists who purvey standardized ready-made amusements to the masses are doing their best to make you as much of a mechanical imbecile in your leisure as in your hours of work" (Huxley 300). Exiled in America during the Second World War, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer significantly expanded this critique in their analysis of "The Culture Industry." This line of thinking persisted after the war and saw its most forceful articulation in the work of their student Jurgen Habermas, who boldly posited that print culture and broadcasting were inimical.

In addition to the disdain of earlier thinkers, the neglect of wireless in cultural criticism must partially be attributed to radio's ephemerality, spectrality, and lack of physical presence and remainder. The tone, rhythm, and inflection of early broadcasts has largely been lost as the vast majority of radio programming before and during the second

World War went unrecorded. While materialist criticism has done much to recover the deep and long conversation between modernism and mass culture, it has largely turned a deaf ear to broadcasting. Yet the existing audio archive, small as it is, is supplemented by material more familiar to literary researchers: written records. Typewritten scripts, often with hand-written additions and emendations; letters and contracts between broadcasters and administrators; and references in personal letters, diaries, journalism, and imaginative writing are often extant and convey a great deal about what was transmitted. This archive has been saved and reconstructed by humans with agendas and I want to mark at the outset that the archive in some ways helps to perpetuate older, pre-existing power structures. The BBC, drawing on financial resources that were harnessed from the empire, had by far the biggest budget of the three national services in the present study and the ability and inclination to keep thorough records of its undertakings. But since the BBC was composed of many individuals, the records are far from monolithic, instead revealing a complex web of interactions.

Modernist studies for a long time overlooked the rich media ecology of the twentieth century and maintained the distinction articulated by some modernists between high and low culture, with Andreas Huyssen providing a forceful recapitulation in the 1980s. In the past decade, a number of scholars representative of the new modernist studies, seeking to contextualize modernism and overturn the critical orthodoxy that held an antipathy between modernism and mass culture, have begun to uncover the histories of writers at the microphone. Todd Avery's *Radio Modernism* (2006), for example, challenges the presumed divide between modernist writers and mass media, looking more

specifically at how a number of British writers—including Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot and H.G. Wells—turned to the airwaves to disseminate their political and aesthetic ideas, often clashing with administrators by attempting to push the boundaries of accepted topics of discussion. A subsequent collection, *Broadcasting Modernism* (2009), further advanced the field by examining a wider cross-section of writers and forms, but it largely avoided discussion of empire.[21]

Despite all of the prejudices against and the difficulty of recovering the history of the medium, mine is not the first study of radio and modernism. There are two recurrent figurations in existing narratives, however, that my study helps to overcome. The first is that radio is best understood in a national context, a holdover from early, national broadcasting schemes. Well before Benedict Anderson identified radio as an analogue to print in spreading nationalism, early twentieth-century states used broadcasting in various attempts to shore up their borders. In England, the BBC worked to create and extend the national imagination; Irish and Indian radio did too. Radio was famously used to further violent, exclusionary nationalisms in Germany, Italy, and Japan. As Allan Hepburn points out: "Sound induces a sense of community during the war, and it perpetuates the notion of personal involvement as an obligation of citizenship" (Hepburn 12). The medium's ability to link the personal and the national was precisely what made it such a priority for propagandists.[22]

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[21] Michael Coyle's contribution on T. S. Eliot's broadcasts to India is a notable exception, though it focuses on the place of the broadcasts in Eliot's oeuvre and his evolving conceptions of culture. For more see Coyle.

[22] Within modernist studies, the disproportionate attention drawn to Ezra Pound's broadcasts for the Italian Fascists has obscured important differences between Pound's

Radio both used and extended vernacular languages, offered government accounts and speeches, and advanced pre-approved nationalist visions, but while it furthered cultural nationalism, it also disregarded terrestrial boundaries. In other words, broadcasting was always already international. But one recurrent narrative within radio studies (borrowed unwittingly from previous imperial discourses) is that when radio was international, it was used as an instrument of colonial power to dupe passive, native listeners or as a centrifugal force relaying the views of the imperial center to audiences in the peripheries. Representative of this trend is Douglas Kerr's analysis of George Orwell's experience at the Eastern Service, where Kerr argues that "the BBC Eastern Service in wartime was an organ of colonial discourse, propagating the word, and the worldview, of the metropolitan centre to its peripheral subject people" (474).[23] While this was certainly the plan of some policy makers, the Eastern Service was instead a contact zone where colonizer and colonized fought over rival narratives.

Remediating Modernism

The dissertation is divided into two sections. In the first, I use the Eastern Service of the BBC as a case study of a transnational institution of modernism by examining the different yet overlapping projects of E. M. Forster and Mulk Raj Anand. E. M. Forster was a central figure at the BBC and used his considerable influence as the best-known

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work and that of the Eastern Service. For more on Pound's Broadcasts, see Daniel Tiffany 221-290; Pound, *Ezra Pound Speaking*; Lewty; and Fisher.

[23] Other examples of this thinking can be found in Briggs and Hajkowski.

English novelist to open the airwaves to innovative and challenging works and writers. This chapter recovers Forster's incredibly productive years between *A Passage to India* (1924) and *Two Cheers for Democracy* (1951), when he became a surprisingly radical voice. In his extensive career broadcasting to India, Forster challenged easy distinctions between center and periphery, reviewing works written and published in India as central to the ongoing movement of modernism. By discussing Indian writing on the same level and in the same breath as English and continental writers, Forster modeled, in his talks, the atmosphere at the Eastern Service, which in large part because of Forster's affability, became a laboratory of postcolonial writing and critique.

For Mulk Raj Anand, the heady environment of the war-time BBC functioned as a cauldron where he met and mingled with practitioners who helped him sharpen his *ars poetica*. Anand's work foregrounded politics over aesthetics and roved restlessly over the globe seeking inspiration and models to develop a project that yet had no name. In novels like *Untouchable* (1935) and *The Big Heart* (1945), Anand defies the trend towards abstraction, pairing instead some of the formal elements of the avant-garde with the concerns and worldview of social realism. Anand's literary broadcasts provided a crucial space for testing his philosophy and melding his heterogeneous influences. A more robust engagement with Anand's war-time writing is critical to the project of globalizing modernism, unsettling easy distinctions between a European avant-garde and a Third World realism; Anand's frenetic attempts to create a space between the two exemplify what he dubs impatient modernism. For Anand, the rapidity of broadcast production,

transmission, and reception was a technological benefit of modernity that he would harness into an aesthetic of speed.

The second section of the dissertation reaches back in time, focusing on two interwar works and tracing the networks that connect them to broadcasting. The fourth chapter turns to a work promoted by Forster to his Indian listeners and launched by radio, James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939). Belying its reputation as a hopelessly difficult text, *Finnegans Wake* was taken up by a number of BBC broadcasters who argued for the book's importance and accessibility. This intervention by sympathetic writers over the airwaves constituted an unprecedented and long ignored effort to win readers over to the *Wake*. Placing this moment of acceptance next to an earlier one of tension, the chapter demonstrates that the *Wake* was not simply a passive recipient or beneficiary of radio promotion. Instead it actively reflected on the medium's crisscrossing arguments and positions as well. Joyce's working notebooks reveal that radio provided a material basis for his conception of what he called the novel's "polylogue" style. Competing national visions offered on English and Irish radio fascinated Joyce and in the mid 1930s he began incorporating these claims into the existing story of the empire-builder, conqueror, and father, HCE. This use of radio was different in kind from its earlier use as a way of thinking through the mélange of voices in the *Wake*. Now it critiqued the fledgling, and increasingly conservative, Irish state and the authoritarian, priggish, and imperialist BBC. These points of contact between the *Wake* and radio combine to form a narrative not simply of literary production and critical reception, but of the ways that wireless contributed to modernism's transnational commerce of ideas and ideologies.

The final chapter takes seriously a claim by C. L. R. James that his experience broadcasting for the BBC on the centenary of Emancipation provided the impetus for his famous biography of Toussaint L'Overture, *The Black Jacobins* (1938). At a time when the BBC was a frequent and thorough defender of empire, James took to the microphone to boldly, and controversially, link Emancipation with a proposal to end Crown Colony government in Trinidad. Despite the dramatic reaction incited by James's broadcast, he quickly came to see his broadcast as a painful failure. *The Black Jacobins*, published only five years later, repudiates "the anniversary orators" like himself for naively buying into and furthering a narrative of improvement. In *The Black Jacobins*, James jettisons a teleological view of progress, employing instead a narrative frame of rupture and uncertainty. This chapter reads *The Black Jacobins* as a palimpsest and a modernist novel to recover the politics of James's form. Rather than positing his broadcast as modern, and *The Black Jacobins* as modernist, this chapter uses both texts—despite, or because of, their radical formal differences—to articulate a more capacious history of the links between modernism and modernity.

In the ongoing effort to better understand our present hyper-connected world, "Fiction on the Radio" intervenes to offer a model to check the excesses of technological utopianism without losing sight of the cultural ties wireless offers. Rather than confirm a common idealism expressed by supporters of globalization, that technology will radically alter power structures, democratizing knowledge, my project tells a different story. Certainly a utopian strain was woven into early broadcasting, but it was balanced with a healthy skepticism. These writers struck a balance; they were not against globalization

altogether, they worked to further the cultural ties it offered while resisting its penchant for exploitation. In this sense, writers at the BBC participated in and furthered what Melba Cuddy-Keane identifies as "modernist literature's engagement of perspectivism and pluralism as a generative site for an alternative discourse of globalization—one that at the very least complicates the specters of exploitation and homogeneity that are often assumed to be the inevitable consequences of a globalized world" (Cuddy-Keane 540). In place of the Manichean choice we are so often confronted with between luddism on the one hand and internet utopianism on the other, modernism provides the example of fiction on the radio.

CHAPTER 2

ONLY CONNECTING:

E. M. FORSTER, EMPIRE BROADCASTING, AND THE ETHICS OF DISTANCE

Introduction

The modernist writer has been described as "a man of tremendous guts," an iconoclast whose work challenges "clichés, not merely of language but of ideas and even of values" but it would surprise many to hear this said of E. M. Forster (Menon 3, 5). In the hands of Anglo-American critics, Forster is widely seen as "at best a closet modernist," with an "anti-technological bias" and a vision limited to English middle-class life (Jameson 159).[24] In contrast to the epic ambition of Proust or the stylistic pyrotechnics of Joyce, Forster is "irritating in his refusal to be great," leaving Lionel Trilling to wish Forster's style "less comfortable and more arrogant" (Trilling 9). Narayana Menon, who worked with Forster at the BBC's Eastern Service offers a different, even unexpected, take on Forster. That this view was widely shared by the most radical early twentieth-century Indian writers should give us pause. A shift in perspective, specifically a consideration of Forster's broadcasts and essays as "significant work," was enough to inspire Menon to observe: "Intelligent, solid, well-equipped critics who have

[24] Fredric Jameson employs Forster's *Howards End* as shorthand for a circumscribed metropolitan perspective with which to contrast the peripheral, colonial double-vision offered in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. For Jameson, Forster's novel stands metonymically for the metropolitan perspective to the extent that it registers the existence of, but fails to describe, a space beyond the shores of England that is nonetheless constitutive of its economy: the colonies. Technology, in this case a train, frames the infinity posited but never articulated by *Howards End*. But the proliferation of technology radically altered the spatial and temporal coordinates of empire; technology had changed things in ways that complicated who was peripheral and who central.

not looked into his essays have written of the 'shy, unworldly quality' of his work, 'almost diffidently presented'! How wrong they are" (Menon 6). As Menon well knew, Forster and his Indian coworkers at the BBC turned what was supposed to be a source of imperial propaganda into an unlikely but vivacious cauldron of artistic experimentation and transnational exchange. Forster's modernism was not primarily between the covers of his novels; it was on the radio.

The humble title of Forster's monthly, fifteen-minute "Some Books" program—broadcast over the BBC's Eastern Service from 1941 to 1947—belies the complex ways in which it registered and furthered the disjunctive flows of modernism. The title sounds impossibly capacious, as if the program would deal with a random or haphazard assortment of books. For Forster's Indian listeners, it could often seem that way, tackling—in addition to literature—books of history, journalism, politics, and science in addition to art exhibitions, concerts and plays. Its refusal of a more precise adjective is significant beyond the maintenance of Forster's freedom of critical movement, however. "Some Books" eschews every tried-and-true system of literary classification, from genre, language, nationality, period, and canonical status to personal taste ("favorite," say) in large part because Forster envisioned and maintained his program as a platform to discuss and promote the products of increasingly nomadic writers and fractal publishing structures. Ostensibly meant to connect England and India, a project to which Forster was committed, his program also exploded neat boundaries of place, time, and cultural belonging.

The broadcast talk is a curious genre.[25] It is an unusual (and often ignored) object of critical attention, a literary oddity in equal parts because of its brevity, novelty, and intimacy. In the hands of Forster, the talk also possesses a relentless, roving inquisitiveness. Because none of the talks offer sustained engagements with any single text, theme, or place, they have largely escaped serious consideration. But rather than the loosely constellated nature of Forster's talks detracting from their value, their very fragmentation has advantages. The broadcasts give narrative form to the perpetually revolutionary energy and effects of modernity but do so in a baggy, supple way—indeed this is their central value. The lack of closure in "Some Books" embodies the very contradictions it identifies rather than resolving them. Forster's writerly dissatisfaction with the particular ways different authors responded to the war kept him searching across the globe for a satisfying answer.[26] That he never found one is a boon for us.

Forster's account of Indian culture and thought is much more nuanced than many critics of his fiction have realized, despite occasional use of keywords and phrases that arouse suspicions of Manichean thinking, like Forster's distinction between "culture here and culture your end," (*BBC* 258). In his program, Forster stresses the fallacy of monolithic conceptions of national culture, arguing, for example, that the works he

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[25] I'm grateful to Hilary Schor for showing how useful these two meanings are.

[26] As early as 1976, Bradbury and McFarlane warned against an easy equivalence between experimental style and modernism: "Modernism is less a style than a search for a style in a highly individualistic sense" (Bradbury & McFarlane 29). Forster continued his search after *Passage*, over the long course of his broadcasting career.

reviewed "suggest that there are several Englands as well as several Indias" (*BBC* 186–87).[27]

The BBC forms a rich site from which to examine how Forster nurtured modernism's internationalism because technological and social conditions combined to create an environment in which the transnational was stressed on both ends—receivers listed city names along with frequencies and short-wave stations like the Eastern Service created and disseminated programming to reach listeners far afield. That writers like Forster used the service to cultivate transnational dialogue has been overlooked in large part because the empire service was originally conceived as a means of emitting imperial views in a unidirectional manner from London to the furthest reaches of empire.[28] Forster reversed this logic by facilitating the circulation of people, books, and ideas from India to London. A consideration of Forster's extensive engagement with broadcasting challenges

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[27] Only three years after the Toynbee series recollected by Said, Forster rejected an invitation to deliver the Reith Lectures and Forster often cited the social and political inequities faced by Indians in England when refusing invitations to broadcast.

[28] Scholars are right to point out that the Empire Service was initially imagined as an "organ of colonial discourse." As Raymond Williams notes about new media, "virtually all technical study and experiment are undertaken within already existing social relations and cultural forms, typically for purposes that are already in general forseen" (120). Italian experimenter and entrepreneur Guglielmo Marconi's wireless telegraph was marketed to the British government specifically as a means of keeping the empire and the navy that maintained it in close and immediate contact. Furthermore, western Ireland served as the base for many of Marconi's transmissions — initially directed to England — demonstrating the usefulness of wireless for keeping the colonies in touch with the homeland. When the technology for audio broadcasting was developed in 1920, it too inherited surrounding social relations and cultural forms, including (among many others) the structures of Britain's economic, political and social exploitation of its colonies. Charles Ritchie, a Canadian diplomat to Britain, identifies a cliché that nonetheless teases out these threads; playing on the rhythm of Morse code as well as conceptions of the body politic, wireless was commonly referred to as "The Pulse of the Empire" (Ritchie 32).

these critical orthodoxies and brings to the fore neglected works and positions that reveal a more complex dialogue between British modernism and imperialism.

Turning to Forster's Indian broadcasts will help radio studies remember and think through the medium's disregard for terrestrial boundaries. Despite a growing conversation between media and modernist studies, recent scholarship on radio and modernism has largely overlooked the international context of wireless, focusing instead on domestic broadcasting (Avery, Hajkowski, Nicholas, Lago).[29] A few studies that have examined radio as an international medium have employed an overly simplified center / periphery model that fails to correspond to broadcasting practices beyond the early 1930s (Kerr, Briggs). These histories identify and critique the imperial values of BBC directors like John Reith but they unwittingly maintain Reith's over-simplified centrifugal model of cultural diffusion. Representative of this trend is Douglas Kerr's analysis of George Orwell's experience at the Eastern Service, where Kerr argues: "the BBC Eastern Service in wartime was an organ of colonial discourse, propagating the word, and the worldview,

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[29] The same emphasis runs throughout the few discussions of Forster's broadcasting career. Mary Lago's "E.M. Forster and the BBC" (1990) paints a fascinating picture of Forster's behind-the-scenes battles with the administration over both censorship and the inclusion of more cultural programming, his influence on the genre of the "Talk" and the struggles of various programmers to get Forster to contribute to the Home Service. Although she mentions Forster's Eastern Service broadcasts, correspondence between various BBC administrators and Forster concerning programs for the Home Service forms the bulk of Lago's primary material. Her later biography, *E.M. Forster: A Literary Life* (1995), presents slightly more material on his Indian broadcasts, including a short analysis of a broadcast from November 1940 concerning an exhibit of photographs of Hindu temples. Nonetheless, Lago's works, as well as the introduction to the *The BBC Talks of E.M. Forster: A Selected Edition* (2008) by Linda Hughes and Elizabeth Walls, while touching on certain details of Forster's overseas broadcasts, deal primarily with the place of the broadcasts within the development of the BBC in England or within Forster's oeuvre.

of the metropolitan centre to its peripheral subject people" (Kerr 474). Kerr's account, along with those that fail to acknowledge or analyze the role of Indian writers at the BBC, distort the historical record in two significant ways. First, these studies miss the development of the BBC Empire Service from an "organ of colonial discourse" to the multicultural contact zone that it became in the 1940s. These studies thus posit the British writer as a solitary figure disseminating his views or works to peripheral—in both senses of the word—subjects in empire, thus ignoring the rich, interactive environment at the BBC, where writers of different nationalities collaborated on broadcast programs. Second, these accounts overlook the role that the colonies had in shaping metropolitan identity, literature and publishing practices in the first place.

Forster's broadcasts, therefore, are such a valuable resource precisely because they complicate this familiar story, emphasizing the agency of his Indian listeners as well as the many intellectuals (Indian and English) who worked at the BBC during the war. While the intentions of some policymakers to use broadcasting as a means of shoring up the empire—or holding on to it until the war was over—are an important element of the story, so too are the actual practices of broadcasters and listeners who may or may not have agreed with official policies. Similarly, although histories of the BBC offer rich insight into the behind-the-scenes operations of administrators, they often ignore the ways in which individual broadcasters put these ideas into practice. An analysis of Forster's "Some Books" program will allow for a more nuanced account of the Eastern Service, Forster's career, and the cultural dynamics of late empire.

Forster used the international span and cosmopolitan staff of the BBC to turn the Eastern Service into a laboratory of postcolonial criticism. Of the many Indian intellectuals at the Empire Service, Forster counted many as personal friends, including Mulk Raj Anand, Ahmed Ali, and J. M. Tambimuttu. Forster promoted publications by these writers both inside and outside the BBC. The practice of having all contributors to a broadcast sit around the same table and shift seats to address the microphone further reinforced the sense of communal production. The presence of so many leading Indian writers in London and Forster's interest in and interaction with them complicate who could be considered "metropolitan" and who "peripheral."

In order to tell the story of how Forster used the BBC to challenge clichés of language, ideas, and values, I start with Forster's trip to India in 1945, where he temporarily interrupted his BBC program to broadcast on All India Radio. Forster's act of turning these texts into essays in *Two Cheers for Democracy* (1951) serves as a departure point to consider the ways in which Forster's broadcasts challenge imperial conceptions of temporality, which assume that thought and action originate in the metropole and only subsequently travel to the colonies. Instead, Forster's writing from the period originates in India and appears subsequently in England, mirroring a larger pattern Forster identifies in "Some Books," that some of the most radical and significant writing of the time originates in the colonies. In the second section, I hone in on Forster's "Some Books" radio program to show how Forster used his program to challenge censorship and welcome experiments with Indian English. In the third, I trace the development of Forster's intimate address in the interwar years by contrasting Forster's little-known anti-

imperial writings and growing queer canon with a series of talks organized by the Colonial Office. By way of conclusion I return to *A Passage to India* to reflect on the ways in which the novel anticipates not only events in the Second World War, but also offers an overlooked but incisive critique of the limitations of adhering to nationalism, whether Indian or British.

Global Time

A blind uncle is better than none.
— Bengali Proverb

Narayanan Menon's characterization of Forster as rebel in the chapter opening is predicated on an engagement with Forster's essays and broadcasts. If Forster's novel *Howards End* can only gesture towards the expanse of the colonies, as Fredric Jameson has suggested, Forster's non-fiction has a much more complicated geography. Forster's 1945 visit to India (his third) was the occasion for four broadcasts on All India Radio, all four of which were later retooled for delivery over the BBC's Home Service; in fact, much of Forster's war and post-war writing was intended for an Indian audience and only subsequently re-purposed for an English audience. Forster's familiarity with Indian writers and writing usefully complicates centrifugal models of culture in that it highlights the exchange of cultural goods between London and the colonies. If the broadcasts help theorize the spatial dynamics of empire, they also challenge colonial conceptions of temporality wherein the imperial center represents all that is modern, while the colonies await a more complete modernization. The complicated flows of his own oeuvre allowed Forster to appreciate the extent to which center and periphery were interconnected, that

the periphery could be the site of innovation, and that there were alternate modernities unfolding there.

The broadcasts help, then, in rethinking the different temporalities of modernity in that radio, as a modern technology par excellence, allowed information to pass great distances nearly instantaneously. The transnational scope of broadcasts coupled with Forster's emphasis on newly published books from around the world therefore aids in the ongoing project of rethinking Eurocentric, teleological narratives of progress and modernization. The Historicism identified in Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* suggests that if modernism even happened in the colonies, it was a belated and watered-down phenomena.

The transnational scope of Forster's radio program along with the sheer variety of the material he reviewed provides an opportunity to reexamine global modernization. Radio as a medium coordinates multiple temporalities. Néstor García Canclini argues that despite the hybridity of programming, broadcasting functions as a synchronizing force in Latin American cities: "radio and television, in placing in relation to each other diverse historical, ethnic, and regional patrimonies and diffusing them massively, coordinate the multiple temporalities of different spectators" (211). In other words, by absorbing and retransmitting elements of different cultures on a grand scale, broadcasting emphasizes the simultaneous presence of multiple temporalities while "coordinat[ing]" them for individuals. Empire broadcasting extends this feature, connecting London and India in near simultaneity. At the BBC, however, Forster extended this function by discussing

books from all over the globe and by explicitly theorizing how modernity's ruptures were refracted in literature.

Because the Eastern Service was more accommodating with content than the Home Service, and because of Forster's sustained interest in India, over half of Forster's 145 broadcast talks were directed to the country.[30] The sheer number of Forster's broadcasts to India point to his ongoing interest in and affection for the people and literature of the Subcontinent. More importantly, however, they reveal a complex circulation of books, ideas, and people that provides a new depth to understanding the workings of Empire and radio, emphasizing the extent to which these artists made a virtue of physical distance in an attempt to form more equitable relations.

As Forster's familiarity with Indian writers like Anand, Ali, and Tambimuttu suggests—and in sharp contrast with BBC domestic programming as well as the work of some fellow Eastern Service broadcasters like T.S. Eliot—many of Forster's broadcasts concerned not only English and Continental fiction, but Anglophone Indian books or, occasionally, books by English authors on India as well.[31] The largest percentage of his talks are international in scope, covering a number of continental writers within one

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[30] B.J. Kirkpatrick identifies 145 "Talks" in her Forster bibliography. Not included in this tally are collaborative broadcasts such as the discussion "Efficiency and Liberty" with Captain Anthony Ludovici in 1938. For more on these broadcasts, see Lago, "E.M. Forster and the BBC" 135; see also Lago, *E.M. Forster: A Literary Life* 92–130.

[31] See, for example, Coyle for an account of Eliot's Eastern Service broadcasts, which were either readings of his own work or reflections on British Culture, narrowly defined.

talk.[32] While he reviews many books by English authors, he just as frequently reviews books by Indian writers or books by English writers on India.[33] In sixteen broadcasts, Forster covered the works of English writers but in sixteen others, he discusses either Indian writers exclusively or British writers interchangeably (as in the 3 February 1943 broadcast, which considered new volumes by C.S. Lewis and Mulk Raj Anand side by side).[34]

The varying national foci of Forster's broadcasts point to the physical circulation of both books and people, with the BBC serving as a valuable contact zone. Forster was in a particularly good place to talk to India, having traveled there in 1912–13 (at the invitation of his friend Syed Ross Masood) and again from 1921–22 (during which time he worked as the Private Secretary to the Maharajah of Dewas State Senior). Having lived there and having written the famous *A Passage to India*, Forster was revered by

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[32] On 20 June 1943, for example, Forster considered playwrights from various countries: Englishman William Congreve, Frenchman Molière, Irishman G.B. Shaw, and the Russians Ivan Turgenev and K. Simonov.

[33] Forster similarly acknowledges the receipt of N. G. Jog's *Onions and Opinions* on 19 December 1944. The BBC library was a major source for the titles reviewed by Forster. Although he occasionally bought or received books published in India in the mail, for the most part he selected — or George Orwell recommended — titles from the BBC's collection. Much of the correspondence between the two writers centers around Forster's neglect to return borrowed books in a timely fashion.

[34] Another example of a comparative talk is the one from 9 December 1942 on V.K. Narayana Menon's *The Development of William Butler Yeats* and T.S. Eliot's "Little Gidding." Two examples of "English" author talks include that from 11 February 1942, which covered Aldous Huxley's *Grey Eminence*; a talk on 27 May 1942 reviewed Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*. An Indian talk was given on 3 July 1946, with Forster reviewing Saratchandra Chatterji's *The Deliverance*, Tarashankar Banerji's *Epoch's End*, Pramatha Chaudhuri's *Tales of Four Friends*, Tagore's *Farewell My Friend*, as well as two anthologies and four critical studies.

both English and Indian readers. *Conversations in Bloomsbury*, Anand's recollection of his early years in England, quotes Nikhil Sen telling a jingoistic English writer: "I suggest, Sir, that you take a chair in an Indian University for a few years. . . . You might be able to go beyond Kipling's *Kim* to Forster's *A Passage to India*" (4). Beyond revealing the reverence with which he approached Forster, Anand's conversations describe various locations of London literary discussion, from Virginia Woolf's drawing room to various bookshops, and the BBC served as one such literary meeting place. Narayana Menon, for example, in a collection of tributes to Forster from six Indian writers, notes, "I still remember vividly my first meeting with him in the corridors of the British Broadcasting Corporation some twenty years ago. . . . For the next five years we met frequently — at BBC studios, for lunches at the Reform Club, at Abinger Hammer . . ." (13). Menon's contribution is supplemented by other Indian writers who describe the assistance, friendship and on-air publicity Forster provided them over the years. All attest that the spirit of cooperation spilled outside of the recording rooms into less formal and more liminal spaces: hallways, cafeterias, and offices.

Conversations with Indian writers at the BBC and outside of it often led to Forster helping Indian writers. From Forster passing manuscripts to publishers and providing prefaces to books, this care extended to writers handing him books to review, as in the case of Menon's study of Yeats and Anand's *The Sword and the Sickle*. The exchange of books extended to volumes Forster purchased on his 1945 trip to India as well as to books mailed by authors and publishers seeking publicity. Forster starts his broadcast on 2 December 1943 by acknowledging one such shipment:

> Before I say more, let me thank those who have sent me these books, and say that I am glad to mention in my broadcasts books published in India, whenever they are suitable. I can't make a definite promise, because I only talk once a month and then for under a quarter of an hour, and there's a great deal of ground to be covered. But if I can include books published in India I will. And I am grateful for them personally. They make me feel less lonely. They remind me that links between culture here and culture your end do exist, and that the microphone, which hangs before me now like a petrified pineapple, is capable of evoking a human response. (*BBC* 258)

A few months later he expresses gratitude for Kumara Guru's *Life's Shadows*, further noting, "I was glad to receive it, and as I've said once before, I will always, when possible, mention in these talks books sent to me from your country. They may not always reach me, and they may in some cases be unsuitable — technical works, for instance, are unsuitable" (*BBC* 297). Whether or not this reference to technical works constitutes an apology for ignoring large shipments of such books is difficult to determine, but it opens the possibility that there were more books crossing borders than can be inferred from a mere consultation of the titles reviewed. Although it is difficult with broadcasting to determine precisely who is listening and how, the shipments of books to Forster constitute a body of physical evidence testifying to an engagement with Indian writers at the very least.

While "Some Books" registers the transnational circulation of books, people, and ideas, undermining center-periphery conceptions of culture, it is also an instructive example of a middle ground between the false universalism of the colonial narrative and an irreducible multiplicity of alternative modernities. Forster's quick and loose comparisons strike a tentative balance between the acknowledgement of uneven and

differently realized processes of modernization and the need to identify and narrate larger structures and patterns.

Forster formulates various scenes of modernity but ultimately argues that the spread of total war thrusts writers from disparate locations into similar situations.[35] Jane Austen's world provides a point of contrast to Forster's moment:

> Jane Austen chronicles a social system that has completely passed away, in England and elsewhere. Today, families are smaller, the bonds uniting them are looser, when a rectory is warmed it is by central-heating, and when a rector's daughter has brothers in the Navy she herself probably joins the Wrens. . . . [Austen] didn't even, in modern parlance, know that there was a war on. . . . This contrast between the writer, then when war was localized and standardized, and the writer today, when war is total, is a striking contrast. (*BBC* 294–95)

Forster suggests that the agrarian middle-class world of Austen has been surpassed by the nuclear family, central-heating and total war—the last remnants of England's feudal past annihilated to make room for the present. The pervasiveness of the war leads Forster to argue that despite varying local conditions, writers from different countries were involved in similar projects. The war changed much in England but it also altered conditions in India, as documented in Forster's reviews of novels by Indian writers. English, Indian, and continental writers alike struggled with the spread of industrialization, secularization, and the possibilities and pitfalls of nationalism, but these struggles became more salient during the war. As Forster points out, the writer faced with total war cannot choose to ignore it as Austen did.

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[35] Forster's identification of "total war" continues an elaboration of the concept in the interwar years. As Paul Saint-Amour points out, the colonies were the scene of experimentation with "air policing" and the bombing of civilians, techniques tested for a future war involving Western cities. For more see Saint-Amour, "On the Partiality of Total War."

Forster's comparatist approach enabled him to identify common ground in the struggle to integrate residual and emergent cultures while remaining cognizant of important differences. Discussing Thomas Hardy, Forster argues: "He has a deep feeling for old-fashioned characters, and local customs that were dying out . . . you will realize that he was a part of the country he loved, and of an age that has gone forever" (*BBC* 169). Hardy's depictions of the countryside are the occasion for his most poetic moments but the tragic arc of his novels stem from the inability of his characters to flourish in such surroundings once they have been exposed to modern ideas.

The difficulties accompanying attempts to merge the traditional and modern are central in other countries as well. Of two anthologies of Bengali fiction, Forster argues: "they are interested in the collision between the old order and the new — the old order being orthodox Hinduism, with its various social implications, and the new order having two aspects. The humanitarian and the industrial. There is the same collision in English literature . . . [but] it is the suddenness of the break-up that excites the Bengali writers" (*BBC* 359). What strikes Forster about the specific clash between orthodox Hinduism and the newer industrial order is that it is simultaneously local and international. Hinduism is (here) specific to India, but the broader tensions between traditional practices and industrialization are traceable in English and Indian literature alike. Yet there remain important differences. Hardy depicts residual practices specific to his youth in Dorsetshire, where village superstitions—eating fried adders to cure snake-bite—are dying out (*BBC* 169). In the Bengali stories Forster reviews, the extended family changes the ways in which modernity's disruptions are registered. Saratchandra Chatterji's novel

The Deliverance, Forster points out, features a "Hindu joint-family, a form of social life unfamiliar to the west" that cannot survive the strain of in-fighting and is broken up by a law suit (*BBC* 357-8). Further, while industrialization creates tensions in both locations, Forster is careful to note its uneven appearance, in this case by remarking on the rapidity with which these conflicts are unfolding on the subcontinent.

This vision of the global village is a significant contribution to literary criticism despite the fact that Forster often bemoaned its aesthetic realization. Forster bestows rare approval on R. K. Narayan and Chatterji but for the most part is unsatisfied with his choices, admitting in many broadcasts that he has not come across any good books. Forster's personal tastes are for "a novel of human contact and human character," preferably without much attention to war or politics, and he only begrudgingly admits that it is necessary for writers to address these topics one way or another (*BBC* 169). But it would be an oversimplification to argue that Forster's aesthetics are unconsciously ideological despite claims of disinterestedness and universality. The fact that Forster is broadcasting against fascism should be considered alongside his statements decrying the political turn of writing in the 1930s and '40s. Similarly, while he enjoys stories about human character and everyday life rather than overtly political material, he admits about India: "it's hard to see how anything non-political could at present be written about the country" (*BBC* 297). While he claims to do so reluctantly, he addresses war and political writing frequently. Furthermore, when he does so, he gives more time and attention (not to mention praise) to anti-imperialist arguments than he gives to the government position. For Forster, the contemporary writer was thrust into a situation in which he or she had to

address war and politics, regardless of his or her nationality. While it frustrated his more committed friends, Forster's disinterest in topical literature was tempered by his engagement with such material.

Forster's broadcasts challenge the teleological, historicist model in a number of ways. First, Forster used his program to theorize the knotty relationships between modernism and modernity. Focusing on how material and social conditions impacted imaginative products, "Some Books" coordinated multiple modernities, showing how the acceleration of modernity was a global phenomena that also left residues of the pre-modern intact. Second, because the BBC's Eastern Service was more intellectual than the Home Service, it served as a laboratory for post-war British Broadcasting, with The Third Programme modeled on the Eastern Service.

As Forster's "Some Books" suggests, far from serving as the dumping ground for material from the Home Service or for straightforward colonial propaganda, the Eastern Service allowed more freedom for broadcasters from both censorship and the requirement to provide "light" entertainment instead of more robust, intellectual material. A number of writers were eager to take advantage of this opportunity. As he made clear in a letter to George Barnes, who worked in the domestic Talks Department, Forster preferred overseas broadcasting "because I'm let to rip and even allowed to be obscure if I want to be so" (qtd. in Lago, "E. M. Forster and the BBC" 149). Administrators had a much higher opinion of the intellectual capacity of Indian listeners than English ones. While the Home Service was turning to light music, the Eastern Service allowed and encouraged Forster to dedicate broadcasts to the likes of Proust, Mann, and Joyce. This imbalance in

programming meant that, at the conclusion of the war, the Eastern Service—not the Home Service—served as the model for the newly-created, culture-oriented Third Programme, with Eastern Service broadcasters helping to imagine and then launch the new channel.[36]

Another intellectual service of the BBC that contributed to the Third Programme was intimately tied to empire (and a venue for Forster's views), *The Listener*. *The Listener* regularly featured a surprisingly thorough coverage of colonial writers, many of whom opposed, contradicted, or challenged official views. In fact, the first installment of the publication sets the tone by including an article on the history of art in India in which the chairman of the India Society, Lord Ronaldshay, claims of Indian writing in English, "Here, then, we have a new milestone on the long road of Indian culture and art—one which marks the beginning of an epoch, the possibilities of which may be dimly guessed at, even though, as yet, they cannot fully be foreseen" (18). Ronaldshay's talk, from January 11, 1929, and entitled "India in Art and Literature," was part of what the BBC described as an "orgy of Orientalism" that night, including readings of Indian literature by Indian students in London (qtd in Lago 232). The first issue of *The Listener* posited a kind of break into a new world of global English that was then documented throughout the periodical's interwar life. Only shortly thereafter, on 24 Dec. 1930, Mulk Raj Anand received an early boost from a positive review of *Persian Painting* by Herbert Read. *The Listener* would go on to publish talks by Anand, E. M. Forster, T.S. Eliot, Hsiao Ch'ien and a host of other Eastern Service broadcasters during the war years but the publication

[36] For more, see Whitehead.

was also supportive of interwar writing. R. K. Narayan's *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937) was praised by Edwin Muir for its "consummate if unobstrusive skill" and glowing reviews of Cedric Dover's *Half-Caste* (1937), CLR James's *The Black Jacobins* (1938), and Anand's *The Village* (1939) all appeared in quick succession (Muir 944).[37]

Edited by Forster's friend J. R. Ackerley, who wrote about his experiences in India in *Hindoo Holiday*, *The Listener* had a much more intellectual and progressive worldview than the Home Service. Ackerley took advantage of Forster's commitment to friendship by requesting and receiving material to publish, circulating Forster's Indian material to an English audience. From 1941 to 1947, *The Listener* published 23 of Forster's broadcasts, including talks on Iqbal, Narayana Menon's book on William Butler Yeats, and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* for the Eastern Service's experiment with distance learning, "a series of Talks . . . covering some of the set books in the B.A. course in English Literature at Calcutta University" (qtd. in Kirkpatrick 156).

Third, this pattern can be traced in Forster's oeuvre, with his talks for All India Radio rebroadcast over the BBC and included in his major post-war publication, *Two Cheers for Democracy*. The subsequent adoption of programming designed by and for Indian listeners and broadcasters reverses the European narrative of modernization. On his third trip to India, at the invitation of the All-India Centre of the P.E.N. Club meeting in 1945, Forster broadcast four talks, one each from Delhi, Calcutta, Hyderabad and Bombay. Forster's broadcasting career doubles a counter-teleological frame in that not

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[37] For more on the *Listener*'s intermedial status and its relation to modernism, see Cohen. Forster singled out *The Bachelor of Arts* in his annual review of books of 1937 for special praise as "so charming and so little known" (*Creator* 242).

only did he broadcast both for the BBC Eastern Service and for All India Radio (AIR), but the talks he developed for AIR were repurposed for subsequent talks on the BBC's Home Service and for print publication in England.[38] *Nordic Twilight*, a pamphlet of Forster's from 1940, collected three anti-Nazi broadcasts originally written for the Hindi service but distributed widely at home as a Macmillan War Pamphlet.[39] These publications were supplemented by a collection of Eastern Service Talks edited by George Orwell, *Talking to India*, which was published in November 1943 by George Allen and Unwin. The most substantial example, however, is Forster's collection of "essays," many of which are thinly disguised broadcasts; close to half of *Two Cheers for Democracy* is derived from *The Listener*.[40]

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[38] Despite the change of location, Forster didn't significantly alter his style or content for his broadcasts from India. Forster's first talk, "The Artist in the Postwar World," continues a line he had long followed in his BBC broadcasts, arguing against an increased attention to politics and argumentation in fiction. Countenancing an "orgy of messages" both in England and India alike, he argues that the role of the artist is "to listen more carefully than most people, and to use his ears with detachment and passion" rather than to preach (*Hill* 283). If the first talk reflected in general terms on the changing literary world, the second, "Does Writing Pay?" examines specific, practical aspects of copyright and publishing, offering support for writer's groups like P.E.N. Although only these two scripts survive, the talk from Bombay, "Has India Changed?" was transformed into a series of two talks given on the BBC Home Service upon Forster's return, which were then reprinted in *Two Cheers for Democracy*. Both talks were printed in the *Listener* after they were given on the Home Service and before they appeared in *Two Cheers*, on 31 January and 7 February 1946.

[39] See Kirkpatrick 250, d 1-3.

[40] Thirty-one out of sixty-nine chapters originally appeared in *The Listener*. For more see the Abinger Edition of *Two Cheers*. Forster's last major collection, *The Hill of Devi* (1953), continues the trend of publishing Indian material; it is comprised of edited letters from Forster's first two trips to India. The Abinger Edition (1983) includes significantly more material, including his diary from his third trip, when he broadcast for AIR in 1945.

An examination of Forster's broadcasts to India challenges the center-periphery model of culture while advancing a usefully loose narrative of global modernization. The broadcasts overturn some common misconceptions about Forster: that he was a technophobe, that he stopped writing after *A Passage to India* and that he was uninterested in politics.[41] The BBC, unlike Forster's novels, was a site where he expressed and furthered—in his characteristically reserved way—ideas that were no less radical for their subtle expression.

Forster's Radio Modernism

Forster's style—characterized by humility, uncertainty, irony—is a response to the intellectual readjustment required by modern experience. Forster's most forceful hostility to the traditional took the form of pushing the boundaries of what was representable in fiction, but it has been overlooked because he did so from without the novel, rather than from within. On the BBC Forster actively promoted the more formally-innovative novelists with whom he is often contrasted. Forster was part of a larger modernist movement that sought to represent new terrains of experience and neglected points of view. Seeing links between the struggles of queer writers at home and those representing the ramifications of empire, Forster turned down an invitation to broadcast in a series devoted to "the freedom of the artist," quipping that he would be unable to praise "the libel laws or the blasphemy laws or the laws related to obscenity, or about colour-prejudice encountered by my fellow-writers from India in this country" (*BBC* 24).

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[41] Forster wrote a satiric fragment about broadcasting and listening-in in the late 1930s, "From a Forthcoming Blue Book" (*Arctic Summer* 252-4).

For Forster, censorship was a means of denying voice, and in turn understanding and sympathy, to those who challenged the status quo. Forster rejected the mantle of wildly experimental aesthetics in his novels, but he argued vigorously that artists were part of an avant-garde. This was their central value to Forster and—as his above rejection makes clear—he saw that pushing the boundaries of acceptable topics was linked to formal experimentation, leading him to welcome and reinforce Indian writing in English.[42] By combating censorship and supporting Indian literary experiments, Forster made the Eastern Service a way-station in the circulation of new ideas.

Forster's commitment to liberty had a long and personal story that is not revealed through his publishing practices. It is remarkable how much Forster was willing to fight for others while remaining reticent about causing trouble with his own fiction. As is well documented, after publishing *A Passage to India* in 1924, Forster turned increasingly to criticism, publishing a number of essay collections and biographies.[43] This turn has been explained partially as a protest against, or a means of coping with, his inability to publish fiction dealing with homosexual characters, desires, and situations. Between *Howards End* and *A Passage to India* Forster completed a novel, *Maurice*, but because "the lovers get away unpunished and consequently recommend crime" Forster refused to seriously

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[42] Forster experimented with stream of conscious technique in "Story by Five Authors." The shift in focus to Forster's broadcasts thus enables us to register the ways in which Forster was most innovative outside of fiction but it also allows for the recovery of a significant piece of fiction written specially for the Eastern Service.

[43] These include *Aspects of the Novel* in 1927, a biography of his friend Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson in 1934 and a collection of essays, *Abinger Harvest*, in 1936. For more on Forster's transition to criticism see Advani 15.

pursue publishing it (*Maurice* 250).[44] In a diary entry Forster reflects "I should have been a more famous writer if I had written or rather published more, but sex has prevented the latter" (qtd in *Life to Come* xiv).[45] Other legal concerns reduced his output as well. Forster gained personal experience with the pernicious side of libel laws when the first edition of *Abinger Harvest* inadvertently reprinted a libel. Forster and his publisher had to pay £500 plus costs (Furbank 211). Worse, Forster's loss led him to fear another might follow him as the editor of T. E. Lawrence's letters and he reluctantly withdrew from the project. In the face of real danger, Forster consistently resorted to scrupulous self-censorship.

Yet the care with which Forster sought to avoid controversy with his own writing is completely absent in his literary broadcasts, where he strove to combat censorship by creating a wider readership or public for writers who subverted normative moral, political, and aesthetic values.[46] The broadcasts are an overlooked but significant counterpart to more polemical statements against censorship, self-reflexively advancing

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[44] Instead, the novel enjoyed a very limited circulation in manuscript and was published posthumously in 1971.

[45] Forster also sought a model in the life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, telling his listeners in August 1931 that: "If you say poetry is greater than criticism, I agree. But if you say—as is often said—that Coleridge is a failure, because he turned from a poet into a critic, I shall dispute it. He had a double achievement, and he couldn't scale the second peak until he had descended—painfully and with lamentation—from the first" (*BBC* 65).

[46] Even during Forster's break from broadcasting to write the Dickinson biography, he was thinking of how the radio created publics. Writing to his publisher at Edward Arnold, Forster reflected, "I do want the book to be advertised and "pushed", in ways suitable to its character. I have got the idea that Dickinson, owing to his broadcasting, was on the edge of a much wider public, and I do want him to reach them" (quoted in *Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson* xiii).

their arguments through indirection and fragmentation rather than outrage and indignation. By promoting censored texts and writers, Forster quietly turned the BBC into a space where the relationship between the social and aesthetic functions of art were explored and contested. These threads emerge in Forster's 1930 broadcast on D. H. Lawrence, a writer Forster recommended to his Indian listeners no less than five times:

> He has two publics, neither of them quite satisfactory. There is the general public, who think of him as improper and scarcely read him at all, and there is a special public, who read him but in too narrow and fanatical a way, and thought of him as a sort of god, who had come to change human nature and revolutionise society. His own public – the real public – he hasn't yet found that, and it is in the hope of persuading you to form part of it that I am speaking (*BBC* 55).[47]

This intervention is significant in that it very explicitly attempts to use the mass media to spread modernism beyond a small coterie of followers to the common reader. But Forster's sense of moderation makes it easy to overlook another context of his appeal, the challenge to the juridical structures that disallowed the publication and circulation of such material. The general public could not read Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) for another thirty years, when Penguin generated, and won, an obscenity trial in 1960.[48] Less than a year before Forster's broadcast, an exhibition of Lawrence's paintings was disrupted when authorities confiscated the canvases and these were only the most recent

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[47] D. H. Lawrence was referenced approvingly by Forster in Eastern Service broadcasts on 27 May 1942, 14 October 1942, 23 March 1944, 9 May 1944, and 20 November 1946. Additionally, Forster's original script for a Home Service talk on "New Books" on 3 October 1932 included a review of Aldous Huxley's *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, but for reasons that are unclear, Forster replaced this section with one on Edith Sitwell's *The Pleasures of Poetry: The Victorian Age*. See *BBC* 84-5.

[48] An expurgated edition was not published in England until 1932 and the original Italian printing was difficult at best to acquire.

examples of Lawrence running afoul of the law.[49] In Forster's characteristically furtive manner, he distances himself from Lawrence's most fervent adherents and detractors alike, while nonetheless insisting on Lawrence's position in the cultural vanguard. In Forster's hands, Lawrence is less pornographic than prescient, leading him to praise "the disquieting apparitions of D. H. Lawrence" in a broadcast to India (*BBC* 303). Forster was happy to defend his vision of the artist as part of the avant-garde even if he was unwilling to allow his fiction to join such ranks.

That Forster was allowed to even mention Lawrence, let alone dedicate a broadcast to him, speaks to the ways Forster was able to use his celebrity and reputation as a tool to chip away at restrictions. Just a year later, Harold Nicolson's talk on *Ulysses* was censored after his series "The New Spirit in Modern Literature," praising Lawrence then Joyce, raised the eyebrows of Reith and led to a BBC ban on discussion of contemporary novels *tout court*.[50] Forster bravely quoted from the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode of the banned *Ulysses* in his 1931 series of lectures, "The Creator as Critic," at Cambridge.[51] Lamenting that such behavior was tolerated in controlled, academic circles and not in public, Forster decided to push the envelope on the airwaves as well. In a talk given on 10 March 1934 and organized around the topic of individual liberty, Forster argued: "We can't read or write what we like. Oh, by the way, some

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[49] For more on Lawrence's brushes with censorship, see Moore.

[50] Both writers had works banned at the time of the broadcast. I discuss Nicolson's broadcast on Joyce in much more detail in Chapter 3. For more on the ban on contemporary novels, see Avery 47-50.

[51] See Forster, *Creator* 84.

publishers of repute intend to bring out an edition of Joyce's *Ulysses* in this country: I hope they'll get away with it because it's an important work – but we'll see" (*BBC* 125).[52] Forster's casualness, his phrasing suggesting that he mentioned *Ulysses* as an afterthought, was a successful strategy for circumventing censorship. Forster was not simply reflecting on whether or not the publishing of *Ulysses* was possible, he was himself involved in an experiment to see whether or not he could "get away with" directly challenging Reith's rule against mentioning *Ulysses* by name.

Forster gave up hope of publishing his own homosexual fiction as well as the lively correspondence of T. E. Lawrence but, faced with these limitations, nonetheless committed himself to helping other queer writers find larger publics. Forster did not simply compile a canon of gay writers for his private reference; he actively discussed and promoted this canon on the air. From 1931-32 Forster gave a series of talks on books and often addressed the work of close friends, many of whom were open about their homosexuality with Forster, such as Gerald Heard, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, Lytton Strachey, William Plomer, and Christopher Isherwood.[53] With "Some Books," Forster extended his queer canon by adding Forrest Reid (one of few people to whom Forster showed *Maurice*), Marcel Proust, Edward Carpenter, Lionel Fielden, and

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[52] *Ulysses* was available for the first time—legally—in the US on 25 January 1934. The novel wasn't widely available to the English public until the 1936 Bodley Head edition.

[53] For Forster's discussion of these figures see: Heard (*BBC* 62); Buckingham (*BBC* 69); Dickinson (*BBC* 86); Lytton Strachey (*BBC* 118); Plomer & Isherwood (*BBC* 120). The letters between Forster and Isherwood contain many references to Forster's broadcasting and he takes book suggestions from Isherwood and thanks him for mailing the translation of the *Gita* (*Letters* 133).

Benjamin Britten.[54] Playing with the lines between his public and private selves, Forster wrote and performed a dialogue between a novelist and a policeman modeled on an early interaction between himself and his lover Bob Buckingham (*BBC* 69-79). Forster even brought Buckingham into the studio to play the part of the policeman.

Forster extended the same care to his Indian colleagues as he did to his English ones. Forster is remembered as a witness for the defense in two highly publicized obscenity trials—for Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness* and D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*—but he unobtrusively aided his Indian colleagues navigate existing restrictions as well.[55] Forster's commitment to freedom for writers is an important but

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[54] Forster broadcast on Britten in 1946 but they were friends earlier through Isherwood; Britten bought Forster his first gramophone (Moffat 278-9). Britten and Forster later collaborated on an opera adaptation of Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*. Forster brought Bob Buckingham in for an Indian broadcast, echoing their earlier installment for *Conversations in a Train*. Joe Ackerly, part of a group of friends living in Maida Vale, took a job in the BBC's Talks Department in 1928 and eventually in 1935 became the literary editor of *The Listener*. Ackerley worked for the Maharaja of Chhatarpur in 1923, thanks to Forster's connection. For more on Forster and Ackerley, see Furbank 117, 135. For an overview of Fielden's experiences in India, see Zivin. Fielden's *Beggar My Neighbor*, reviewed favorably by Forster, was banned by the Government of India as "unadulterated pro-Congress and pro-Gandhi propaganda;" a bulletin issued by the Indian National Congress awarded it Book of the Year (qtd. in Zivin 218).

[55] Forster published an anonymous article in the *Nation and Athenaeum* calling for an "effective protest" against the troubles faced by the *Well of Loneliness* and Forster and Virginia Woolf signed a joint letter in the next installment criticizing the book's suppression (Furbank 154). Forster agreed to serve as the president of the National Council for Civil Liberties in 1934. His first major task was to combat the passage of a 'Sedition Bill' that would make it illegal to disseminate or be in possession of literature "liable to seduce soldiers or sailors from their duty or allegiance" (qtd in Furbank 188). Forster uncharacteristically urged people to join the organization, attend a rally, and write their MPs. In a broadcast in 1938, Forster cited the legislation as one of many threats to liberty in England (*Creator* 245). For more on Forster's involvement with the N. C. C. L. see Furbank 186-96. Not only did Forster continue to advocate for Civil Liberties in his broadcasts to India, but he also recalled his involvement in specific campaigns to his

overlooked aspect of his support for Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Untouchable*, which publishers considered aptly titled until Forster agreed to write a preface.[56] Forster uses the occasion to highlight that *A Passage to India* included discussion of latrines as well and—though at least one reader found this objectionable—the novel was not censored. Forster was instrumental in getting the censor to pass Ahmed Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* and he also privately defended Raja Rao's work to a potential publisher who feared Rao's work might be subjected to censorship.[57]

The BBC's Eastern Service was a much more public site where Forster pushed these boundaries, discussing the work of four preeminent Indian writers in English (Anand, Ali, Rao, and R. K. Narayan) on 9 June 1941, even though some of their works were banned in India. Anand, Ali, and Rao were all known for sympathetically portraying anti-colonial resistance even though their individual works suffered different fates, with some (but not all) of Anand's novels restricted, for example. When Forster was aware that certain works were banned (and mention of them likely to trigger the censor at the

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Indian listeners, including H. G. Wells's harangue against the Soviet Union: "I remember being on a platform in the early thirties with him, to protest against the Incitement to Disaffection Bill. Wells—always naughty—seized the opportunity to attack the Soviet Union, a topic which had nothing whatever to do with our objective, and which threatened to disrupt our audience. He could never resist bringing out a peashooter and having a pot" (*BBC* 369).

[56] In a striking passage, Forster argues for the frank depiction of Bakha's work on commodes and streets: "the book seems to me indescribably clean and I hesitate for words in which this can be conveyed. Avoiding rhetoric and circumlocution, it has gone straight to the heart of its subject and purified it" (v). For a less generous reading of Forster's contribution, see Singh, "The Lifting and the Lifted."

[57] Forster's defense of Rao is at the University of Reading. For more on Forster and Ali, see Joshi 213-27.

BBC) he worked with his colleagues to circumvent the restrictions. For example, when Orwell warned that K. S. Shelvankar's *The Problem of India* was banned, Foster instead approvingly mentioned Shelvankar's article in *Indian Writing*.

The support Forster provided to Indian writers extended to serious critical consideration of their work that described their use of western literary forms and the English language as "valuable work" (*BBC* 185). Forster makes much of the increasing speed with which books cross borders, which allowed artists to see and respond to what their contemporaries were doing across the globe. Forster's fellow Eastern Service broadcaster T. S. Eliot was immensely popular in India, for example. Of Bharati Sarabhai's play, "The Well of the People," Forster comments, "This is an attempt to combine ancient Indian tradition with contemporary Indian troubles, political and economic, and to present the whole in a western literary form" (*BBC* 259).[58] Forster is one of the earliest proponents of Indian writing in English as a distinct and valuable literature characterized by an adoption of "western literary forms" like the novel, combination with Indian literary, religious, and philosophical traditions, and treatment of contemporary Indian issues. Promoting both Iyengar's books and the works Iyengar

[58] This cultural borrowing went both ways, however. Tagore in particular was extremely influential in London and Forster makes much of Yeats's infatuation with him. In the broadcast on Jane Austen, Forster notes the death of L.H. Myers and points out that "he found in sixteenth-century India, with its special contacts between Hindus and Moslems a fertile soil for his own subtle and philosophic talent, and he sought to express the problems of the twentieth century through that remote medium" (*BBC* 296). Also of interest to Forster were more active collaborations like the translation of the Bhagavad-Gita by Christopher Isherwood and Swami Prabhavananda or Forster's preface to Menon's book on Yeats.

studied, "Some Books" was a humble but surprising contributor to a growing movement to claim English as an Indian language.

The wide-ranging coverage of "Some Books" allowed Forster to build connections between writers and literary innovations coming from different parts of the empire, which emerges in a broadcast dedicated to James Joyce.[59] That he should dedicate an entire broadcast to an artist that he admits he "do[es]n't really take to," whose work is both "obscure and uncompromising," may at first glance be rather surprising (*BBC* 283). One of the most frequently invoked themes throughout Forster's broadcasts, however, is precisely the importance of patience and thoughtful engagement with what one does not immediately understand or appreciate. Forster admits to his own struggles with Joyce, adding that: "comments about him are usually abusive" (*BBC* 286). Nevertheless, Forster urges patience because "Joyce managed to build up something that was unique, something which represents our troubled age more than our age likes to confess . . . it expresses our inmost writhings with an appropriateness that achieves

[59] Forster mentioned Joyce in at least two earlier talks on the Home Service. On 4 July 1941, Forster notes the death of Virginia Woolf, Hugh Walpole, and Joyce, "a writer with a vision of the universe which he expressed through recollections of his early life in Dublin" (*BBC* 145). Forster first recommended Joyce to his Indian listeners on 10 December 1941: "Try James Joyce's – no, I'm not going to say what you expect me to say; I'm not going to say "Ulysses". "Ulysses" is a great work, but it is difficult to get, and difficult to understand. I'll recommend you a volume of short stories by James Joyce called "The Dubliners". It is an early work, and semi-true and lovely, most particularly the story in it called "The Dead" (*BBC* 156). In another talk, on Mark Twain, Forster quotes a passage from Huckleberry Finn and prefaces it by saying "Here's the passage – and if you are a student of James Joyce you may be amused to detect in its artless prose an occasional premonition of the cadences of Ulysses" (*BBC* 255).

beauty" (*BBC* 285).[60] Despite the obscurity of Joyce's language, he is nonetheless representative of the age for Forster as a cosmopolitan, exiled writer whose hybrid language points to the combination of traditions that Forster commends wherever he finds it.

Forster's broadcast on Joyce is not framed as a criticism of his work, but rather an opportunity to hand on a tip to encourage potential readers, not to mention writers who struggled with many of the same issues as Joyce. As Forster explains: "The tip is that Joyce was an exile. . . . He deliberately abandoned his triple heritage of a country, a religion, and a language" (*BBC* 284). If Forster's listeners are largely composed of the native elite, many of whom were educated in (or had at least traveled to) England or Europe, they may view Joyce's voluntary exile with particular sympathy. Some of Forster's fellow Eastern Service broadcasters certainly did. Mulk Raj Anand, for example, spends the first half of *Conversations in Bloomsbury* praising Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and attempting to track down a copy of *Ulysses*.

Rather than harping on Joyce's stylistic experimentation, Forster focuses on Joyce's linguistic innovation, exploring the possibilities of English as an Irish language. If Joyce's exile is in line with the experiences of some of his listeners and co-workers, certainly the confluence of many languages in *Finnegans Wake* is another point of potential connection, and one that Forster acknowledges. Forster argues, "He was born into the use of the English language, and his earlier books are written in it. But in *Ulysses* he is breaking down the normal idiom of English and in *Finnegans Wake* the process has

[60] Forster's argument somewhat anticipates Jacques Lacan's argument that Joyce represents the "sinthome," a voluntary symptom, in his seminar on Joyce.

gone much further. Many of the words in *Finnegans Wake* aren't in the dictionary at all. They are made up out of other words, and sometimes not out of English words, for he was a learned linguist" (*BBC* 284). This explanation could comfort those readers struggling through Joyce's late work, but Joyce's combination of languages points to a larger trend in British, continental and Indian literature that Forster's commentary makes clear. Praising Iyengar's *Literature and Authorship in India*, Forster argues, "He describes the early and rather promising impact of western culture on the East, and traces its unexpected reverberations down to the present day, when 'India can neither do with English nor without it' " (*BBC* 239). Forster's attention to the creative possibilities for Indian writers in both Joyce and the English language were apt not just for his contemporaries Mulk Raj Anand and G. V. Desani, but also held true for later practitioners of the Anglophone Indian novel like Salman Rushdie.

Forster balanced his aesthetic reservations with his desire to help younger writers. As a critic—especially one who claimed to stand for art for art's sake—Forster made some surprising recommendations to his listeners.[61] Despite his frequent statements that

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[61] Anand's open letter to Forster in the early 1960s helpfully parses some of Forster's seemingly incongruous beliefs and actions:

> You may recall that you were one of the few British writers who did not become the enemy of the movement for the inclusion of social and political causes which dominated the thirties. I know that you were skeptical about the aims of this movement. I realize that you did not wish us to go beyond certain limits, even in regard to Indian nationalism, because you were afraid that in our urge for freedom we might emulate European chauvinism. All the same, I remember that when I came to you, in your role as President of the Civil Liberties Union during the war, to get your signature on a petition against the then British Government's torture of Jai Prakash Narayan, you willingly signed it. In effect, you have always

he had no interest in politics, he approvingly discussed and recommended much overtly Marxist fiction.[62] For example, about Tarashankar Banerji's novel he observes:

> The action of *Epoch's End* takes place in Calcutta, during the tragic winter of 1942–43. Famine and squalor and profiteering, bags of rice in the godowns, while the poor starve outside . . . the hero . . . will help to inaugurate the new age, and to overthrow the capitalism in which he almost acquiesced. It is a documentary novel with a purpose, and belongs to a class of fiction which originated in Russia and has now spread over the world. It does not reach or desire to reach a high artistic level, but it is sincere and warm-hearted. Tarashankar Banerji is a member of the Progressive Writers Association. (*BBC* 358)

The review criticizes the novel in so far as it has failed "to reach a high artistic level" but this assessment is not dismissive. Instead, Forster describes the politics of the novel in a sympathetic light while simultaneously drawing attention to a major failure of the British

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> held aloft the ideal of the primacy of conscience. And, disagreeing as we did on many moot points, you never ceased to give me your personal friendship, even though I seemed to you to be too passionate a radical, too rebellious a novelist, and too eccentric a personality. But you fought against censorship of all minds and made freedom of opinion possible in a difficult period. (Anand 45-6)

[62] Forster reviewed Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* over the BBC in the early 1930s, pointing out the paradox of Trotsky's faith: "He regards only general laws as important, and the general law which (he believes) is now at work, ordains that the proletariat shall rule and that the proleteriate alone can understand the proletariat. I don't agree with him in that, by the way: observe instead that he is building up a new discipline under which Chaliapin will feel as uncomfortable as ever, and by which he himself will be expelled" (*BBC* 113). Nonetheless, Forster headed the British delegation to the 1935 International Congress of Writers in Paris, where he gave a speech decrying the Obscene Publications laws, the Sedition Bill, and the extent to which British liberty was withheld from Indians, Africans, and the working class. Forster's interest in the working class, however, did not take the same form as the majority of the other writers present, of alignment with Communism, and Forster received a tepid response. Nevertheless, Forster agreed to give a paper at the 1937 *entretien* of the League of Nations' Committee for Intellectual Co-operation (Furbank 221). Forster shared with his Indian listeners his meeting with Paul Valéry at the Defense of Culture meeting (*BBC* 352). He discussed the meeting in more detail on the Home Service at the end of 1937; see *Creator* 243-4.

administration. Couching his critique of Empire in the guise of an objective book review, Forster is able to support Banerji while subtly reminding his listeners of past injustices. Further, Forster's reference to the Progressive Writers Association points to his ardent support of a group of Indian writers organized in the 1930s to revolt against social inequality, including—explicitly—foreign rule. The group included writers that Forster discussed in numerous broadcasts, such as Ali and Anand. Furthermore, Forster not only advertised the group's journal, *Indian Writing*, on air, but—revealing his close relationship to members of the group—did so from proofs of the first issue.

Interwar Intimacies

The relatively recent availability of Forster's broadcast scripts has made possible not only a new understanding of Forster's role in engaging and fostering wider reading publics for modernism in the 1940s, but also sheds new light on and begs a critical reassessment of Forster's interwar writing. Forster's investment in personal relationships, friendship, and individual liberty rather than revolutionary politics or aesthetics is precisely what makes him seem out of place in the interwar years, yet simultaneously what makes him so radical. Reviewing a collection of his broadcasts, the novelist Zadie Smith argues that Forster's reputation as "garden variety" is undeserved: "He was an Edwardian among Modernists, and yet—in matters of pacifism, class, education, and race—a progressive among conservatives" (Smith n.p.). Forster's ability to establish and maintain friendships with people of different nationalities, ages, classes, and political beliefs was predicated on his openness to other points of view but also furthered and

deepened his ability to see and then portray things from multiple perspectives. Unlike in the 1940s, when Forster's interest in furthering goodwill between England and India overlapped with the Eastern Service's mission, in the 1930s, the BBC and Forster offered very different accounts of empire. Instead of *Passage* rendering Forster an orientalist, as Edward Said argues, reading the novel in the context of Forster's other interwar work allows for a more complicated picture, putting Forster's scepticism of nationalist movements in context.

Unlike war-time propaganda which stressed imperial unity, a "people's war," in the interwar years the Colonial Office attempted instead to bring attention to the economic benefits of empire while reinforcing the paternalistic image of the colonizer, justifying imperialism in the present with observations about the differences between colonized populations and those at home, though always with the view to raising the colonized people to a level where they could eventually join the Commonwealth. John Reith's personal commitment to the monarchy and empire inspired the Colonial Office to count the BBC as a close ally, and a particularly valuable one given its wide audience.[63] A standing gentleman's agreement between the BBC and the Colonial Office meant that the Colonial Office had the opportunity to review news reports before they were broadcast. The BBC organized series on the Empire stressing its exoticism (for example *Dark Continent*, *Life Among the Native Tribes*, *Edges of the World*, *Palm and Pine*, and

[63] Not only did broadcasts organized by the Colonial Office disseminate their views, but the republication of these talks in *The Listener* gave them increased prominence, further circulation, and a venue to combine the scripts with visual elements like maps, charts, and propaganda posters. The Colonial Office was eager to fit existing imperial propaganda created for film, lectures, posters, and pamphlets into the new aural format.

Other People's Lives). These programs accompanied more didactic ones such as *The Responsibilities of Empire* and *Brush Up Your Empire* as well as adaptations of imperial romances including *The Green Goddess*, *Congo Landing*, and *The Poisoned Arrow*.[64] Citing school talks, Empire Day celebrations, and the King's Christmas broadcast, Sian Nicholas describes the BBC as "a willing, even evangelical, propagandist of empire in the inter-war years" (Nicholas 208).

With the growth of anti-imperial movements in India and the West Indies coupled with the success of uprisings in Ireland, the Colonial Office was keen to take advantage of the airwaves to disseminate its position, sponsoring two series of talks, "The Commonwealth of Nations" and a series of ten talks by Professor Reginald Coupland and H. V. Hodson from April to June of 1936, entitled "The British Commonwealth and Colonial Empire." Billed as a series "in which it is intended to present a picture of the British Empire, as it has evolved and as it is, and to afford an opportunity to discuss some of the most important problems connected with it," the talks painted a rosy picture of imperial history and argued that the biggest problems were that subject peoples were simply not yet sufficiently advanced to govern themselves (Coupland, "First" 485). The series combined an emphasis on the great responsibility that the British had for their subject peoples while making clear appeals to the national interest, frankly admitting to the economic benefits of empire. Hodson put it succinctly when he observed that the "White Man's Burden…is also a privilege, not always without profit" ("Trusteeship" 749).

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[64] For more on how the empire figured in BBC domestic programming, see Hajkowski 19-82.

According to these talks, the acquisition of the empire was an almost effortless, natural process. The battles against native peoples in North America, for example, were but blips in an otherwise smooth transition wherein native people welcomed English intervention. Coupland explains: "These temperate countries were relatively empty. Their native population was generally small and weak. The 'Redskins' of North America were only formidable in the early days of colonization" ("Bird's-eye" 802). In other cases, areas with which the British traded simply "in one form or another…came under British rule…A country, for example, was subjected to British rule because it was so law-less and ill-governed that trading could not prosper" (802). The tropical empire, for example, is necessary because the people there are "politically backward" (803). Barring these reasons, other areas were annexed to save them from being taken over by another, less responsible, European power. The "native peoples" were hopelessly different and were to be cared for like children (Hodson, "Trusteeship" 749) and the land itself was hostile—the tropics could never be a permanent home for whites as white children could not prosper there (Coupland, "Bird's-Eye" 802). Summarizing the necessity of British tutelage, Coupland explains, "broadly speaking, you can think of the varied inhabitants of this, the greater part of the Colonial Empire, as…peasants, simple, ignorant (as we use the word), and poor" ("Dependent Empire" 1088).

As Mulk Raj Anand pointed out in an earlier anecdote, Forster's depiction of colonial subjects in *A Passage to India* is a far cry from the image offered by the Colonial Office, but Forster's other interwar work goes much further. Forster's interwar broadcasts, over the Home Service, critique the version of empire promoted by the

Colonial Office and the BBC. In a particularly revealing review of Karel Capek's *Letters from England*, Forster focuses on Capek's experience at Wembley:

> He feels a mixture of terror and contempt to which only his own prose can do justice. It represents to him the British Empire, minus the four hundred million coloured people who inhabit that Empire, it is a gigantic sample fair where commerce insolently usurps the throne that belongs to Man…And when we look at Capek's funny mischievous sketch of four arm-chairs, all exactly alike, all hideous, all expensive, and labeled respectively "Made in Bermudas, Made in Fiji, Made in South Africa, and Made in British Guiana", we ask ourselves the same question that Ruskin put to our fathers, namely is this what we want from our civilization, and will these armchairs help either the men who make them or the men who sit in them, to save their souls? (*Creator* 239)[65]

Both writers find the Colonial Exhibition to be representative, but not of the vision that its creators intended. The very vision of commercial benefit held up by the Colonial Office is here exposed as a delusion that ignores the existence of the people on which the empire is based. The colonial exhibition leaves out the one benefit Forster identifies, the possibility it opens for contact and even friendship. The chairs stand synecdochically for the false universalism pushed by the Colonial Office—everyone in the empire can be equal as long as they are equal in emulating English products, culture, and people.

Forster's trips to India informed much of his writing and broadcasting but he gained further influential experience in Egypt, where from 1915-19 he volunteered for the Red Cross.[66] Forster's relationship with an Egyptian tram-conductor, Mohammed el

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[65] Capek writes "There are four hundred million coloured people in the British Empire, and the only trace of them at the British Empire Exhibition consists of a few advertisement supers, one or two yellow or brown huxters and a few old relics which have been brought here for curiosity and amusement" (Capek 69-70).

[66] Parts of "Mosque" in *A Passage to India*, as well as other events in the novel, are based not on Forster's travel in India but on experiences in Egypt.

Adl, allowed him to see parts of Egypt he would otherwise have missed but it also allowed him to personally see how the Egyptian people were treated by British authorities. After the war, instead of granting self-rule to Egypt, as promised, the British continued their protectorate and even cracked down more thoroughly. Mohammed was wrongly imprisoned and wrote Forster conveying his shock at the terrible conditions and the corruption of the guards.[67] This experience made the already palpable injustices of the British colonial system more personal and sinister to Forster and he responded in an uncharacteristic genre: the political pamphlet.

Perhaps because it was published by the Labour Research Department rather than the Hogarth Press or Edward Arnold, *The Government of Egypt* has received scant critical attention but significantly alters the predominant view of Forster as apolitical. Forster turned conversations, correspondence, and experiences with Egyptians as well as reading in history and politics to frame his political pamphlet, which comes down strongly against imperialism. In his pamphlet, Forster reviews the history of Egypt, noting that the construction of the Suez Canal "however valuable internationally, was destined to do Egypt more harm than good" and that British troops ended a nationalist movement "which, if treated sympathetically, might have set Egypt upon the path of constitutional liberty" (Forster, *Government* 3, 4). Forster's indignation is clear: "We broke promises and made mistakes both before and during the war, but the seeds of revolution were not sown until after the Armistice had been signed with Turkey. The Egyptians who had acquiesced in our Protectorate as an exceptional measure, now hoped to regularize the

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[67] For more see Moffat 179.

situation, but found that martial law was sterner than ever and that they were treated as members of a subject race" (Forster, *Government* 6). In place of the high principles extolled by the Colonial Office, Forster finds racism and contempt in Egypt. The pamphlet takes pains to explain recent Egyptian history from the perspective of Egyptians rather than the British and forcefully demonstrates how the West's false universalism is an instrument of oppression rather than liberation. Throughout the pamphlet, Forster stresses the secularism, moderation, and political viability of Zagloul's nationalist movement, the draconian measures taken by the British officials, and the reasonableness of Egyptian independence.[68]

The political pamphlet was not a genre that Forster subsequently adopted, but he experimented with other outlets for his critique of imperial narratives of global development, the most significant of which is *A Letter to Madan Blanchard* (1931). The *Letter* is written to a sailor described in George Keate's *An Account of the Pelew Islands* (1788), which is based on the journals and letters of Captain Henry Wilson and others aboard the Antelope, which was shipwrecked on the islands. After building a sloop to sail to China, Blanchard decided to stay on the islands and Forster writes to ascertain "why you went native, and how you are" (12). But instead of focusing on Blanchard, the *Letter* tells the story of Prince Lee Boo, who returned to England with Captain Wilson. Forster's sardonic tone captures his disgust with Lee Boo's treatment:

> The Company's plan was to educate him in England, and send him back to rule the islands for us; he was to take with him horses, dogs, cows, pigs,

[68] While Forster offers a thorough critique of the British intervention in Egypt, he does not make a specific recommendation, saying "I have seldom drawn any conclusions, leaving such a task to those who are better qualified" (3).

> goats, seeds, clothes, rum, and all that makes life bearable; he was to oust Qui Bill from the succession, conquer the Artingalls with musket-fire, and reign over corpses and coconuts in a gold-laced suit. The small-pox had something to say to all that and there will be no more talk of annexation yet awhile (Forster, *Letter* 11-12)

As Forster makes clear, Lee Boo was held up as a model "noble savage" and Forster's ironic tone throughout is as much an attack on that literature as on this failure of contact to at all alter the preconceptions of the English. Lee Boo "managed to pass away without distressing the Christians or disappointing the philosophers" (Forster, *Letter* 21). This brief send-up of adventure literature is one of a number of ways in which Forster approached the colonial question.

Clearly, friendship was a motivation behind much of Forster's work, including his pamphlet and *Letter to Madan Blanchard*, which inquires to what extent the sailor was able to befriend the people of the Pelew. Perhaps because friendship brought Forster to India, he is careful to remind listeners of his own connections and of some of the benefits he received from each. Of Syed Ross Masood, to whom *A Passage to India* is dedicated, Forster says:

> perhaps I owe more to him than to any one individual, for he shook me out of my rather narrow academic and suburban outlook, and revealed to me another way of looking at life—the Oriental, and, within the Oriental, the Moslem. He prepared me for one aspect of India. When I first came East in 1912 and visited him I made another great Indian friend. . . . Bapu Sahib revealed another aspect of India to me—the Hindu—and through it another aspect of life, and he had a deeper sense of the nobilities and the delicacies of personal intercourse than anyone whom I have ever met, whether English or Indian. (*BBC* 200)

Forster not only specifically credits these friends with expanding his outlook, but he immediately demonstrates this effect by identifying the source of his own faith in

personal intercourse in the figure of Bapu Sahib. This faith in personal affection and travel leading to intercultural understanding forms a major theme of Forster's talks. Forster points out, for example, that Edward Carpenter accepted an invitation from a friend to study with a holy man and "managed to see Ceylon and India with his own eyes rather than through Imperial spectacles" (*Creator* 291).[69] Reviewing M.J. Tambimuttu's anthology, *Poetry in Wartime*, Forster posits, "Mr. Tambimuttu is from Ceylon, and his own language is Tamil, but he is living in London, he is in touch with contemporary English poets. . . . To me it is a very cheering sign, for I believe that if our troubles are ever straightened out it won't be done by business men nor by politicians . . . but by so-called impractical people, by sensitive men, by people of culture and sympathy and by artists" (*Creator* 263). Forster emphasizes friendship not for its own sake, but for its ability to open the possibility of cross-cultural understanding.

In an influential reading of *A Passage to India*, Edward Said argues that Forster's emphasis on friendship leads him to dismiss Indian nationalism. In *Culture and Imperialism*, for example, Said argues: "Forster's India is so affectionately personal and so remorselessly metaphysical that his view of Indians as a nation contending for sovereignty with Britain is not politically very serious, or even respectful" (204). According to Said's analysis, the novel in Forster's hands can only register the crisis of empire without coming down firmly on the side of the oppressed; or, worse, in *Orientalism*, the novel is said to leave its readers "with a sense of the pathetic distance still separating 'us' from an Orient destined to bear its foreignness as a mark of its

[69] Thanks to Todd Avery for pointing me to this collection.

permanent estrangement from the West" (244). Said is right that Forster was less than enthusiastic about certain expressions of the independence movement, particularly in literature. But one thing that his later broadcasts and his pamphlet help us see is that Forster supported and sympathized with independence movements, but also saw beyond the nation, maintaining that personal intercultural exchanges were important.

Let me turn quickly to one of the most potentially damning features of the novel, its depiction of Aziz as poet.[70] When Das asks Aziz for a poem for all Indians, Aziz is unable to provide one. The narrator reveals that Aziz is forced to think of the mother-land even though he does not truly love it (298). Aziz had taken to writing poems "all on one topic—Oriental womanhood," which the narrative dismisses. The narrator echoes Forster's own critical interests: "In one poem—the only one funny old Godbole liked—he had skipped over the mother-land (whom he did not truly love) and gone straight to internationality" (329). These passages seem to suggest that nationalism is a flash in the pan, a comfortable and ready crutch for Aziz when he is angry. That Indian nationalism receives this representation in Forster's novel places it in a wider orientalist tradition identified by Said. Yet read in the context of Forster's other work, these moments scan a bit differently. Knowing that Forster was supportive of independence movements but wary of them overthrowing aesthetic and literary interests, this portrayal can also be seen to envision and argue for precisely the kind of intercultural borrowing and exchange promoted by Said.

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[70] Parts of Aziz as poet / writer were based on Masood, who published "Some Aspects of Urdu Poetry" in the *Athenaeum* in 1920 (Furbank 119).

While Forster consistently stressed the power of friendship and culture, he also acknowledges the complexity of how these goals interacted with social, economic and political forces. In *Howards End* (1910), for example, the efforts of the Schlegel sisters to adopt Leonard Bast, though proceeding from noble intentions, are ultimately thwarted by their failure to account for Bast's economic situation. More specifically, it is precisely the interpenetration of private "worlds"—his appearance in the dining room of Howards End—that leads to Bast's death. Somewhat similarly, in *A Passage to India*, the budding friendship between Mr. Fielding and Aziz becomes impracticable because of the many institutions that surround them. Published in 1924, the novel identifies many of the tensions that would be played out during the Second World War, from the hope for independence revealed by Aziz's comment, "Until England is in difficulties we remain silent, but in the next European War — aha aha! Then is our time!" to the reason the British felt it must be postponed, as expressed in Fielding's question to Aziz, "who do you want instead of the English? The Japanese?" (360). The possibility of cross-cultural friendship is explicitly questioned early in the novel, when Aziz visits with Mahmoud Ali and Hamidullah; the collector insists that anything beyond courtesy and conversation results in disaster. Forster's fiction, while opening the possibility of intercultural and interclass understanding, ultimately shows that such efforts are not sufficient in and of themselves. Instead, they offer a contact that must be accompanied by the transformation of human institutions. The conclusion of the novel drives this point home:

> But the horses didn't want it — they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau

> beneath: they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, "No, not yet," and the sky said, "No, not there." (362)

On the one hand, the two men are driven apart through the voices of natural forces, "the sky" as well as man-made ones, "the temples, the tank," etc. At the same time, these voices are countered by those of Aziz, who wants friendship after independence, and Fielding, who wants it immediately. The conflict between so many different voices is ultimately left unresolved, "not yet" and "not there."

Amardeep Singh offers one way out of this impasse with his emphasis on semipublic, Islamic spaces in the writing of Forster. For Singh, "Forster develops a unique concept of intimacy in semipublic spaces, which might enable him to provisionally overcome the obstacles introduced by the imbalance of power between white and brown, between colonizer and colonized" (36). Although Singh identifies Forster's use of semipublic spaces primarily within his fiction and correspondence, I would argue that the idea can be usefully applied to his broadcasts as well. In fact, Forster puts himself in a position similar to Mrs. Moore in *A Passage to India* when he tells his listeners in a broadcast from 1943, "[I] will tell you a personal experience. I was once in Cairo and I was looking into the ruined enclosure of the oldest of the Cairo mosques, the mosque of Amr. . . . As I looked there came over me an unusual sensation of peace and well being . . ." (*Creator* 272). Forster admits his reluctance to ascribe a deep spiritual meaning to his experience but also notes that the sense of peace at this particular location has been shared by many other writers. This is but one example of how Forster took advantage of the intimate address of broadcasting to cultivate a sense of personal

connection, even as he acknowledged the physical and cultural distance between himself and his listeners.

The semi-public space of broadcasting is one that Said took advantage of himself and it is a significant point of connection between Said and Forster. In the introduction to the collection of his 1993 Reith Lectures, Said reflects on his experience at the microphone as well as on previous incarnations of the series:

> I had heard some of them over the air — I particularly remember Toynbee's series in 1950 — as a boy growing up in the Arab world, where the BBC was a very important part of our life; even today phrases like "London said this morning" are a common refrain in the Middle East. They are always used with the assumption that "London" tells the truth. Whether this view of the BBC is only a vestige of colonialism I cannot tell, yet it is also true that in England and abroad the BBC has a position in public life enjoyed neither by government agencies like the Voice of America nor by the American networks, including CNN. (*Representations* ix)[71]

Said's pithy reflections on both his childhood experiences and those of contemporary listeners in the Middle East captures one of the strengths of the medium — its ability to create a sense of intimate address that lends itself to broadcasting becoming "a very important part of our life." The ubiquity of the BBC points to radio's ability to take modernity's dissolution of time and space to new heights: London becomes a familiar character in the Middle Eastern home, discoursing over breakfast—or in Said's case, on Sunday afternoons, as he religiously tuned in to "Nights at the Opera" as a child in 1940s

[71] Thanks to Priya Joshi for pointing me to Said's broadcasts. For more on Forster and Said, see Morse.

Egypt.[72] Said used his Reith Lectures to argue for the independence of the writer and intellectual, a major theme of "Some Books."

Conclusion

Though Forster worked hard to use the wireless in the service of literature, there has always been significant suspicion of and open hostility to the institutional and financial support offered to writers by broadcasting. Cyril Connolly—who also broadcast for the Eastern Service—nonetheless disparaged radio work, including broadcasting in his cautionary *Enemies of Promise* because, though profitable, broadcasting distracted writers from producing longer works that better lent themselves to collection and republication (86). For Forster, who brought celebrity along with his insightful commentary, the wireless was particularly remunerative: "by 1941 [the] BBC was paying him twenty guineas per quarter-hour broadcast. By comparison, T.S. Eliot did not receive more than fifteen pounds for a broadcast until after 1945" (*BBC* 7). Whether his broadcasts distracted him from producing more substantial works is difficult to determine, but Connolly's point that producing so many short works does not necessarily lend itself to literary immortality is a good one.

The Frankford School worried less about broadcasting's effects on writers and more on what they perceived to be the technology's hostility to literature and rational public debate. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, writing in America during the war, argued that the Enlightenment emphasis on human freedom had been abandoned in favor

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[72] For more on the importance of the BBC to Said's childhood, see *Out of Place*, esp. 35, 96, 100, 151, and 204.

of the pursuit of mastery over nature and other humans. According to their account, technology, a theoretically democratic creation of knowledge, was being used as a force of manipulation rather than discovery. As a tool of the culture industry, radio "confines itself to standardization and mass production" (95). Jürgen Habermas, writing some twenty years later, offers a more elaborate critique of the transformation of the public sphere into a "pseudo-public or sham-private world of culture consumption" (160). Cultural broadcasts typify this transformation:

> …at one time the commercialization of cultural goods had been the precondition for rational-critical debate…Put bluntly: you had to pay for books, theater, concert, and museum, but not for the conversation about what you had read, heard, and seen and what you might completely absorb only through this conversation. Today the conversation itself is administered. Professional dialogues from the podium, panel discussions, and round table shows — the rational debate of private people becomes one of the production numbers of the stars in radio and television, a salable package ready for the box office… (164)

For Habermas, mass media are responsible not only for a decrease in reading, but more importantly, for a sterilization and control of public debate constituting nothing short of "a tranquilizing substitute for action" (164). In other words, for Habermas, the mass media equals mass deception.[73] In one sense, Forster's broadcasts seem open to such critique and not only because he was capitalizing on his fame in order to appear at the microphone as a professional commentator.

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[73] In contrast, Adorno's relationship to radio is much more complicated than is indicated by the positions expressed in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. See, for example, his study of American right-wing radio, *The Psychological Technique of Martin Luther Thomas' Radio Addresses* and the recently-published collection on radio music, *Current of Music*.

The book review, as it is remediated by broadcasting, suffers from the effects of the larger displacement of narrative or critical thought associated with the rise of mass media and bemoaned by Walter Benjamin in "The Storyteller." Forster's catholic selection process forced him to sometimes offer superficial summaries of books. One such account, on 19 December 1944, discusses Kumar Goshal's *The People of India*, Beverly Nichols's *Verdict on India*, Clive Branson's *British Soldier in India* and the caricaturist Vicky's *Nine Drawings* at a rapid pace:

> Mr. Kumar Goshal lives in America and addresses an American public. He is well informed and writes well. He is anti-British, not interested in the Moslems, pro-Hindu, nationalist, and favourable to Congress — to Congress in its popular and socialist aspect that's to say. Mr. Beverly Nichols, an English journalist, is critical of the British, hostile to the Hindus, and to Congress, which he regards as a purely Hindu body, and favorable to the Moslem League and to Pakistan. He eulogizes Mr. Jinnah, whom he met, denounces Mr. Gandhi, whom he didn't meet, is most severe on the Indian arts, and dismisses the Vina as an 'off colour guitar.' Clive Branson — the late Clive Branson I have to say — for he was killed in Burma — he was an artist by profession, and a communist politically; what struck him in India was the poverty; anti-British, anti-Congress, and anti Muslim League too I imagine; pro-food and economic reconstruction on communist lines. With him can be classed the left-wing caricaturist, Vicky. To them, hunger not communal division is the basic problem.
>
> That should roughly indicate to you the character of these four books. (*BBC* 322)

Although this checklist style of presentation (anti-British, anti-Congress . . .) is an extreme example of simplification, Forster's habit of dispensing with the books he reviewed in a few lines can be troublingly reductive.

On the other hand, the "culture industry" strain of Frankfurt School thought has rightly been taken to task for succumbing to technological determinism and for ignoring reception. To simply dismiss Forster's broadcasts as insufficiently serious or rigorous is

to miss an important intervention in the history of broadcasting and empire, for Forster's broadcasts exemplify another definition of remediation: "reform in a social or political sense" (Bolter and Grusin 60). In other words, the book review is seemingly transformed in these broadcasts in two important directions. First, it undergoes a transformation in which the length is measured temporally and in which the content is, generally, condensed and simplified. As we've seen, this particular refashioning opens the broadcasts to the critiques offered by various theorists associated with the Frankfurt School.

Yet Forster's broadcasts paradoxically fulfill Habermas's "institutional criteria" for the Bourgeois Public Sphere: the bracketing of economic and social status; the establishment of a situation wherein works originating from the people tackle subjects formerly reserved for authority figures; and, finally, an inclusiveness in principle (Habermas 36–37). The empire service was reimagined in the 1940s as a service to the native bourgeois rather than to English expatriates and this is precisely the audience to which Forster was so adept at speaking. Forster's wide-ranging coverage had the advantage of relativizing the official position of the Colonial Office. While "Some Books" may not have been a platform for explicit social critique, it certainly recognized and sought to further existing public debates concerning literature and society. Just as the Bourgeois Public Sphere is predicated on the participants' willingness to straddle the private and public realms, so too do Forster's broadcasts play with distance and intimacy to allow for the expression of otherwise taboo ideas.

Mary Lago's *E. M. Forster: A Literary Life* (1994) tapped into and extended the general consensus that "The novel is the form most readily associated with Forster's name" by focusing on the novels, though her biography devotes more space than others to his broadcasts (Lago ix). The emphasis on Forster's novels as well as his loyalty to liberal humanism, balance, friendship, and Edwardian aesthetics have contributed to his image as a faint modernist, but his radio work allows us to see a different Forster. The historical conditions of the war imbued his adherence to these same principles with a more radical cast than they bore during the interwar years.

Furthermore, while Forster reluctantly agreed to work within the confines of BBC policy, he also attempted to shape the use of transnational broadcasting in the service of more equitable relationships of exchange rather than exploitation. Forster's Eastern Service Talks, in other words, attempted to present different voices and viewpoints, but this time in the service of friendship and understanding. As he argued in the *New Statesman*:

> the talks, although they may not be listened to widely, and although they may not leave much that is definite behind, do promote tolerance, which is education's crown; they do, by their very variety, remind listeners that the world is large and the opinions in it conflicting, and they make the differences vivid and real to him because their medium is the human voice and not the printed page. ("Freedom of the BBC")

Forster suggests, with his emphasis on the human voice, that the presence of conflicting voices, rather than postponing friendship as in *A Passage to India*, could now be seen as a necessary precondition to it, one that could partially be met by the medium of radio.

CHAPTER 3

AN "IMPATIENT MODERNIST:" MULK RAJ ANAND AT THE BBC

Introduction

The February 1943 issue of *London Calling*, the journal of the BBC's overseas programming, includes a small photograph amidst complicated schedules of lectures, discussions, drama, music, and news. Taken the previous November, the picture features the writers George Orwell, Mulk Raj Anand, T. S. Eliot, Una Marson, Venu Chitale, M. J. Tambimuttu, Narayana Menon, and William Empson huddled around a table at 200 Oxford St., London discussing the influence of India on English literature for the BBC program *Voice*. More than a mere participant, Anand planned the discussion with Orwell, recommended most of the works discussed, and personally arranged for copyright payments to his fellow Indian writers.[74] Yet in the photograph, Anand is

[74] For more, see Anand, Letter to Orwell. 15 November 1942. Contributor file: Mulk Raj Anand. BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham, Reading (hereafter BBC WAC).

obscured, literally in William Empson's shadow. The picture serves as a visual epigraph to this chapter, symptomatic of a larger failure in literary history to countenance the presence of colonial writers and writing in the metropolis, veiling the contiguity of anti-imperial struggles, the growth of mass media, and literary modernism.

Addressing authors and readers in India, Anand embodied a crucial aspect of *Voice* (and of the Eastern Service generally), its treatment of English and Indian culture as not only mutually influential, but also as coeval. Appreciated at the time and subsequently for narrating the significant but uneven relationship between colony and metropole, Anand's early novels such as *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936) have become touchstones in a growing—though still slender—critical engagement with what Jane Marcus calls "the presence of black and South Asian intellectuals on the cultural scene" in interwar London (Marcus 181).[75] Yet while Anand's broadcasts and 1945 novel *The Big Heart* (written during his BBC years) also critique imperialism, they depart from his earlier work in limning the simultaneity of Indian and English temporality, offering a rejoinder to narratives of colonial belatedness pervasive both at the time and in the present. By emphasizing wireless transnational networks, radio studies can aid modernist studies as it rewrites narratives of the western diffusionist model of culture.[76] The "impatient modernism" developed by Anand at the BBC and facilitated by the technology

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[75] In highlighting the transnational and cosmopolitan strand in Anand, my work joins a small but growing movement to revise accounts of modernism's internationalism. See also, for Anand, Berman and Bluemel. For recent scholarship employing non-Eurocentric conceptions of modernism, see—among others—Walkowitz, Esty, and Joshi.

[76] For examples of these critiques, see Appadurai, Chakrabarty, and Gaonkar; for my discussion of this movement, see Chapter 1.

of short-wave radio reveals a significant shift in the relationship between literary modernism and colonial modernity.

The ability of radio waves to traverse, nearly instantaneously, the vast physical distance between London and India fused with *Voice*'s progressive analysis of how culture "at home" was altered by the colonies. The program's accent on literary cooperation and mutual influence was embedded in its very DNA, with Anand collaborating with Orwell on the program. Contrary to the intentions of the BBC leadership and subsequent received wisdom, empire broadcasting illustrates the extent to which the colonies affected London, a significant example of a larger pattern identified by Paul Rabinow, whereby "the colonies constituted a laboratory of experimentation" (Rabinow 289). As even a highly condensed summary of Anand's broadcast work suggests, the Eastern Service was the site of extensive innovation in cultural programming. That the Home Service, on the other hand, jettisoned serious programming during the war in favor of light music meant that the Eastern Service was the testing ground or laboratory for the Third Programme, England's post-war cultural channel.[77] The object of considerable pride in England, the Third Programme was not an

[77] Though this point escapes other historians of the BBC, Kate Whitehead's literary history of the Third is a notable exception in its inclusion of frequent quotation from the Eastern Service's George Orwell and the identification of innovative programming, including *Voice*, "the first broadcast 'little magazine' on the Indian Service" (Whitehead 159). In addition to drawing on the experimental content of the Eastern Service, the founders of the Third either came from or sought the advice of Empire Service employees. Two of three central figures in the formation of the Third, Leslie Stokes and Etienne Amyot, both worked for overseas services during the war; John Morris, who later ran the Third, first helmed the Far Eastern Service.

autochthonous creation, but rather one that drew from the strengths of England's far-flung empire.

The spirit of invention at the heart of the Eastern Service allowed Anand to explore, evaluate, and develop a wide range of aesthetic responses to modernity. Anand's self-identification in one of his broadcasts as an "impatient modernist," eager to modernize literature, cities, and social relations but unsatisfied with the pace and nature of the changes around him, posits a link between aesthetic tumult and wider forces of modernization explored throughout his broadcasting career (Anand, "London" 2). Between 1942 and his return to India in 1945, Anand wrote or broadcast over 60 programs for the Eastern Service.[78] During his years as a regular contributor, Anand gave talks on books, participated in on-air group discussions of art and literature, modified his own short stories as well as those of other writers for broadcast, and organized two series in which he interviewed working-class people. His literary broadcasts demonstrate a wide transnational purview as he adapted Chinese writer Lu Hsun's "The Tragedy of Ah Q,"

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[78] By all accounts, Anand's time with the BBC was a fertile one. While there he published *Letters on India* (1942), *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), *The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories* (1944), *The Big Heart* (1945), and various contributions to edited collections and periodicals, not to mention the performance, by the Unity Theatre Company, of his play *India Speaks: Map of India* in 1943. Not only was Anand integrated into the literary circuit of the BBC, but he was well-known in larger literary circles, befriending George Orwell while serving in the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War in addition to working as a copyeditor at Leonard and Virginia Woolf's Hogarth Press and T. S. Eliot's *Criterion*. Anand was published in many of the well-known periodicals of the time including *Penguin New Writing*, *Fortnightly Review*, *Life and Letters To-day*, *The Listener*, and *New Statesman* and his books were published by the likes of Faber & Faber, John Murray, Allen & Unwin, Lawrence & Wishart, Penguin, and Jonathan Cape. E. M. Forster provided the foreword to *Untouchable* (1935) and Anand's retrospective *Conversations in Bloomsbury* (1981) recalls his conversations with the Woolfs, Eliot, Clive Bell, Aldous Huxley, D. H. Lawrence, Nancy Cunard, and many other figures.

discussed *War and Peace*, and evaluated the careers of Arthur Rimbaud, Virginia Woolf, H. G. Wells, and George Bernard Shaw.[79]

Taking a cue from Anand's work, this chapter argues for and employs a relational model of modernism that "stresses the condition or sensibility of radical disruption and accelerating change wherever and whenever such a phenomenon appears, particularly if it manifests widely" (Friedman 503). Doing so flies in the face of the traditional narrative of international modernist aesthetics, with the West coming first and the "rest" lagging behind. Abandoning the practice of defining modernism metonymically or through a laundry list of formal features, and instead positing it as a wide range of responses to modernity, goes a long way in overcoming these perceptual problems. More specifically, it allows us to recognize Anand's use of intertextuality as a cooperative rather than derivative project.

Anand's broadcasts and novel register radical—and increasingly rapid—cultural upheaval with a descriptive capacity that reveals the severely attenuated ability of hypercanonical modernism alone to illuminate the complex relays of modernity. Singling out speed and simultaneity as cornerstones of Anand's aesthetic practice allows for an unfamiliar but significant new way to understand his intertextuality: as a means of escalating the velocity of the creation and reception of his work, extending existing conversations, and drawing the worlds of politics and aesthetics closer together. Anand's extensive use of literary allusion and adaptation is thus at an angle to intertextuality as it

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[79] Anand, though generally reluctant to discuss his time with the BBC, recounts in *Author to Critic* witnessing a fight over broadcasting between Orwell and H. G. Wells. See Anand, *Author* 82-3.

is often said to operate in modernist and postcolonial texts. In *The Waste Land* Eliot employed techniques of literary adaptation, allusion, and collage to portray a gulf between the greatness of the past and the confusion of the present, while also buttressing the poem's formal radicalism with cultural capital. Helen Tiffin identifies the use of similar techniques to radically different ends in the "canonical counter-discourse" of postcolonial texts like Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, which expose and dismantle the "underlying assumptions" of a canonical British intertext (Tiffin 99-101). Anand's extensive use of intertextuality taps into elements of both; in "London As I See It" Anand places himself at the end of a series of English writers and his reworking of previous accounts of London embodies the revisionist and critical stance identified by Tiffin.

Yet Anand is also up to something different and decidedly more cooperative. While Bertolt Brecht complained that radio was parasitic, imitating "every existing institution that had anything at all to do with the distribution of speech or song," Anand put radio's parasitism to work (Brecht 41). Rather than "make it new," Anand embraced the mélange of existing texts and genres in broadcasting, forging a role for himself as an imaginative arranger rather than a creative genius. Anand's technique of adopting Dylan Thomas's "Prologue to an Adventure" for "London As I See It" carries over to the novel composed during his BBC years, *The Big Heart*, which is an adaptation of Ernst Toller's play *Die Maschinenstürmer* (1922). In both cases, Anand eschewed the classics to reference contemporary texts by writers he knew personally, employing the structure or scaffolding of these works to shape his content.

Writing for radio altered Anand's aesthetic as well as the way his work created a global present, providing a valuable model to readers in the current moment seeking to understand radio's acceleration of modernism. While radio studies has done much to usefully complicate how modernism unfolded within the context of the nation, the global has not as often been part of its brief. Radio studies is poised to extend its valuable contributions to modernist studies by adopting a transnational framework. Grappling with radio's instantaneity and internationalism brings to the fore a model of modernity usefully at odds with the European diffusionist narrative, highlighting coeval developments in metropole and colony.

Anand's polyphonic compositional style is the subject of the first section, which analyzes Anand's broadcast, "London as I See It," as well as his war-time novel, *The Big Heart* (1945). The following section turns to Anand's unpublished play, *India Speaks: Map of India*, which uses the metaphor of the editorial board to raise awareness of the famine in Bengal, combining snippets from political speeches and news reports with dramatic enactments of the crisis in India. The last section turns to Anand's contributions to one of the Eastern Service's most innovative programs, the literary magazine of the air, *Voice*. Anand's contributions to *Voice* help to globalize the interpretation of the war and literature and—more importantly—articulate a new perception of worldwide connectedness.

Contemporary Counter-Discourse

The Big Heart, published in 1945 closes with an inscription marking its provenance, "St. George's Mews, N. W. 1.," where Anand lived during the war and

where he wrote his BBC scripts before posting them to Broadcasting House. The novel is dedicated to Anand's friend and fellow Eastern Service broadcaster Hsiao Ch'ien, whose broadcast, "China's Literary Revolution" was published alongside Anand's "Open Letter to a Chinese Guerrilla" in *Talking to India* (1943). But beyond these paratextual cues, the novel gestures towards Anand's broadcasts in a number of important ways. The villain Satyapal listens to Berlin-based Azad Hind, or Free India, Radio, the channel that the BBC's Eastern Service was established to counter. *The Big Heart* reuses some of the language and imagery of Anand's broadcasts, referring to the clocktower as "the new god, Time" echoing the same sentiment in one of Anand's last BBC broadcasts, "London as I See It." But beyond topical references and paratextual cues, both the novel and Anand's broadcasts articulate a newly globalized present.

As we can see, there are important links within Anand's corpus from this period beyond the financial support that broadcasting provided, enabling Anand to be a full-time writer. Both *The Big Heart* and "London As I See It" are reworkings of previous texts and this literary indebtedness gestures to Anand's larger project of embracing modernity while rejecting imperial domination and economic inequality. Anand's goal is a complete repudiation of a return to the past; arguing against Gandhi's native revivalism and call to luddism, Anand's work supports a turn to technology and industry. He calls, too, for joining larger, world-wide socialist movements rather than returning to or maintaining traditional practices.

Anand uses intertextuality extensively and powerfully in a 14 February 1945 broadcast in the series "London as I See It." Though the series was meant to capture

what was assumed to be a bewildering first impression of the imperial metropolis, Anand turns this assumption on its head by underscoring that an unmediated experience of London was impossible for colonial subjects. Having delineated in his earlier novels how Western subjects approach the East with Orientalist spectacles, Anand cleverly inverts the process here through the depiction of an impossible search for the fabled London as a center of progress. Instead of finding the city a beacon of light, Anand's speaker is disappointed to witness agonizing poverty, pollution, and decay. Intertextuality is thus central to Anand's critique, which functions simultaneously on two levels: the attention to the subjectiveness of the speaker's description is a fillip to the supposed objectivity of the Western gaze and the inclusion of distasteful and unseemly elements is a response to the rosy depictions of England offered by the imperialists. Anand's extensive use of literary allusion highlights the simultaneous existence of modern and premodern structures in London, reinforcing his message that both England and India were examples of incomplete modernization.

The broadcast is one of Anand's more impressionistic, fusing his penchant for social critique with his interest in and engagement with modernist literature. The broadcast was meant to capture Anand's reflections on living through the Blitz, but this frame allows Anand to play the foreign critic (in the tradition of Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* or Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*) and the dandy observer in the tradition of Baudelaire and Rimbaud.[80] Like his later work *Conversations in Bloomsbury*, the broadcast allows Anand to explore his position in London as both colonial outsider and

[80] Anand produced a 30-minute feature entitled "Arthur Rimbaud" on 1 October 1945, but the script is not in the WAC.

literary insider. While *Conversations in Bloomsbury* largely recounts and critiques the complicity of London's supposedly forward-thinking writers and intellectuals with the country's imperial agenda, "London as I See it," on the other hand, offers a more depersonalized, sweeping view of the city itself. At the same time, the broadcast still manages to point to the hypocrisy of the imperial purview—the squalor of the East End and the Embankment giving the lie to Britain's supposed wealth, moral-superiority, and organization.

The broadcast posits Anand's experience as an exploration of the preconceptions with which he arrived. Contrary to expectation, the "taxi driver was friendly" and "it was not drizzling, as people say it always drizzles in London" (Anand, "London" 1). After a brief spell of alienation, Anand explains:

> Later, however, I discovered London. I saw the rows of simple, straightforward Georgian houses. I walked along the beautiful squares of Bloomsbury, and I looked at St. Paul's and other buildings which owe their existence to the genius of Wren. I learnt to appreciate the beauty of the soft graded colouring of the London atmosphere which appears in all its nuances in Victor Panmore's pictures. I could understand even the genteel shabbiness of London's lower middle class through the irony and pathos presented in the paintings of Walter Sickert. (Anand, "London" 1)

Between the colours of Panmore and the "irony and pathos" of Sickert, Anand's London was not one of modernity's supposed shocks, but rather one already thoroughly processed.[81] Thus Anand was able to make "associations of time and place with the names of the greatest sons of England, Shakespeare, Johnson, Shelley, Byron, Thackeray and Dickens" (Anand, "London" 2). The swift accumulation of literary references is

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[81] Sickert was especially appreciated by Anand's erstwhile employer, Virginia Woolf. For an extended meditation on his art as writing, see Woolf.

symptomatic of the way in which almost all of Anand's observations are mediated through art; London as he saw it was a London glimpsed through the paintings and writings of others.

But while the broadcast is partially a story of enchantment, identification, and belonging, it also expresses a deep disillusionment following the realization that the idea of progress pushed by imperialism was elusive at home. After a brief, favorable mention of Westminster Cathedral and St. John's, Anand turns to the seedier side of London life, from the Embankment, "a kind of dung heap on which all the bleary, worm-eaten tramps and downs and outs festered like the sores on England's fair names" to the prostitutes lurking "in the shadows of the side streets…Demi-mondaines with an unnatural piercing glint in their eyes, night creatures with hard, hollow features, thinly coated with preservatives" (Anand, "London" 2). If the colonized are often feminized in colonial discourse, Anand returns the compliment with a vengeance, relishing—like Baudelaire—the dark underside of the metropolis.[82] While Anand quickly—at the end of his talk—salutes the bravery of Londoners during the blitz, he uses most of his time to convey his disappointment at arriving in a London that was "old," "dead," and "decrepit." Explaining that he was an "impatient modernist," Anand asks, "Why hadn't they realized the true spirit of the machine age more intensely, rid their towns of the smoke by the use of electricity, built functional houses, offices, theatres, and public buildings?" (Anand, "London" 2). The London of the Colonial Office is, for Anand, nowhere to be seen.

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[82] As such, Anand's focus on the figure of the prostitute may work at cross-purposes with what Jane Marcus identifies as a progressive view of English women in *Coolie*. For more see Marcus.

Texts and writers not mentioned in the broadcast loom large as well, including T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*, and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. However, none of these texts have as much influence on "London as I See It" as the work of another Eastern Service broadcaster who shared Anand's ambivalent feelings about his experience in London, Dylan Thomas. "London as I See It" forms a conversation with Dylan Thomas's early prose experiment, "Prologue to an Adventure," which recounts in densely symbolic language a young man's difficulty adjusting to London after leaving Wales.[83] Thomas's opening, "As I walked through the wilderness of this world, as I walked through the wilderness, as I walked through the city with the loud electric faces…" (Thomas, "Prologue" 57) in Anand's hands becomes "As I walk along, as I walk along the streets and lanes of London…as I walk along the streets of London" (Anand, "London" 1). Both pieces are concerned with similar characters—policemen, "loose" girls, and ragged women—and similar locales: taverns, cathedrals, and dark streets. Thomas's speaker critiques "they who were hurrying…time bound to their wrists…who consulted the time strapped to a holy tower" (Thomas, "Prologue" 57) and Anand notes the constructed nature of time, "I walk along in a time manufactured by the Home Secretary, in synthetic days and black, velvety nights" (Anand, "London" 2).

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[83] As one example of how the Eastern Service was integrated into the circuit of literary publication and promotion, Anand (had he not already been familiar with it) may have come across "Prologue to an Adventure" when he prepared to interview Keidrych Rhys, the editor of *Wales*, since Thomas's prose experiment had prominent placement as the first work in the first issue of Rhys's little magazine. As Gifford points out, "Prologue to an Adventure" was also published in Lawrence Durrell's *Delta* (Paris) in 1938. Thomas's letter to Durrell proposes including "the one you like in the paper of Tambimuttu," referring to the journal *Poetry London*, edited by Anand's fellow Eastern Service contributor, M. J. Tambimuttu (qtd. in Gifford 19).

In keeping with the critique of urban space as artificial, both writers emphasize the transformations wrought by electric light, with Anand singling out "the neon lights in Picadilly Circus" (Anand, "London" 4).

Yet while Anand's broadcast shares many of the images, themes, and conclusions of "Prologue to an Adventure," it does not use Thomas's radical style nor point of view; rather than metaphorically accompanying the devil, as Thomas's narrator does, Anand takes pains to separate himself from the surrounding decadence. In contrast to Thomas's mandarin, mellifluous prose style, Anand's is a vision of sobriety. Anand contrasts his early impressions of London with those during and immediately following the Blitz, favoring concrete references to real people and places over Thomas's allegorical figures, "Old Scratch," "Daniel, Ace of Destruction," and "Mister Dreamer." And though Anand acknowledges his loneliness, unlike Thomas's speaker, Anand's never converses with any of the characters he encounters; there is no interaction, only solipsism.

Despite Anand's restrained prose and imagery, which establishes a critical distance between the speaker and the surrounding decadence utterly absent in Thomas, working in radio sharpened Anand's attention to the sense of sound. The speaker in "London As I See It" is not only interested in the visual spectacle of the city; he is also careful to capture—like a phonograph—the urban soundscape:

> "I want to be happy…" a shrill voice imitates the soprano of Binnie Hale to the tune of a badly played piano in a pub in a mean street behind the luxury hotel and the expensive restaurants.
>
> Someone starts another song: "If you were the only girl in the world…"
>
> And there is ribaldry and loud laughing in the public bar, full of Londoners who have hobbled in for their usual pint, regular customers and

> a few stray ones. The publican cracks a joke with someone like a benign pater familias. More laughter, interspersed with talk…
>
> "Lily of Killarney…" the man at the piano hammers away, and the whole atmosphere becomes charged with his broad, ringing voice, with a kind of Dionysian spirit, the kind of abandon which is the spirit of "merrie England".
>
> Only, soon, the publican calls out: "Time, gentlemen please, it's time." And there is a strain of music outside which jangles on the nerves, a melody which is being played on a broken viola by a man in tattered clothes. (Anand, "London" 4)

This scene echoes Eliot's *The Waste Land* more than Thomas (especially with the inclusion of last call), but the arrangement of the sounds—unlike in Eliot—is not seemingly random, but rather is in keeping with Anand's social critique. In other words, the "pub in a mean street" is *behind* the "luxury hotel and the expensive restaurants" in more than one sense. Further, his narrative moves continually down the social ladder, ending with the veteran in "tattered clothes." The scraping of the homeless veteran "jangles the nerves" not only because it is being played on a "broken viola" but also because it pulls the drinkers out of a state of temporary reverie. In this broadcast Anand uses sound to map out economic inequality, rendering the cacophony of urban spaces not as one of modernity's shocks, but rather as pointing to the all too familiar.

If Anand is impatient with modernization in London, he is equally concerned about India and takes up the cause of industrialization in the novel composed during his employment at the BBC, *The Big Heart*. Viewed from one angle, *The Big Heart* seems to fit in well with Anand's other novels, focusing on the trials and tribulations of a working-class character attempting to put into practice the socialist ideals and modernizing

impulses he learns from a well-educated friend.[84] It is concerned, too, with the clash between traditional and modern economic and social arrangements. With its setting in Amritsar among Thathiar Hindus—a class that Anand knew well, though his father had entered the military rather than become a coppersmith—the text adds autobiographical resonance to its façade of social realism. Both Anand and his critics have stressed precisely these qualities of the novel, with Anand describing "the original of Ananta" and Margaret Berry claiming that Anand's inclusion of tension between sub-castes—and even between individuals within sub-castes—"renders his message more than usually realistic" (Anand, *Author* 122; Berry 49).

Anand's experience with radio may have had minimal impact on the content of his works, but it had a huge impact compositionally. To overlook this change is to miss precisely how Anand was an impatient modernist. *The Big Heart* is unique among Anand's novels as an adaptation and remediation of another work. If *The Big Heart* catalogs some of the many ruptures wrought by modernization, it does so by undermining claims to authenticity and realism, exhibiting a new author function in which the author is, like a factory worker, a playwright, or a broadcaster, one small part in a much larger production.

To understand how the novel performs this reversal, however, it will be useful to point out how and why it has so far been understood as an example of social realism. Part of the reason is extra-textual—Anand's participation in the All-India Progressive Writers Union (whose manifesto calls for social realism) as well as his own statements that he

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[84] This structure is hinted at in the conclusion of *Untouchable* but developed much more thoroughly in *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942).

was attempting to bring this kind of writing to India. Writing to his biographer, Anand explains, "If the seamy side of life had to be written about, then there it was and must be exposed. Never mind if Gorky had already done it for Russia, Zola in France and Dickens in England. In India it had not been done" (Anand, *Author* 116). At the same time, many formal elements of the novel itself are in keeping with realist fiction—from third-person omniscient narration, to infrequent narratorial intervention, to its emphasis on the details of everyday, contemporary life. Certainly in its depiction of the working-class Ananta as a hero- (if not Christ-) figure, its frank depiction of poor working conditions and widespread poverty and suffering, struggle to organize labor, and consistent style, the novel outwardly conforms to the genre.

From this perspective, the story of the protagonist, Ananta, seems plausible. Ananta is a coppersmith of the Thathiar caste recently returned to his birthplace in Amritsar. After organizing unions in Bombay and Ahmedabad, he attempts to channel the anger and anxiety of his fellow metal workers, who had recently lost work when a few local families opened a factory. Ananta pleads for the establishment of a union and—like the BBC's Eastern Service in general, but certainly all of Anand's broadcasts— the general principles of patience, reason, and internationalism. The workers alternate between following Ananta and a more violent nationalism advocated by the student Satyapal, who—taking his cues from Fascist radio—argues for the immediate destruction of the factory and a rejection of technological modernity. At the conclusion of the novel, Satyapal wins the men to his side and convinces the workers to smash the machines in the

factory. Ananta, who pleads with his friends to stop, is killed by his old drinking-mate Ralia. Ananta's head, the seat of reason, is smashed against a machine.

Part of the realism of the novel stems from references to real people and events. These include a host of historical allusions including references to Mahatma Gandhi's opposition to machinery (Anand, *Big Heart* 25), references to the Second World War including planes, "that engine of destruction, the bird of steel, which excretes bombs and urinates bullets," and alliances, with the poet Purun Singh arguing that "the Sarkar may be oppressing us, but the people of Vilayat are the friends of the peoples of Roos and Chin, and on the side of truth against falsehood" (Anand, *Big Heart* 50, 51). Like *India Speaks*, *The Big Heart* addresses dramatic increases in the price of flour and includes mob scenes outside of the grain shop (Anand, *Big Heart* 163). But over and above these historical details, the novel captures the larger ruptures that characterized the age. The opening of the novel shows how the Billimaran lane of Amritsar testifies to these changes—the Clock Tower, built by the British, stands above the new factory, the Ironmongers' Bazar, the Booksellers' mart, and the post office, all of which are juxtaposed with vestiges of the pre-modern—at the other end lies a shrine to the goddess Kali as well as the "ancient market, where the beautiful copper, brass, silver, and bronze utensils made in the lane are sold" (Anand, *Big Heart* 8). The novel explores the various effects of the clash of these two forces by tracing the movements of the characters between these two poles.

As always, Anand uses the novel to critique caste divisions and prejudice.[85] *Untouchable* dealt with caste inequality by highlighting the humanity of the outcastes and cataloging the injustices meted out to Bakha on a daily basis. In *The Big Heart*, however, caste divisions are further complicated by the new economic relationships introduced by the factory. For example, when Murli, a Thathiar, partners with members of the higher Kasera brotherhood, he attempts to ingratiate himself with his new associates and impress his soon-to-be in-laws by refusing to invite any Thathiars to his grandson's wedding. The father of the bride, worried about the low turnout, confronts Murli about his snobbishness, asking where the Thathiar brotherhood is and threatening to call off the wedding (Anand, *Big Heart* 148-9). Murli is forced to beg his few guests to stay and complete the ceremony, pleading: "Save this ceremony. I have sinned. I have erred. You can beat my old head with your shoes. But let us have this betrothal…if I did not invite them it was because they felt bitter with me about the factory and the loss of their trade" (Anand, *Big Heart* 155). The conflict stemming from Murli's attempts to use the factory as a means to move up the social ladder are visible in other sections of society as well, as Thathiars compete for factory positions and the few remaining commissions for hand-made goods from the Kaseras.

The novel features an unprecedented emphasis on mood and imagery. As opposed to the sprawling narrative of the trilogy or even the open-endedness of *Untouchable*, *The Big Heart* achieves dramatic effect through careful control of atmosphere and the

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[85] The novel also critiques arranged marriage, presenting Ananta's decision to take a consumptive widow as his mistress as more ethical than acquiescing to a partner selected by his mother.

repetition of key figures. The novel's nightmarish setting is established early on, when Ananta recalls the previous night's dream:

> [there] was a considerable crowd before him and he had begun to speak. But Janki, his mistress, had interrupted him with a wail, and as he had turned to go towards her in a garden that looked like Guru ka Bagh, the crowd had become like the masked men he had seen in the dacoit films in Bombay…And they were following him, while he had run, their hands dripping with blood. He had been frightened and had tried to run faster, but behind him there was a voice calling, "I am hungry! I want blood," and he had felt almost overpowered…He had looked back and found a black woman with a trident in her hand standing on the cremation ground, stamping upon corpses and dancing as she shrieked again and again, "I am hungry! I want blood!" And he could hear the dead moaning under the feet of the woman, whom he soon recognized as the Goddess Kali… (Anand, *Big Heart* 12)

The dream's sources of images, the movies and religion, encapsulate the struggle depicted in the novel between the many manifestations of tradition and modernity while the dream itself foreshadows Ananta's death later that day at the hands of a group of machine-wreckers. One effect of the novel's many allusions and returns to the dream—for example when Ananta wakes from a brief nap (in which he recalls his dream) only to see Kali depicted on the wall in front of him—is to maintain a dark, somber mood (Anand, *Big Heart* 178). The image of destruction is repeated and expounded upon throughout the novel, coupled—for example—with that of circling crows, "ominous birds" that Ananta sees on his way to warn factory-owner Chaudhri Gokul Chand about the machine smashing (Anand, *Big Heart* 197). Ananta sees and discusses shadows, ghosts, and skeleton-like figures throughout, suggesting Expressionism more than social realism.

By the hygiene of style and historical references, the novel outwardly conforms with the expectations of social realism. This is complicated, however, by the emphasis on a nightmarish mood that seems more in keeping with Expressionism as well as by the narrator's warnings about notions of purity and unmediated access to "truth." The "age of truth" is always invoked in scare quotes and further questioned as in the reference to "the pure, holy water (if it ever was pure?) of the ceremonies of the 'age of truth'" with the narrator sardonically adding "whenever that may have been" (Anand, *Big Heart* 7). Like its protagonist, the novel questions nostalgia and argues for the inevitability of industrialization.

This is precisely where the novel as adaptation is so important—*The Big Heart*'s preface pulls in two directions. Opening with an excerpt from Lord Byron's speech on the Luddites to the House of Lords, the novel uses England as a historical parallel, with Anand as author reinforcing the point when he adds, "Although human conditions have much changed since Lord Byron thus spoke in the House of Lords this quotation is given here because it still might have some relevance to our time" (Anand, *Big Heart* 6). Ananta further buttresses this connection, arguing later in the novel that local workers should organize like their English counterparts did. At the same time the inclusion of Byron's speech, which seems to fill a documentary purpose and to work at cross-purposes with the Expressionist elements of the novel, is the first of many obvious parallels with Toller's *Die Maschinenstürmer* (translated by Ashley Dukes and published

and performed in London in 1923 as *The Machine-Wreckers*), which opens with a translation and adaptation of Byron's speech in verse.[86]

Toller, an acquaintance of Anand's, was widely known for his Expressionist plays and radical politics—imprisoned after leading the Bavarian Soviet Republic, Toller's *Die Wandlung* (1919) was released to wide-spread renown and he wrote other plays and a collection of poems while in prison. Stripped of his citizenship by the Nazi Party, Toller had a warm reception in England: *Requiem* was performed regularly by the Unity Theatre; Stephen Spender translated *Pastor Hall*, which was published in 1939 and filmed by the Boulting brothers in 1940; Auden translated and adapted the songs from *No More Peace*, and—testifying to Toller's importance at the time—Auden's "In Memory of Ernst Toller" was one of three elegies published in *Another Time*, alongside memorials to Yeats and Freud.[87]

Flying in the face of its otherwise realist commitments, the characters and plot of *The Big Heart* are directly derived from Toller's play. Ananta is based on Jimmy Cobbett, who—like Ananta—is friendly with the local children, recently returned home after working for unions in other cities, manages to talk the workers out of violence by spreading the idea of trade unionism, is mistakenly believed to be secretly in the pay of

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[86] Dukes visited Toller in prison after seeing a production of *Die Maschinenstürmer* in Berlin to consult about the English translation. For more on English productions of Toller's work see Dove.

[87] Augustine, the protagonist of Richard Hughes's historical novel *The Fox in the Attic,* helps search for Toller after the "White forces" retake Munich in 1919 (Hughes 168). For more on Toller's *Requiem* see Dove 132; for *Pastor Hall* see Dove 332; and for *No More Peace* see Dove 329.

the factory owners, debates passionately with another organizer who preaches violence, is killed in a frenzy of machine smashing, and—in death—makes the workers realize their mistake. The martyrdom of both protagonists is prefigured through religious imagery—Cobbett is referred to as a "colonel of a regiment of angels," a "new prophet," and is given a crown of straw (Toller 43); Ananta's death is foreshadowed in his dream of Kali. In both cases, the impending death is figured as the sound of marching, with the Beggar in *The Machine-Wreckers* "imitating the sound of marching men," yelling "Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp!" (Toller 43); similarly, Ananta is haunted by Kali's stomping.

Even minor moments are taken from the play, such as when Ananta attempts to give bread to begging children and they fight over it.[88] Satyapal is modeled on John Wibley who seeks to steal Jimmy Cobbet's power over the workers by advocating violence, arguing "we must have deeds, not words!" (Toller 24).[89] Jimmy's response to Wibley, "one would think you had no wish to free them, but only to revenge yourself…" (Toller 25) is echoed and extended by Ananta in his responses to Satyapal as well as by the narrator:

> How much the violent insurrectionism he was preaching derived from his impatience to change India overnight by a bloody revolution, and how much of it arose from the striving for power that was the outer curve of an

[88] Other examples include the hawking of panaceas, depictions of children working the machines while the overseers justify child-labor to visitors, and workers being locked out of the factory for showing up a few minutes late. All of these scenes can be found in Marx and Engels as well.

[89] Other characters find a parallel in Toller as well. Ned Lud smashes the machines in Toller's play and is transformed into the emotional Ralia in *The Big Heart*. Murli is the foreman and a cousin of Ananta's, which is a slight modification of the relationship between Jimmy Cobbet and the foreman in *The Machine-Wreckers*, his estranged brother Henry.

> inner corrosion through his intense sensitiveness to British insults, no one could resolve. For though vanity, pride and the flamboyant manner had appeared in him, he had not yet revealed that utter contempt for the people which accompanies the desire to rise, through the depreciation of others, to undreamed of heights of power. And he had certainly been misled by the 'Azad Hind' Radio" (Anand, *Big Heart* 193).

Wibley instructs the workers to kill Jimmy for being a traitor but does not participate himself (Toller 51-5); similarly Satyapal urges smashing of the machines but is not himself physically involved. Further, Cowasjee claims that the working-title of *The Big Heart* was *The Machine Wreckers*.[90]

I mark these parallels not because they connect Anand's work in a one-to-one relationship with an earlier work of German Expressionism but rather precisely because the citation opens on a vast network of intercultural transactions. Toller explained that his play was based on accounts of the English luddites in Friedrich Engels's *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England* and Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*; in addition to general descriptions of living and working conditions derived from these sources, and as N. A. Furness points out, Toller's play renders keywords in English, for example: knobsticks, cottage, and mule (Furness 848). As we've seen, it opens with a scene recounting Byron's speech in the House of Lords defending the Luddites, establishing a reference to the speech as well as Byron's poem, "Song for the Luddites." Furness has identified

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[90] Cowasjee does not indicate why Anand changed the title to *The Big Heart* but copyright issues may have been at play—Anand was forced to accept half pay from the BBC when he adapted the work of others. This happened at least twice though on neither occasion had Anand indicated that the scripts were adaptations. For more on the shifting relationships between creativity and copyright in the twentieth century, see Saint-Amour. While Cowasjee identifies *The Machine-Wreckers* as an important source, his analysis does not go beyond noting a few "points of similarity" like those between the Prologue and the Preface and "the death of the respective heroes" (Cowasjee 127).

additional textual sources by examining the songs included in the play, which are translations of English Chartist verse printed in Max Beer's *Die Geschichte des Sozialismus in England* (1913). Adding yet another turn to the screw, however, one of these "English" songs was translated by Beer from Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke* (1850) where the narrator claims his song is "the spirit-stirring marching air of the German workmen students" (qtd. in Furness 852). Rather than grounding one work squarely in another, Anand's and Toller's catholic and wide-spread borrowings suggest a vast international network of appropriation and cooperation, eschewing an individual standpoint in favor of what Deleuze and Guattari call "a collective enunciation" (Deleuze and Guattari 17).[91]

Bringing the works into closer dialogue are a number of important historical considerations. First, the two cities to which Ananta is said to have traveled, Bombay and Ahmedabad, were the capitals of India's booming textile industry. In a recent book on Ahmedabad, the historian Howard Spodek unpacks the city's reputation as the "Manchester of India," arguing that the city's ethnic and social problems rendered it a "shock city…on the front lines of the problems of its nation" (Spodek 5). It was on the outskirts of this, the city with the most industrialized labor force in India, that Gandhi established his Sabarmati Ashram, where Anand is said to have sought Gandhi's input on

[91] Shifting our attention from experiments in Germany to those in Prague, Deleuze and Guattari's theses on "Minor Literature" developed to discuss the works of Franz Kafka have many potential parallels with Anand's work and could perhaps usefully be extended to Anand's entire generation of Anglophone Indian novelists.

Untouchable.[92] Gandhi's role in arranging and influencing the Textile Labour Association bears an uncanny resemblance to Toller's Cobbet and Anand's Ananta, both of whom preach negotiation rather than strikes. As Spodek points out, "In 1918, Gandhi intervened in a strike and lockout in the Ahmedabad mills that threatened labor and management with great losses. He declared his first "fast unto death" to force both sides to compromise" (Spodek 7). Although Anand's trilogy included an unflattering portrait of Gandhi, with Anand aligning himself more and more clearly with Nehru, Ananta's Christ-like sacrifice had historical resonance beyond Toller.

India Speaks in England

On Friday, June 18, 1943, Anand's play *India Speaks: Map of India* premiered at the Unity Theatre alongside the recently broadcast one-act play by Randall Swingler, *The Sword of the Spirit*. The addition of a radio play alongside Anand's was only one of many important links between the BBC and *India Speaks*.[93] Like *Voice*, Anand's play stages an intervention in the public sphere by depicting the meeting of an editorial board for a print publication. Though the editors in *India Speaks* are preparing a special supplement for a newspaper as opposed to a literary magazine, the framework is still used didactically. It too emphasizes global connectivity not only by arguing that Indian Independence could bolster the English war effort and by showing how allocations of food for the war were

[92] For Anand's account of this encounter, see Anand, "The Story of My Experiment With a White Lie."

[93] One of the contributors to *Voice* 1, Vida Hope, is introduced by Orwell as "the well known character actress who has appeared at the Unity Theatre" (Orwell XIII 460).

creating starvation in India, but also through its visual presentation, bringing together scenes from England and India on to the same stage. While representing this dialogical relationship, the play also explodes the simple dichotomy between the two, drawing from theatrical practices in America, Germany, and the USSR. At the same time, the play has been consistently overlooked. Never published, a script is housed in the Unity Theatre Archive in the Victoria & Albert Museum, though—unlike many other Unity productions—no photographs appear to be extant. Interesting as an oddity in Anand's oeuvre—it seems to be his only play—*India Speaks* shows how Anand combined texts to form new ones and how he was engaged in collaborative productions and polyphony while juggling a commitment to documentary practices as well.

Written in response to the 1943 famine in West Bengal, the play enjoyed a short run at Unity Theatre in Goldington Street and—like many of Unity's productions—was also taken on the road. The production was so successful that Unity performed it in Birmingham, Leeds, and Cardiff as well as to Indian sailors in the East End (Chambers 236). One special performance for the India League featuring a speech by Krishna Menon, who helped Allen Lane establish Penguin Books, raised £2,500 for the cause. A later Unity production penned by Anand, *Famine*, was performed by the Army Bureau of Current Affairs Play Unit throughout that same year.

Anand's association with Unity shows the extent to which he was integrated into the lives of the English working class after the General Strike. The Unity Theatre was an amateur, volunteer theatre by workers and for workers. Opened in 1936, Unity became increasingly popular through the late 30s and early 40s. Though catering primarily to

workers, Unity attracted a wider audience thanks to a number of well-received productions. Unity had its first hit with the Christmas pantomime, *Babes in the Wood* (1938), which used a combination of song and pantomime to lampoon Chamberlain (the evil uncle), Fleet Street (Fairy Wish-fulfilment), and Hitler and Mussolini (the two robbers). The play ran for 27 weeks, spurred 2 singles on Decca, and more than doubled membership from 3,500 to 8,000. Labour MPs Stafford Cripps and D. N. Pritt attended, as did Churchill's son-in-law, Duncan Sandys (Chambers 176).[94] Unity was the first theatre in Britain to stage a play by Bertolt Brecht, premiering "Señora Carrars Rifles" in 1938 as well as Sean O'Casey's *The Star Turns Red* (1940). Paul Robeson turned down offers from other theatres to appear in a 1939 staging of *Plant in the Sun*, prompting a broadcast on Unity by Harold Nicholson and drawing a number of MPs and Jawaharlal Nehru to the audience (Chambers 157).

Despite this success, Unity remained amateur, with the cast for most productions listed anonymously in case a late shift or some other mishap required a last-minute replacement. As such it lacked the prestige and budget of more established, professional theatres, but this also meant that Unity was not subject to the Lord Chamberlain's vigorous censorship, allowing it to tackle social issues largely ignored by the bourgeois theatres. One Unity pamphlet went so far as to boast, "We are the first theatre to attack the war policy of a government in war time since Euripides" (qtd. in Davies 58). Unity

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[94] Anand's *India Speaks* references one of the hit songs from *Babes*, "Love on the Dole" when the Woman Correspondent explains "An agrarian crisis in India does not mean what it means in the West—'Love on the Dole' or 'This means toast'—it means starvation and death" (Anand, *India* 3). The song was likely inspired by Walter Greenwood's novel, *Love on the Dole* (1933) which was adapted for the theatre in 1934 and filmed in 1941. For lyrics see Chambers 171-2.

also benefited financially by the closing of established theatres during the Blitz, attracting playgoers accustomed to the West End theatres.

Beyond its working-class politics, Unity in the 1940s made a good home for Anand aesthetically. In the context of the rise of fascism on the continent and the party's switch to a Popular Front strategy, Unity Theatre's focus on promoting solidarity among workers meant that it eschewed the earlier, aesthetically radical agitprop techniques of various revolutionary theatre groups like the Workers' Theatre Movement. Anand's play draws from Unity's prior Living Newspapers, *Busmen* (1938), an account of a failed strike by bus workers, and *Crisis* (1938), which reported (within 24 hours) on the meeting between Chamberlain and Hitler on Czechoslovakia. As the *Crisis* pamphlet explains:

> There was, of course, no "ready-made" play available and it was decided that a special "Living Newspaper" must be written and produced within two days. The first rough version was completed in one session of twenty-four hours, and produced in even less time. Writers and actors, though they had to be at work the next day, worked all through the night on the production, and on the day that Chamberlain flew to Munich, the show went on, the actors largely reading from script… ("Living Newspaper")

The documentary impulse of the Living Newspaper was familiar to Anand whose novels and stories were often praised for their realism. Furthermore, the kind of harried writing and production of *Crisis* is evident in the extant script of *India Speaks* which, while complete, seems to be an early copy—a note at the end states that "Lantern slides are not according to script" and some of the speeches are written in hand (Anand, *India* 14).

The turn away from agitprop techniques and towards documentary did not, however, mean a straightforward adoption of naturalism. Instead, Unity productions supplemented the inspiration they drew from Ibsen, Shaw, and American documentary theatre practices (like the Living Newspaper format) with aspects of German

expressionism and Soviet theatre. The director Van Gysem made a trip to study Soviet theatre and reported back to Unity but while Soviet theatre was an inspiration to Unity, Anand meshed the documentary approach with German Expressionism influenced by Ernst Toller.[95]

India Speaks is based on a series of juxtapositions. It employs speeches and figures reported in print and contrasts these with depictions of events on the ground. The play is presented as a meeting of the editorial board of a newspaper publication preparing a "special supplement" on the food shortage in India (Anand, *India* 1). The newspaper office is represented by the Editor, who has assembled a staff of "experts," an Assistant Editor and a Woman Correspondent who are also "representatives" of "the hungry millions of India" (Anand, *India* 2). The Stage Manager, who the script indicates should be placed and lit "as if he were a projection of their brains" plays "the voice of history" as well as serving as "a ray of revolution bringing to you the wisdom of the years as well as living, hot news, by cable, wireless and tape machine" (Anand, *India* 2, 3). Additional visual elements include projected lantern slides which show maps, charts, posters, and photographs. These are then supplemented by scenes in England and India acted-out in different parts of the stage.[96]

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[95] Anand recommended Van Gysem as a potential broadcaster for the Eastern Service.

[96] Though the Unity Theatre Archive lacks any pictures or brochures for this particular performance and though the remaining script seems to be an early version, we can infer a number of things from other plays produced by the company. First, pictures of "Aristocrats" (1937) show four screens with projections. Second, many of the Unity Theatre productions from the time credit The Trix Electrical Co., Ltd. For providing sound equipment and at least the brochure for Irwin Shaw's "Bury the Dead" (1938)

The play frames the problem of wide-spread famine for its London audience, imparting background information and then reinforcing this by acting out various scenes of suffering or British hypocrisy. As the Announcer points out, the public may have learned some geography from reading the press, "But there still seems to be a blind spot in Fleet Street—India. Hardly any news comes from that country" (Anand, *India* 1). As its title suggests, *India Speaks* is an attempt to grant the common people of India an audience in England; the Woman Correspondent claims: "you shall hear the echoes of my country's songs, the sound of its heart beats. The music of its anguish and pain" (Anand, *India* 2). This pain is presented in a series of tableaux: striking workers attacked by police; the arrest of Gandhi, Nehru, and Azad; a crowd waiting impatiently in a grain-shop queue; and rioters sentenced in court.

These tableaux are juxtaposed with scenes of Anglo-Indian extravagance or ignorance. In one scene at an English club, the upper class is portrayed as completely out of touch with conditions on the ground:

> 1st Woman: 'My dear, I am simply famished!'
> Male Partner: Let me get you something, darling. Some sandwiches?
> 1st Woman: I would love an ice.
> 2nd Woman: Go on, make a pig of yourself, George! What luscious things they have! Ooh, and the champagne! (Anand, *India* 9)

The scene employs an ironic use of "famished" to highlight the disconnect between conditions in and out of the club, but *India Speaks* is not a condemnation of the British *tout court*. An English soldier who walked into the town by his barracks writes home, "You know that Calcutta is being bombed. But did you know that an acute shortage of

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reads "Records kindly supplied by Alfred Imhof, 122, New Oxford Street, W. C. 1." (Bury the Dead).

food is raging throughout Bengal. In this rice-producing province there is practically no rice. There is a coal crisis in Calcutta. Food queues are everywhere…Such is the mass basis prepared by Linlithgow & Co for our armies to win in Burma." (Anand, *India* 7). Reinforcing the message of the play, this common soldier has come to this realization after leaving his barracks and seeing conditions first-hand. As part of the play's didactic structure, he models the process of discovery that the play hopes to create in the audience. Yet the play also shows dissent within the higher ranks. In another English club scene, officers debate not only the existence of famine but cooperation with Indian leaders as well:

> 1st Off: I think it is the limit. The Statesman says that 'the Govt. is throwing India from the frying pan of hunger into the fire of revolution.' I think that takes the cake! …
> 2nd Off: There may be something in that. I feel -… after all, food is very scarce.
> 3rd Off: Strength doesn't necessarily mean woodenness. We ought to realize that there is a famine. The question is whether we can relieve it with the help of…their leaders…we ought to…
> 1st Officer: (Rising in anger) But my dear Sir, look at the roads we have built, the railways, the telephones. Damn it, we have made famine impossible! (Anand, *India* 11)

Throughout, the editorial team contextualizes the events, with the Assistant Editor commenting after the club scene, "Behind all the bustle and excitement of New Delhi are drowned the agonies of the present millions existing on [a] level below subsistence" (Anand, *India* 12).

Breaking any remaining suspension of disbelief, like most Unity productions, "India Speaks" ends with a direct appeal to the audience, with the Editor pleading, "Only the hungry know the sweetness of honey and bread. But my voice is only the

reververation of your own intimate experience. For you too, you and you and you, have known the world which could have become a vast storehouse of plenty was made into a vast poor house of disintegrating humanity" (Anand, *India* 14). And while the play includes many of the themes present in Anand's novels, it uses the medium of the theatre to personalize otherwise elusive statistics, by confronting the audience head-on with Indian actors after opening with statistics about peasant diets in Bengal and radically dissimilar life expectancies in India and England. Second, like Anand's broadcasts on keywords, *India Speaks* reveals the ideological basis behind words.[97] In one scene the editors unpack the definition of the keyword frequently invoked in press coverage, "looting:"

> Woman Corres: Who are the looters.
> Editor: Looting is an ugly word—but names of themselves do not alter facts.
> Assist. Ed.: A hungry crowd raiding a food store 'loots'.
> Woman Corres: When a woman steals a loaf of bread to feed her dear ones, that is also presumably 'looting!' (Anand, *India* 10-11)

This short exchange is representative of the play's attempt to spur critical thinking in the audience in the vein of Epic Theatre, urging the spectators to acts of reason rather than emotional identification.

With its emphasis on pedagogy, the play is a powerful example of the Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt* adopted for the anti-colonial struggle. But the use of cutting-edge visual and audio technologies in *India Speaks* also signals other inspirations. The use of

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[97] Anand discussed the etymology and use of keywords in the program *Through Eastern Eyes: New Weapons of War*. The 1942 series included the following episodes: "Fifth Column" (15 March), "*Lebensraum*—Living Space" (22 March), "New Order" (29 March), "Pluto-democracy" (5 April), and "Propaganda" (12 April). Each installment lasted for approximately 12 minutes. Anand's scripts are housed in the BBC WAC.

historical sources, metatheatrical moments, and emphasis on raising political consciousness are all central to the Brechtian method but they are also important to the playwright Ernst Toller. The play's emphasis on the characters' symbolic weight, with the Stage Manager as a "ray of revolution" and the "voice of history" suggests allegory. More forcefully, the use of tableaux is reminiscent of Toller. Anand thus complicates the polarity or geography of empire by tracing his own journey from India to London but gesturing to writing (an intellectual heritage) from around the globe. *India Speaks* addresses issues between England and India in theatrical forms indebted to American, Russian, and German traditions. Anand significantly extends his global perspective in another collaborative editorial collective, the Eastern Service's literary magazine, *Voice*.

A Little Magazine on the Air

After decades of ignoring the material conditions of modernism, the story of the importance of periodicals to the spread of modernism is beginning to emerge. Identifying little magazines as "the public face of modernism," Mark Morrisson points out that far from ignoring or disdaining the masses, "modernists in this period searched for ways of rejuvenating the public sphere…or simply making their voices and their art prominent in the vibrant and exciting new print venues of the public sphere that the commercial culture had helped to create and sustain" (Morrisson 10). Yet while periodical studies has done much to recover the multiple contexts in which modernist works entered the public sphere, these insights need to be paired with a wider focus that can better countenance the complexity of the early twentieth-century media ecology, to include aural as well as

visual texts. Demonstrating how these mediums were mutually constitutive and testifying to the importance of periodicals in shaping public discourse, both *Voice* and Anand's 1943 play *India Speaks* stage interventions into the public sphere specifically by depicting editorial meetings of print publications in an oral format. Both broadcast and performance pull the curtain back from the otherwise unseen and mysterious editorial process, highlighting their status as collaborations, reflecting on how textual meaning is informed by context, and revealing the ideological battles that underpin the selection, combination, and presentation of writing to the public.[98]

Voice shared many aspects of the little magazines: it abjured advertising and did not even attempt to turn a profit, focusing instead on disseminating works that the editors considered important.[99] Like many little magazines, *Voice* was a transnational affair, bringing together writers born in present-day Jamaica, India, Sri Lanka, the US, and the UK to London in order to discuss literature for an equally cosmopolitan audience. Yet as Orwell made clear in the first installment, the "readers" of *Voice* would have to use their

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[98] Not only were periodicals crucial in the creation and distribution of canonical works like T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, but as Anand's publication history shows, periodicals were important to emerging writers and political movements too. Joyce's *Portrait* was released in an anarchist and feminist magazine, *The Egoist*, for example. Multiplying the sense in which magazines put modernist works in conversation with larger political and social concerns, a study of little magazines highlights the extent to which these artists and their works were in conversation with one another, with the Imagist poets, *Portrait*, and *Tarr* all appearing in the *Egoist*. Radio programming, with its combination of writers not usually thought of together, is—I contend—as rich a site of investigation as modernist periodicals.

[99] The editorial board could make such judgments confidently. Tambimuttu and Eliot edited two of the most well-known literary periodicals, *Poetry London* and *The Criterion* respectively. In fact, like the *Criterion* and the American *Dial*, *Voice* disseminated parts of Eliot's monumental *The Waste Land* (1922). For more see Coyle.

imaginations when picturing the cover and feeling the pages, because *Voice* was a collaborative literary magazine *of the air* broadcast to India on the BBC's Eastern Service. The broadcast format had some major advantages, though, especially given the shortage of paper during wartime. Orwell boasted, "all it needs is a little electric power and half a dozen voices," thus bypassing the trouble, expense, and delay of submitting content to printers, mailing copies, and collecting subscriptions (Orwell, *All* 459).

Despite the many advantages *Voice* enjoyed over print magazines, it faced a number of serious challenges, especially in the context of the war. As Orwell explained:

> While we sit here talking in a more or less highbrow manner—talking about art and literature and whatnot—tens of thousands of tanks are racing across the steppes of the Don and battleships upside down are searching for one another in the wastes of the Pacific. It may seem a little dilettante to be starting a magazine concerned primarily with poetry at a moment when, quite literally, the fate of the world is being decided by bombs and bullets. (Orwell, *All* 459)

In Orwell's analysis, the poetry magazine is doubly threatened by war—first that war may use necessary resources (paper) and second that it may render poetry inconsequential. In fact, this was the position taken by the BBC Home Service during the war. Intimidated by the popularity of the Forces Program, which played light music and featured generally uplifting content, the Home Service jettisoned many of its Talks, Drama, and programs dedicated to classical music and other "high-brow" topics. For empire radio, on the other hand, the war was counter-intuitively a time of increased intellectual rigor in broadcasting, as the audience in India for example was thought to be almost exclusively the university-educated. And while much was being decided by "bombs and bullets" Orwell also knew that the press, particularly radio, played a big role

in determining "the fate of the world." It was the hope of the Eastern Service that by featuring honest and rigorous discussion of culture, they could counter the shrill propaganda of the Germans and the Japanese and maintain Indian loyalty through the war. On one level, then, Orwell's distinction between "art and literature and whatnot" and war is actually a false one—it was precisely by offering art and literature to the colonies that the BBC hoped to help the war effort. At the same time, Orwell's disclaimer is symptomatic of the attitude of most of the contributors to *Voice*, who attempted to maintain this distinction. As Anand realized, however, this "literary" broadcast actually involved a much franker discussion of politics than was permitted in official political debates and discussions, allowing him to demonstrate how politics inform aesthetics and vice versa in a way that the other contributors missed or ignored.

In the second installment of *Voice*, Anand argues forcefully against claims of European exemplarity. Making Anand's interest in intelligibility and political commitment clearer, he proposes the inclusion of Auden's "September 1939" as representative of a new, non-jingoistic approach to writing about war.[100] As in the previous month's installment, Anand's peers stick with a distinction between politics and aesthetics with Empson declaring, "I think the younger poets who are writing now are really unpolitical" (Orwell, *Keeping* 17). Anand's analysis couldn't be further from Empson's; Anand argues "But Auden is still a political poet. That poem has what you could describe as a direct political purpose" (Orwell, *Keeping* 17). Anand's next choice—a scene from T. E. Lawrence's *Revolt in the Desert* in which Lawrence is waiting to

[100] The poem is incorrectly listed as "September, 1941" in the typescript.

dynamite a train—takes the conversation in a new direction. Again Empson disagrees with Anand about its importance. Empson: "Ah, that was a different war. Lawrence was engaged in a minor campaign, and it was fought for limited objects which the people fighting in it could understand. Besides, it was in the open, not in trenches. It wasn't machine warfare, and the individual counted for something" (Orwell, *Keeping* 19). Empson insists on poems that feature trenches and machine warfare and represent the existential crisis faced by the individual soldier and by extension the European world-view; other battles were peripheral or "minor."

Anand's insistence on the importance of *Revolt in the Dessert* challenges Empson's Eurocentrism, provincializing the position of his English interlocutor. The various battles in and for colonial possessions in Africa and Asia and accompanying independence movements were important in World War I; they just don't fit neatly into Empson's view of the war as being centered physically and spiritually in Europe. Empson was not necessarily dismissive of self-determination, but his understanding of war literature is based in Europe and by labeling the Arabic independence movement as "different" and "minor," participates in a larger English habit of dismissing anti-imperial struggle as a series of isolated events rather than a tradition.

Anand was not insensitive to the horrors of trench warfare or the importance of European battles; his novel *Across the Black Waters* (1940) portrayed the experiences of Indian soldiers fighting in the trenches of France along with the attendant physical, emotional, and mental distress caused by this new form of warfare. As the centerpiece of a trilogy, however, the trenches of *Across the Black Waters* are placed in a larger frame

of colonial exploitation and the Independence struggle—*The Village* shows the events leading to Lal's choice to enlist and *The Sword and the Sickle* depicts his life after he returns to India. While life and death in the trenches is just as shocking and devastating to Indian soldiers as it is to their English, Scottish, and Irish comrades, it is experienced as part of Indian experience and history rather than as a temporary crisis confined to a European stage. The conclusion of the trilogy, *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), shows how the individual trials of Lal Singh mirror larger tensions and struggles in India. Despite performing heroic acts ending in injury and time as a prinsoner-of-war, Lal Singh is not rewarded with the land, medals, or money with which the Army lured Indian soldiers. These personal frustrations are placed in the larger context of economic recession, the flu epidemic, and the imposition of the Rowlatt Acts in the face of pre-war promises of progress towards Independence. The novels thus show how the personal world of Lal Singh mirrors larger events. The trilogy explores the interdependence of India and England before, during, and after the war but must do so through other places—in this case France and Germany. Anand's contributions to *Voice* continue this effort to countenance the global reach of the war as well as to place it in a longer time frame.

Showing that not every English writer felt the same way, Orwell's next selection, Byron's "The Isles of Greece," supports Anand's efforts to establish lines of continuity between the wars, something that Anand was better able to appreciate as India still awaited independence. Orwell is able to pick up on what remained only a vague suggestion in Anand's selection from Lawrence, pointing out that "there can be an actual

enthusiasm for war when it's for some cause such as national liberation" (Orwell, *Keeping* 22). Anand's reply, "Of course! That comes very near home nowadays" activates a force-field of potential meaning, with Byron's poem resonating with the independence struggle in the "home" of his listeners in India (Orwell, *Keeping* 22). Orwell's selection is also supportive of Anand's comparative project, showing how an English writer was influenced by events transpiring elsewhere. A letter from Anand to Orwell on the 15th of November 1942 shows how the works that were included in *Voice* were but a small selection of proposed texts and that Anand was a proponent of thinking of "English" verse in broad terms, suggesting not only Indian texts translated into English, but an entire episode devoted to Irish literature.

Anand provincializes Europe, disrupting an otherwise smooth dissociation of aesthetics and politics in British thought and pointing to the much larger geographic and temporal plane upon which the conflict of the First World War continued to unfold. Anand was aware of and sought to highlight these global links not only to promote his fiction but also because of events transpiring at home that continually pressed him to reconsider working for the BBC. Like Orwell, Anand was ambivalent about working for the Eastern Service, politely refusing his first offer of employment by citing his focus on the Indian independence movement. When Germany attacked the USSR in 1941, however, the BBC approached Anand again, through Orwell, this time with success. As Anand soon learned, the Eastern Service was a more congenial atmosphere than he had expected. While interested in maintaining Indian loyalty during the war, the BBC was not putting out crude propaganda; looking back at his time in the Eastern Service, Orwell

reflected, "On no occasion have I been compelled to say anything on the air that I would not have said as a private individual" (Orwell, *War* 57-8). Anand was joined by a host of British writers with whom he developed friendships such as Orwell, T. S. Eliot, E. M. Forster, and Venu Chitale. Ahmed Ali, a founding member—with Anand—of the All-India Progressive Writers Association, worked for the Eastern Service too, performing audience research in India.

A few months earlier, in the spring of 1942, Orwell anxiously followed the results of Stafford Cripps's diplomatic trip to India (the Cripps Mission)—to secure official support for the war effort from the Indian Congress and Muslim League in exchange for Dominion status after the war—from the initial optimism of late March, when Orwell records the hopefulness of his co-workers, to April, when he notes his own depression over the apparent failure of the mission. Orwell typically documented his impressions of the morale of the Eastern Service employees in general, but in a few entries he focuses on the pressures on Anand in particular:

> Anand says the morale among the exile Indians here is very low. They are still inclined to think that Japan has no evil designs on India and are all talking of a separate peace with Japan… A. himself has not got these vices. He is genuinely anti-fascist, and has done violence to his feelings, and probably to his reputation, by backing Britain up because he recognizes that Britain is objectively on the anti-Fascist side. (Orwell, *All* 259-60)

Here Orwell expresses his frustration and depression over the failure of the Cripps Mission, but also gives some indications of mutual suspicions on both sides simmering just below the spirit of cooperation at the Eastern Service. The entry is more important for what it suggests about Anand specifically and the complex ways in which Anand and

Orwell worked together to toe the line on the Eastern Service's commitment to anti-fascist propaganda while also working towards Indian Independence. Orwell's support for Anand in *Voice* comes after Orwell wrote, in July, a glowing review of *The Sword and the Sickle* in *Horizon* as well as a letter in May to *The Times Literary Supplement* "to protest against…some very misleading remarks" in a negative review of the novel (Orwell, *All* 337).

As we can see, Anand wasn't forced to hide his political commitments in his broadcasts. Nonetheless, he did struggle with his position at the BBC, particularly when Cripps's mission failed. These struggles form an important background to Anand's disagreements with Empson. In fact, the day before the first installment of *Voice* was a particularly tense time. Orwell recorded in his diary the arrest of Nehru, Gandhi, and Abdul Kalam Azad accompanied by mass protests and a "ghastly speech" by Leo Amery (Orwell, *All* 458).[101] Even Z. A. Bokhari, who was much less political than many of the Eastern Service contributors, talked about resigning from the BBC.

The first installment of *Voice* aired on 11 August 1942 and was dedicated largely to contemporary poetry, with the participants reading aloud from poems by Herbert Read, Dylan Thomas, and Henry Treece as well as a prose passage from Inez Holden. These readings were supplemented by discussion and debates over the works and the larger context from which they sprung. In addition to Orwell, discussants included Mulk Raj Anand, John Atkins, and William Empson. The examination of Dylan Thomas's "In Memory of Ann Jones" brings out important differences between these figures. Orwell,

[101] This event was important enough to Anand to be dramatized in "India Speaks."

playing devil's advocate, opens the discussion by suggesting "I suppose the obvious criticism is that it doesn't mean anything. But I also doubt that it's meant to. After all, a bird's song doesn't mean anything except that the bird is happy" (Orwell, *All* 464). Empson, who had just read the poem aloud, takes offense and argues for close, rigorous analysis in the vein of New Criticism, "Lazy people, when they are confronted with good poetry like Dylan Thomas's, which they can see is good, or have been told is good, but which they won't work at, are always saying it is Just Noise, or Purely Musical. This is nonsense…[t]hat poem is full of exact meanings" (Orwell, *All* 464). Orwell and Empson's exchange offers a view on debates of intentionality and the function of poetry as either beautiful distraction or as a carefully constructed, precise use of language. The poem is either an airy, immaterial song or a puzzle awaiting interpretation based on identification of literary devices like alliteration, meter, or—since this is Empson after all—types of ambiguity. In neither case is the poem accessible to the common reader.

Anand takes the conversation in a very different direction, ignoring the discussion of the poem's literary merits and focusing instead on its intelligibility: "But it's also true that his poetry has become a good deal less obscure in an ordinary prose sense lately. This poem, for instance, is much more intelligible than his later work…[it] has a meaning that you can grasp at first hearing" (Orwell, *All* 464). For Anand, "In Memory of Ann Jones" is accessible and effective, valuable insofar as it serves as a tribute to an average working-class woman who would not typically be featured in poetry. The stakes of Anand's opposition to Empson's viewpoint emerge more clearly in the debate over Treece's poems. Anand describes Treece's work as "romantic," a reaction against the

Auden-MacNeice school, which favored not only an accessible meaning, but a clear political purpose. Empson demurs, arguing that "these distinctions seem to me all nonsense" but Anand stands his ground; getting the last word, he points out that "periods of classicism have alternated with periods of romanticism, and the distinction has lasted so long that there must be something in it" (Orwell, *All* 467).

Anand's insistence on alternating periods has important effects on reading practices—examining a text's relationship to its period necessarily involves consideration of para-, extra-, and inter-textual links that shape its meaning. Empson's hermeneutic procedure explores a text's idiosyncracies or uniqueness, whereas Anand's insists on the relationship between texts at given historical moments.

This context gives Anand's contributions to *Voice*—namely his insistence on discussing politics and literature together and his emphasis on non-European sites of conflict—much more gravity than Orwell somewhat disingenuously attributed to literary discussions in the first installment. The disagreements staged between Empson and Anand are symptomatic of differing world views, both of which need to be taken into consideration. Empson here exemplifies, with his attention to the formal elements of the poem, the New Criticism that would become widespread in universities after the war and that would marginalize writers like Anand. Anand, though not insensitive to formal elements, is more interested in understanding the poem's social purpose, its ability to link modernism with modernity. Empson's dismissal of the importance of the battles in the Middle East and their literary representations, their role in shaping not only that region

but England as well, is a danger that we risk repeating if we consign Anand's radio work to the ashbin of history.

Conclusion

The impatience expressed in *Voice*, *India Speaks*, "London As I See It," and *The Big Heart* resonates with many of Anand's texts, but it gives a sense of urgency to the adoption of the flush toilet at the conclusion of *Untouchable*—rather than one option out of three (roughly Gandhism, Christianity, or technology), each of Anand's subsequent texts suggest more and more emphatically that hope for greater economic well-being and equality resided in the spread of technological modernization.[102]

Comparison with *Untouchable* is instructive—like the earlier novel, *The Big Heart* was written in the tradition of the modernist Day Book, with the tolling of the town clock recalling Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and Ananta's canvassing on behalf of unionization, delight in the pleasures of food and drink, and treatment as outcast likening him to Leopold Bloom. But unlike *Untouchable*, which features a network of intertextual allusion without favoring any one text over another, *The Big Heart* represents a departure in that *The Machine Wreckers* has become the central inspiration. As adaptation, the novel is simultaneously realist novel, expressionist drama, and modernist Day Book in a manner analogous to the experience of radio as not simply polyphonic but as a combination of various genres and forms existing simultaneously.

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[102] In fact, in a later revision of *Untouchable*, Bahka's idea of telling his father about the toilet becomes more imperative. See *Untouchable* ed. Saros Cowasjee. London: Bodley Head, 1970.

Completed in 1944, as both the war and Anand's time in London were coming to an end, *The Big Heart* (1945) is the most extreme example of the kind of authorship practiced by Anand during his BBC years.[103] Just as "London As I See It" argued that there was no such thing as an unmediated view of the city, *The Big Heart* represents an attempt to think through modernization intertextually and in a number of genres simultaneously. Whereas "London As I See It" was based on Dylan Thomas's prose poem, the provenance of *The Big Heart* is much more elaborately circuitous, challenging a neat geographical connection between India and England. The novel is polyphonic not only in terms of presenting many viewpoints but also in its intertextuality and is in this sense closely linked with his work at the BBC.[104]

Why, then, has *Untouchable* received so much attention and *The Big Heart* received so little? Part of the reason may be the persistence of values from New Criticism. As one example of the ways in which New Criticism shaped and selected objects of study, Cleanth Brooks argues against an allegorical style, "The poet does not select an abstract theme and then embellish it with concrete details. On the contrary, he

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[103] After *The Big Heart*, Anand's writing became much more autobiographical—see *Private Life of an Indian Prince*, *Seven Summers*, *Morning Face*, etc.

[104] *The Big Heart* is a limit case, however, based so closely on Toller that Anand didn't mention Toller in connection with the novel, despite being very open about other influences on the novel (such as *Finnegans Wake* and Rimbaud). Anand seemed less concerned about acknowledging influences on his other works; "Bakha," which became *Untouchable*, is credited by Anand to the influence of Joyce's *Ulysses*, Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Yeats, Gonne, Synge, and Gandhi. In a representative statement, Anand tells Cowasjee about *Private Life of an Indian Prince* in a letter on 18 November 1967, "As usual all the characters are taken from real life and transformed creatively from within in an almost Dostoevskian mood of pity…You may detect the influence of Gide to some extent in this book, but it was much more Dostoevsky" (Anand, *Author* 12).

must establish the details, must abide by the details, and through his realization of the details attain to whatever general meaning he can attain" (Brooks 799). Applying Brooks's account makes Anand's method backwards—he starts with the plot, symbolism and even the features of his characters and then changes details to transpose the setting to present-day India. Not only is Anand backwards, though, but this renders his work unworthy of serious study. Ironically, a number of well-known modernist works were based on other texts—to cite just two examples, *The Waste Land* on the grail quest and *Ulysses* on the *Odyssey*. But Joyce's indebtedness to Homer had to be contained; reacting to critics who emphasized the parallels between the *Odyssey* and *Ulysses*, Ezra Pound took pains to make clear that the *Odyssey* provided the faintest scaffolding and was ultimately unimportant; "correspondences are part of Joyce's medievalism and are chiefly his own affair, a scaffold, a means of construction, justified by the result, and justifiable by it only" (70). Pound's argument seeks to undo the harm to the author function performed by intertextuality—instead of undermining individuality, it is here posited as what is most idiosyncratic about Joyce, "chiefly his own affair."

Of course, periodization plays a part here, too. Bradbury and McFarlane were explicit about something that many critics have subsequently assumed—that modernism ended with the beginning of the Second World War. The fact that *Untouchable* was a Day Book published in the interwar years allows it to fit a chronology that is still comforting even if it is being called into question. What we miss by ignoring later works like *The Big Heart*, however, is the speed with which modernism was unfolding, such

that earlier works may have returned to classical texts for their structure but later ones turned to works written in the previous twenty years.

In an essay on Joyce's *Ulysses*, Franco Moretti usefully identifies a split, or failure, in the text between the stream of conscious technique of the first half and the polyphony of the second half (Moretti 190). Although Moretti is focused on the traditional "Men of 1914" brand of modernism, his insight into the shift in literary modernism from stream of conscious technique and focus on the subjective experience(s) of the individual and psychological interiority towards increased polyphony offers another way to think about global modernist networks without completely eliminating formal considerations. Anand's works have been labeled failures for attempting to contain too much and for showing their seams—the conflict between a social realist style and the inclusion of political and philosophical arguments that are said to take up too much space, to distract from the "real" novel, and to lack an air of believability. Anand's work is polyphonic too but in different ways that have made him illegible to critics; both "London As I See It" and *The Big Heart* question the individuality of the author and explode the continuum between India and England by appropriating and pointing to works from other regions.

As Orwell reflected in his war diary, Anand was between two worlds, part of the Indian independence movement yet simultaneously alienated from it; Anand's own accounts of his experiences in Bloomsbury paint him as literary insider but also political outsider; more recently, scholarship on Anand claims him alternately as modernist or realist. Rather than help place Anand firmly in one camp or another or to resolve these

contradictions, his war-time work shows that a writer absorbing and retransmitting these struggles, synthesizing techniques, and repurposing the past may in some ways have been more in tune with modernity than those who created stunning, idiosyncratic products in their perpetual search for the new. Anand's impatient modernism restores a useful focus on temporality, showing how radio studies is poised to contribute to pressing discussions in modernist studies. The instantaneity of transnational radio serves as an invitation and spur to think through the coeval development of radio technology, broadcasting programs and practices, and—by extension—modernities in different global locations.

CHAPTER 4

THE WIRELESS PRODUCTION AND RECEPTION OF *FINNEGANS WAKE*, 1922-1947

Introduction

On the 5th of October 1946, the voice of James Joyce reading from *Finnegans Wake* was broadcast for the first time by the BBC, and in India, not England. Commencing with this literary-historical curiosity, this chapter unwinds the complex itinerary of this broadcast to reveal a set of longer and deeper connections between the *Wake* and wireless. Radio inspired the *Wake*'s dizzying formal experiments, especially its cacophonous polyphony of voices and languages. One of the novel's central characters, HCE, identifies himself as a BBC broadcaster and echoes interwar radio programming that defended and marketed the imperial project. And in an ironic twist, the *Wake*, which explicitly parodies the BBC's empire programming, gets a crucial boost on the Eastern Service. Radio launched *Finnegans Wake*. Close attention to key moments in the composition and reception of the *Wake* reveal how radio inspired and then spread what has mistakenly been labeled a great but unread book, a limit-case of the supposed insularity of modernist aesthetics.

The previous chapters of "Fiction on the Radio" have recovered significant differences between imperial and domestic broadcasting, such that the Eastern Service's interest in Joyce can be appreciated in a wider context. But unlike for Forster and Anand, for Joyce a spot behind a BBC microphone was a tantalizing but unreachable goal. While

other writers used the BBC to supplement their incomes, secure larger audiences, and enjoy a new aura of celebrity, Joyce was confined to obsessive listening-in from his apartment. Joyce's love of the medium (especially for its generous provision of vocal music) is countered by an accompanying distaste for the combination of imperial bluster and pedantry offered during the interwar years, not to mention a series of rebuffs from BBC administrators. Joyce's ambivalence is reflected in various stages of the writing of his last book. If the first two chapters of the dissertation think through the geography and temporality of Anglophone modernism, this chapter joins those concerns with an interest in tracing some of the various ways that radio impacted literary form. From the roles Forster and Anand played as public figures, this chapter turns to Joyce as listener, recording medium, scribe.

The *Wake* does not have a reputation for accessibility, but it has garnered a good deal of attention. Composed of long strings of multilingual portmanteau words arranged in tattered syntax, the *Wake* poses serious difficulties for readers scanning even a few lines, let alone working to produce an exhaustive interpretation. Such formal features of the novel, coupled with Joyce's epic ambitions to write a universal book in dream language, have puzzled, frustrated, and infuriated readers and would-be readers alike. Despite challenging conventional interpretive practices, Joyce was passionate about acquiring readers. The 1940s were marked by a number of significant interventions like the publication of Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson's *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake* (1944), a guide to the narrative (plot) of the *Wake* that aimed to help the "average reader of decent literacy" through a reading of the difficult text (Campbell &

Robinson ix). The *Skeleton Key* is but one part (though the best known example) of a larger movement to popularize the *Wake*. A fanatic radio listener himself, Joyce was well aware of the promotional value of wireless and tried to organize a number of broadcasts to promote *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce and his sympathetic commentators used the radio to offer an approach to the *Wake* that posited different kinds of intelligibility. Joyce attempted to win over neophytes and skeptical friends by reading passages aloud to them, giving an intimate, aural, and oral performance. Radio was ideally suited to replicating and extending these efforts and was used accordingly.

This chapter uncovers the work of four broadcasters, T. S. Eliot, E. M. Forster, L. A. G. Strong, and James Stephens, who devoted broadcasts to the discussion of Joyce and the encouragement of ordinary readers in the 1940s. Notwithstanding F. R. Leavis's negative view of Joyce that was influential in England and played a part in that country's failure to produce a single critical book on Joyce in the 1940s, the BBC was a flourishing site of conversation on the *Wake*. And just as the *Wake*'s letter seems to travel vast distances, so too did broadcasts about the book.[105] Three of the four I examine here were broadcast overseas on the BBC's Eastern Service, though they had further impact in England as well. Eliot's talk, republished in the *Listener*, reached over 100,000 subscribers (Briggs, *War* 666). All four broadcasters used the wireless to launch the *Wake*, literally sending it into the air, but also setting it up in business, introducing it to new markets. In sharp contrast to nationalist conceptions of culture offered on the radio,

[105] By the *Wake*'s letter, I refer to a defense of HCE penned by his wife ALP, which appears in several versions, as a report from "the old holmsted here" (*FW* 26.25) and later as "scriblings scrawled on eggs" (*FW* 615-619).

these commentators both reveled in the *Wake*'s polylinguistic structure and held up Joyce's voluntary exile as a model. Most importantly, these broadcasts nurtured a transnational body of readers.

The *Wake* was not simply a passive recipient or beneficiary of radio promotion, however. It reflected on the medium's crisscrossing arguments and positions as well. Joyce's working notebooks show that radio provided a material basis for his conception of what he called the novel's "polylogue" style (VI.B.10—37; JJA 31: 97). In addition to using the auditory logic of radio, pre-print materials reveal that Joyce maintained a practice of incorporating technical terms describing the parts, accessories, and audition of radios into the vocabulary of the novel throughout the entire composition process. The early notebooks and the first appearance of *Work in Progress* (in the *transatlantic review* in 1924) illustrate how radio was always already an important structuring principle. Joyce's revisions to the third chapter of the third book (III.3) disclose an innovative approach beginning in the mid 1930s, when Joyce increasingly incorporates specific references to broadcasting practices by rival nations. During this period, Joyce begins a parallel campaign of writing in which he uses the competition between different national broadcasting channels as part of the narrative of the rise and fall of the father of the Earwicker family, an Anglican barkeep in Dublin, HCE.[106] These two simultaneous processes allow us to see how, on the one hand, the technology of radio allowed Joyce to push the limits of narrative cohesion throughout the composition process, with the result

[106] Though the use of characters in the *Wake* is quite complex, readers of the present chapter need only know that HCE is the father of two rival sons, Shem and Shaun, and that The Four sit in judgment of HCE.

that, formally, the novel has a number of radiophonic qualities. At the same time, Joyce references the competition between the BBC and 2RN, tying these observations to the larger themes of empire and cultural and linguistic invasion that resonate throughout the *Wake*.

The *Wake*, its various pre-publication materials, and broadcasts devoted to it constitute a rich archive from which to understand the ways in which radio inspired and influenced both the creation of the novel and its subsequent promotion. Restoring the *Wake* to its conversation with radio provides a window into the cultural and technological dynamics of broadcasting from 1922-1947. A consideration of early radio further sheds light on the *Wake* as well, with radio's discursive structures mirrored in the novel's polylogue style and contributing to the *Wake*'s critique of nationalism. Tracing the loop between the *Wake* and radio reveals a web of conversations in and around the book, revealing a mutual interrogation between the world and the text.

In order to parse how the *Wake* was launched—both transfixed and hurled—by radio, this chapter begins after the publication of *Finnegans Wake*, when Joyce was finally embraced by the BBC and sympathetic writers broadcast appeals to win readers over to the *Wake*. From the nurturing of a transnational body of readers, the chapter turns to an earlier, less accommodating period when Joyce was continually frustrated in his attempts to use the airwaves to his advantage. Next I turn to Joyce's writing from 1922 to 1924 (in early notebooks and the first serial publication of what would eventually be published in book form as the *Wake*) to show how radio shaped Joyce's conception of his new work's style. Competing national visions offered on English and Irish radio

fascinated Joyce and in the mid 1930s Joyce began incorporating these claims into the existing story of the empire-builder, conqueror, and father, HCE. This use of radio was different in kind from its earlier use as a way of thinking through the mélange of voices in the *Wake*. Now it critiqued the fledgling, and increasingly conservative, Irish state and the authoritarian, priggish, and imperialist BBC. These points of contact between the *Wake* and radio combine to form a narrative not simply of literary production and critical reception, but of the ways that wireless contributed to modernism's transnational commerce of ideas and ideologies.

Wakean Radio Commentaries

In a now famous tirade in the then increasingly influential journal *Scrutiny*, "Joyce and the 'Revolution of the Word,'" F. R. Leavis stages his most elaborate case against the inclusion of Joyce in his canon of English modernism. For Leavis, *Ulysses* is full of "inorganic elaborations and pedantries" and, worse, *Work in Progress* is "not worth the labour of reading" (Leavis 197, 193). Consumers in England and America disagreed. In a time of paper rationing and tight budgets, the *Wake* sold briskly, with at least 21,000 copies printed to keep up with demand in the 1940s alone.[107] Leavis insisted,

[107] This is a very conservative figure that includes only the sales reported to John Slocum and Herbert Cahoon when they compiled their Joyce bibliography. The first English (Faber) edition of *Finnegans Wake* (1939) sold 2,255 copies; from 24 Sept. 1946 to 31 May 1948 Faber sold an additional 2,136 copies, but sales between the first edition and the 1946 reprint are not included (Slocum and Cahoon 60). An inquiry submitted to Faber by this writer has not received a response. Details on the American edition are better known and show that it rapidly picked up steam in the 1940s. The 6,000 original copies were sold out by September 1943, when 1,000 additional copies were printed; these were followed by reprints of 2,000 in October 1944, 3,000 the following year, and 5,700 in March of 1947 (Slocum and Cahoon 61). Generally, the excerpts from *Work in Progress*

however, that in contrast to D. H. Lawrence's rich links to the land, England's pastoral history, and romanticism, Joyce's methods were mechanical: "When one adds that speech in the old order was a popularly cultivated art, that people talked…instead of reading or listening to the wireless, it becomes plain that the promise of regeneration by American slang, popular city-idiom or the inventions of transition-cosmopolitans is a flimsy consolation for our loss" (Leavis 200). Leavis here conflates Joyce, *transition*, and the wireless as equally decadent, modern phenomena. Leavis intended the comparison with wireless as an insult, of course, but his remarks were prescient in that after *transition* ceased publication, the radio became a major site of *Wakean* commentary. The radio afterlife of the *Wake* strikes a middle ground between Leavis's antagonism and the adulation of the *transition* editors, and most importantly constitutes one of the earliest and most sustained efforts to court the common reader to tackle the *Wake*.

Leavis's firm stance against Joyce was so influential that Joseph Brooker, in his useful history of Joyce criticism, uses Leavis to explain Joyce's neglect in England in the 1940s, arguing that Leavis "deported him," and pointing out that England did not produce a single book on Joyce for the entire decade of the 1940s (Brooker 86). Instead, the

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did not sell as robustly, with the notable exception of *Anna Livia Plurabelle* (1930), which did well. The first English (Faber) edition sold 10,166 copies between 1930 and June 11, 1948 (Slocum and Cahoon 45-6). *Two Tales of Shem and Shaun* (1932), in contrast, sold 3,849 copies (Slocum and Cahoon 50), *Haveth Childers Everywhere* (1931) sold 249 copies in cloth and 5,341 in paper (Slocum and Cahoon 54), and *The Mime of Mick Nick and the Maggies* (1934) sold out of its 1,000 print run (Slocum and Cahoon 55). After 1947, however, selections from the *Wake* circulated widely in *The Portable James Joyce* (1947) edited by Harry Levin. The first American edition alone comprised 25,000 copies; in May of 1948, Jonathan Cape printed the same collection as *The Essential James Joyce*. For more recent sales figures see Mahon. Thanks to Nick Morris for pointing me to Slocum and Cahoon and to Michael Groden for aiding in my inquiry.

version of modernism that caught on was one that Leavis described as "the age of D. H. Lawrence and T. S. Eliot" (qtd in Brooker 77). Though Brooker is right to note that Joyce was welcomed in America while largely forgotten in England, Brooker's focus on the monograph leads him to overlook a burgeoning area of Joyce criticism and popularization—the radio. If England was slow to produce books on Joyce, there was a comparatively lively debate occurring on Leavis's hated wireless, specifically over the BBC. These discussions may have been easy to miss because, as Salman Rushdie's character Sisodia declares in *The Satanic Verses*, "The trouble with the Engenglish is that their hiss hiss history happened overseas, so they dodo don't know what it means" (Rushdie 343). In other words, the discussions of Joyce may have taken place in studios in London, but they were generally broadcast on the more intellectual Indian service. If the Home Service was slow to bounce back from Nicholson's aborted broadcast on *Ulysses*, the Eastern Service was a flourishing site of conversation, featuring discussions of Joyce by T. S. Eliot, E. M. Forster, and L. A. G. Strong. In fact, as I establish in the chapter opening, Joyce's voice was broadcast for the first time not domestically but to India.

To appreciate the contribution made by these broadcasts, it is helpful to recall the polarized positions taken by many in regard to the *Wake*, the broad outlines of which can be represented by the differences between Leavis and Eugene Jolas. Leavis's article plays on the title of one of Jolas's earliest, most notorious, and programmatic manifestos in *transition*, "Revolution of the Word" (1929) which contained twelve prescriptive and provocative statements like "The revolution in the English language is an accomplished

fact," "The Literary creator has the right to disintegrate the primal matter of words imposed on him by textbooks and dictionaries," "The writer expresses. He does not communicate" and "The plain reader be damned" (Jolas, "Revolution" 111-12). *Transition* was often taken to be synonymous with Joyce; Marcel Brion expressed a commonly held view when he referred to the journal as "la maison de Joyce" (qtd. in Brooker 55). Jolas and Elliot Paul adjusted the publication of *transition* based around the availability of sections of *Work in Progress*. When Joyce did not have a new installment ready, he would arrange for the inclusion of supportive articles, like Beckett's essay "Dante… Bruno. Vico.. Joyce." Like Frank Budgen and Stuart Gilbert, who had an outsize influence on the reception of *Ulysses*, Jolas set the stage for readers of *Work in Progress*. Though many subsequent critics of the *Wake* seized on Jolas's language, including Nicholson, the fact that Joyce was not among the twelve signatories should discourage the conflation of Jolas's goals and aims and those of Joyce himself.

Nonetheless, Leavis reacted as much, if not more, against Jolas's essay published in *An Exagmination* (1929), "The Revolution of Language and James Joyce" than against the actual *Work in Progress*. In Jolas's essay he declares: "When the beginnings of this new age are seen in perspective, it will be found that the disintegration of words, and their subsequent reconstruction on other planes, constitute some of the most important acts of our epoch" (Jolas, "Revolution" 79). Complaining about the prevalence of banal, "worn-out verbal patterns" and coupling this with a belief that culture and language in the twentieth century were becoming increasingly universal, Jolas argues that the new parameters of modern life require new relationships between words (Jolas, "Revolution"

79). Though this process is best exemplified by Joyce, Jolas invokes a host of writers who also employ neologisms in their work: Léon-Paul Fargue, André Breton, Gertrude Stein, and August Stramm. Yet Joyce is said to have developed his system on his own and the statement that most irked Leavis is Jolas's comparison between Shakespeare and Joyce: "In developing his medium to the fullest, Mr. Joyce is after all doing only what Shakespeare has done in his later plays, such as *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*, where the playwright obviously embarked on new word sensations before reaching that haven of peacefulness mirrored in the final benediction speech from the latter play which closes the strife of tongues in *Ulysses*" (Jolas, "Revolution" 86-7). As noted above, Leavis finds Joyce's formal innovations a poor substitute for what Leavis posits as a more organic, agrarian past.

Yet while these two critics disagree so strongly about the value of Joyce, they largely limit themselves to a formalist consideration and both agree that the *Wake* is not for the common reader, an assumption challenged by writers on the BBC. To supplement discussions of the *Wake*'s form, these broadcasters stressed the musical nature of the novel and argued for the legitimacy of an affective response to the text.[108]

Even though none of Joyce's schemes to broadcast came to fruition, broadcasts on Joyce are almost as old as the medium itself, with Sylvia Beach giving a talk in Paris for the *Institut Radiophonique D'Extension Universitaire* on 24 May 1927. Joyce, in

[108] John Cage realized this idea in a radio play, *Roaratorio*; for more see Cage.

Switzerland on vacation, was not able to find a radio to listen-in to the broadcast.[109] The lecture is primarily concerned with the founding of the Shakespeare and Co. bookstore at the suggestion of Adrienne Monnier, its support from the French literary establishment including Valery Larbaud, André Gide, and Paul Valéry, and its cultivation of American writers. The centerpiece of the broadcast, however, is a triumphant, rosy account of the publication and reception in France of *Ulysses*:

> In James Joyce's book life is expressed with perfect frankness, as for example, in Shakespeare's Hamlet. So the Editress of the Little Review, Miss Margaret Anderson, was brought up for trial, and condemned for publishing an immoral book…The importance of this work in our literature is so great, and its suppression in America was of such universal interest that as soon as a complete edition in Paris was announced, letters enquiring about it came pouring in from all over the world…and, as everyone knows, [it] was a tremendous success. (Beach 322-3)

Beach points to the importance of France not only in the publication of the novel but in its reception as well, with Larbaud's essay in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* identified as "the first article on *Ulysses*" (Beach 323). Beach's broadcast, seemingly the first on Joyce, maintained the tradition. Though the broadcast focuses on *Ulysses*, Beach ends her talk by advertising *transition*, and in so doing, the work around which it was edited and released, Joyce's *Work in Progress*: "A new point of contact between French and Americans is the review, "Transition," recently founded here by Mr. Eugene Jolas and Mr. Elliott Paul, both Americans" (Beach 323).[110] Beach's talk is generally upbeat,

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[109] Joyce wrote to Beach, "Wireless is almost unknown here, it seems, so I could not listen in" (Joyce 1987: 121).

[110] Jolas's nationality was more complicated than Beach lets on—born in New Jersey to a French father and German mother, he spent his childhood in Lorraine, his late-teens in New York, and his thirties in Paris. For more see Jolas. Fitting nicely with her theme on

concerned with the benefits of French and American cooperation but she also provides important context in that, though in its ninth edition, *Ulysses* was still banned in the US and England.

Stephen Spender's obituary for Joyce, published just ten days after his death in *The Listener* on 23 January 1941, represents a major departure for the BBC from the interwar years, when mentioning *Ulysses* was strictly banned. Discussion of Joyce was finally permitted by the BBC, but Spender takes pains to stress Joyce's propriety, noting: "as some critics have attempted to portray him as a pornographist, a story in connection with this is amusing. [Sylvia Beach] said to me: 'If ever you speak to Joyce, for goodness sake don't say anything improper to him. There's nothing he hates more than that. He blushes like a girl at an improper word" (Spender 125). This was necessary restorative work, but Spender is more concerned with Joyce's future readership. Though technically an obituary for Joyce, Spender's essay devotes more space to the discussion of *Finnegans Wake* than all of Joyce's other works combined. The obituary, like Beach's broadcast, casts Joyce in a heroic—though apolitical—light; Spender presents him as the last

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French-American cooperation, *transition* was also the journal that began serializing *Work in Progress* earlier that year, after Beach had approached Joyce on behalf of Jolas and Paul. Jolas remembers in his autobiography:

> One Sunday afternoon, at the end of 1926, Joyce invited Miss Beach, Mlle. Monnier, Paul, Maria and myself to his home in the Square Robiac, to listen to him read from the opening pages of his manuscript, which was subsequently to appear in the first issue of transition. He read in a well-modulated, musical voice, and often a smile went over his face when he reached a particularly witty passage. We were staggered by the revolutionary aspect of this fragment…We nevertheless had complete faith in the ultimate value of the work, and were proud to contribute in a modest way to its unfolding. (Jolas 1998: 89)

"representative of the European tradition of the artist who carries on with his creative work unaffected by the storm which breaks around him" (Spender 124). For Spender, the *Wake* is valuable for literature in that it moves beyond the limits of stream of consciousness, including its extreme subjectivity. In its place, the totalizing and universalizing gestures of the *Wake* create a new language that is "the beginning of a universal language" (Spender 124). Speculating that Joyce's works "may lie unread, except by scholars," Spender makes a forceful argument for their relevance to the common reader, "They undermine our picture of life by pointing out that our conception of individuals is only a tiny approximation of the truth…At the same time, his books enormously enhance the value of life by making us realize how every single individual is deeply connected with the past" (Spender 125). This argument is a noticeable and significant departure from Jolas and Leavis, who stressed Joyce's newness. Ending by quoting from ALP's closing monologue in the *Wake*, Spender stresses precisely this connection with the past.

Aimed at the common reader, radio lectures on Joyce were universally encouraging, with T. S. Eliot's October 1943 talk, "The Approach to James Joyce," acknowledging the difficulty of Joyce's work but urging readers to develop a tolerance for discomfort. Simply put, Eliot's "approach" is to read Joyce's works in the order in which they were published. On the one hand, Eliot's talk could be disheartening; he posits, "Even to give you some notion of the style of the writing would take more time than I dispose of today. To explain how to read it would have a dozen talks; and I don't think that I myself am yet qualified to give them" (Eliot, "Approach" 447). Eliot

discourages any approach but a systematic, chronological one and even that system leaves him feeling unprepared to explain how to read Joyce's last novel. Yet the struggle is ultimately worthwhile, with Eliot simultaneously signaling its greatness: "I will say only that I believe [*Finnegans Wake*] to be at least as good as *Ulysses*, and that is a great book indeed" (Eliot 447). Joyce, he added, is "one of the great writers, not of our own time only, but of all European literature" (Eliot 447). Ever alert to the benefits of intellectual struggle, Eliot argues that learning to persevere in a state of confusion is both necessary and rewarding.

Eliot's reluctance to "explain" the *Wake* is not false modesty. Eliot struggled to understand the work himself, though he published a section of *Work in Progress* in the *Criterion* in 1925 and managed to see it through book form at Faber. Eliot was the only member of the "Men of 1914" not to break with Joyce—Pound considered the *Wake* a waste of Joyce's talent and Lewis attacked Joyce at length in *Time and Western Man* (1927). Eliot's broadcast is one of his few public statements on Joyce and is a striking contrast with "*Ulysses*, Order, and Myth" (1923). Whereas the earlier essay proposed the "mythical method" as "a way of controlling, of giving a shape and a significance to the vast panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" the broadcast downplays the Homeric correspondences as one detail among many (Eliot, "*Ulysses*" 178, 77).

In place of the mythic method, Eliot proposes that Joyce's method was profoundly personal:

> His portrait of himself was at the same time a portrait of universal adolescence. This was his method. His was an intensely egocentric

> personality. He did not compose a novel through direct interest in, and sympathy with, other human beings, but by enlarging his own consciousness so as to include them. In his next book he did create a great character, Leopold Bloom, for whom Ulysses is a symbol. But he did this by introducing himself—the same Stephen Daedelus who is the hero of the *Portrait*—and he creates Bloom as a counterpart, an opposite to himself. (Eliot, "Approach" 447)

This shift in focus, from the mythic to the personal, partially explains Eliot's surprising investment in recounting Joyce's biography as a means to understand his work. Four years before his essay on *Ulysses* appeared, Eliot had declared "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality" (Eliot, "Tradition" 43). Yet—perhaps because of Eliot's friendship with Joyce or Joyce's recent death—the broadcast is nothing if not biographical criticism, starting with the first sentence, "James Joyce was born in Dublin in 1882" (Eliot, "Approach" 446). Eliot's discussion of *Portrait* is a blend of the biographical mode of criticism he had been using and partially a re-capitulation of Pound's take on the novel, which posited Joyce's style as "hard, clear-cut, with no waste of words" (qtd in Brooker 13). For Eliot, "It is the first realization of a highly original style of writing: saying many things that other writers would leave unspoken and omitting much detail that other writers would think it necessary to put in" (Eliot, "Approach" 446). Significant, too—especially for listeners in India—was Eliot's take on Joyce's Irishness. Although Eliot claims that Joyce's "standards were European," he hardly copies Pound's contempt for Ireland, arguing instead that Joyce's ability to assimilate English writers yet also stand detached from them as an Irishman, and

particularly one who "had the peculiar mental discipline of a Jesuit school," was a virtue (Eliot, "Approach" 447).

After reviewing Joyce's education in Ireland, his move to the Continent, and the many languages he could speak (and how he learned them), Eliot discusses the background to the *Wake*: "I emphasize his interest in languages as well as in literatures: for his passionate interest in words, and his wide acquaintance with the languages of Europe, give some clue to the understanding of his later work" (Eliot, "Approach" 446). Not only did Joyce use this knowledge of language but, turning next to Joyce's eye-sight, Eliot points out that Joyce had several operations and periods of almost complete blindness and that this biographical detail, too, helps to clarify Joyce's work:

> The partial blindness robbed him of his visual experience, and helps to account for the fact that in all his chief works he draws upon memories of his youth in Ireland. But a blind man can still hear. We can draw a certain parallel between Joyce and John Milton. Both lost their sight, and had to have people read to them; and both were musicians…The combination of great musical gifts with blindness seems to have resulted, in the later work of both men, in writing which makes its strongest appeal to the ear…Joyce's last book has to be read aloud, preferably in an Irish voice; and, as the one gramophone record which he made attests, no other voice could read it, not even another Irish voice, as well as Joyce could read it himself. This is a limitation which has made more slow the appreciation and enjoyment of his last book. (Eliot, "Approach" 446)

Eliot here proposes a reading at odds with his earlier celebration of the "mythic method." Instead of attuning oneself to intertextual cues, Eliot proposes reading aloud, 'doing the *Wake* in different voices,' listening to Joyce's recording, and appreciating the work's appeal to the ear. This sensual appreciation of the *Wake* is a far cry from the kinds of scholarly study Eliot proposes elsewhere. Eliot's approach goes a long way in making the *Wake* more accessible to the common reader and, coupled with Eliot's wide audience in

India and England (his talk was reprinted in *The Listener*), constitutes a striking example of the use of radio to spread and popularize modernism.

E. M. Forster too was encouraging, pointing to the musicality of Joyce's prose as a way in to his late work, and humble, admitting to frustration that only outside reading had cured. Forster admits to not having yet read *Finnegans Wake* and to disliking most Joyce criticism, whether it be abusive or "proceed[ing] from highly trained critics who are sympathetic to him and rather above the general public's head. I believe that there are a good number of readers who are in the same boat as myself—that's to say muddled and vexed by the uncomfortable fellow but certain that he's not a fake, and it's to them I'm now speaking" (Forster 286). Partially because Forster's broadcast followed only a few months after Eliot's, Forster's is a meta-metacommentary, framed as a review not of Joyce's work directly but of Harry Levin's *James Joyce* (1941). In addition to Forster's admiration for the accessibility of Levin's work, he encourages listeners to seek out Eliot's broadcast in the *Listener*; he tells his audience, "With Mr. Eliot's talk and this book of Mr. Harry Levin's, you'll have the necessary preparation" after noting that he had recently finished a second reading of *Ulysses* (Forster 287).

Strong's program was much longer and is proportionately more complex, broadcast 5 October 1946 and recorded a month earlier, on 2 September, it takes place two years after Eliot's and Forster's broadcasts. As far as I can tell, this is the first time Joyce's voice was broadcast, with Strong playing passages from a 1929 reading of "Anna Livia Plurabelle" made by C. K. Ogden at his Orthological Institute at Cambridge.[111] The

[111] For more on this recording, see: http://www.jamesjoyce.ie/detail.asp?ID=185

recording itself makes up over ten percent of the program. A thirty-minute installment of the "Book of Verse" series, "based in general on the poems being studied at Universities in India," Strong's broadcast takes advantage of his half hour to cover more ground than other reviewers, including three of Joyce's poems (XI from *Chamber Music* and "She Weeps Over Rahoon" and "Tilly" from *Pomes Pennyeach*) as well as two passages from *Portrait* (Strong 1). Unlike other commentators, Strong focuses on *Portrait* in addition to the *Wake* in order to create a narrative of increasing subjectivity in Joyce's oeuvre, with *Ulysses* forming a balance between the two and *Finnegans Wake* "go[ing] the whole hog," carrying "the exploration of the inner world, the unconscious mind, to its extreme" (Strong 10).

After the brief excerpt from Joyce reading, Strong shares his experience reading from the *Wake* to a group of schoolchildren, as a means of illustrating the text's affective dimension: "Not one of the children could possibly have understood it consciously, with his brain: but because they were nearer to the state of mind Joyce was addressing…they listened with breathless attention, and, at the end, asked me to read it again" (Strong 1). In Strong's anecdote, the children are better outfitted to enjoy the *Wake* because they can enjoy something emotionally rather than intellectually. But in order to explain how Joyce's writing got here, Strong discusses each of his major works in turn, explaining how "[Joyce] began as an objective writer, an extrovert, and ended up at the deepest extreme of introversion and subjectivity" (Strong 3). Though he includes three poems, Strong cautions that, though they are musical and beautiful, he shares the opinion of Eliot and Forster that Joyce's prose is like poetry and of more interest.

Noting Joyce's difficulty and range, Strong builds a tradition for Joyce that is partly familiar and partly new. Picking up on Ezra Pound's early essays on *Dubliners*, Strong suggests that the stories are modeled on Flaubert, grounding his claim by citing the technique employed by Flaubert in "Hérodias" and Joyce in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room," of relaxing "the tension in a final paragraph of one sentence only" (Strong 5). Joyce's naturalism is attested to by a reading of the famous Christmas dinner scene in *Portrait* in which Stephen's father and Mr. Casey argue with Dante over the church's stand against Parnell. Showing the range of the novel, however, Strong next includes a passage from Stephen's walk along the shore and asks his listeners:

> As you hear this will you listen, please, for the influence of music, both in the subject matter and the writing: will you look out for the preoccupation with words which was to end in the manufactured words and groups of words in *Finnegans Wake*: will you listen for the longing to penetrate the depths of the unconscious mind, the depths within, to look deep, deep, into the self and to escape from time and hear the music and the language of another world. (Strong 8)

Strong points to "the psychology of Jung, on which his last book is based" as well as Vico, who showed Joyce that "civilization develops in a spiral" and that if one could "understand one cycle" one held "the clue to all cycles, all epochs, all periods" (Strong 11). All of these influences had been discussed by previous critics: Pound, Jolas, and Beckett. But in addition to showing Joyce's European influences, Strong makes a move to domesticate Joyce, to make a case for Joyce's Englishness. "The even greater help," claims Strong, was "the Romantic Movement in English literature" (Strong 11). In that it "releases the less conscious parts of the mind," the Romantic Movement allowed Joyce to use one particular city, and even one particular river, in the course of a single night to

convey "all periods of the world's history" (Strong 11). For Strong, *Finnegans Wake* is equal parts William Blake and Giambattista Vico—a continuation of an English tradition rather than a complete break from it.

A unique and valuable service provided by Strong is his modeling of interpretive practice—before he plays the recording of Joyce reading from "Anna Livia Plurabelle," he gives two close-readings of passages in the section to show his listeners that "this is not nonsense" (Strong 12). Strong's gloss of "Is that the Poolbeg flasher beyant, pharphar, or a fireboat coasting nyar the Kishtna or a glow I behold within a hedge or my Garry come back from the Indes" points to memories of watching Dublin harbor and seeing two different lightships, Poolbeg and Kish (*FW* 215.1-3). "Phar" suggests pharos, Greek for lighthouse, "Kish," Krishna, and "Indes," India, "the fireboat carries the dead body down the river to be burnt: and 'Indes' at the end clinches an association which is arranged out of sequence, and out of time, because it works backwards and forwards at once" (Strong 12). Pointing to a later passage, "Teems of times and happy returns. The seim anew. Ordovico or viricordo. Anna was, Livia is, Plurabelle's to be" (*FW* 215.22-4) Strong finds a reference to Vico and states that the Viconian cycle applies to the Liffey, which is here "extended in time" (Strong 12). Strong's broadcast is—by including interpretations or glosses of particular passages—far and away the most detailed broadcast on the *Wake* as well as the most convincing. The fact that it highlighted the Indian influence on the *Wake* to Indian listeners also globalized the novel to an unprecedented degree and anticipated, by many years, postcolonial readings of the novel.

The Irish poet and novelist James Stephens broadcast three times on the life and work of Joyce and though Eliot and Beach drew on their experiences interacting with Joyce, Stephens had a unique and privileged relationship with Joyce, particularly during the composition of the *Wake*.[112] Growing tired of the arduous composition process and sensing that he had created a machine that could largely progress on its own, Joyce considered having Stephens finish the work for him. In a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver in April of 1927, Joyce proposes the replacement and expresses his doubts about the practicality of his writing process "[Stephens] would never take a fraction of the time or pains I take but so much the better for him and me and possibly for the book itself. If he consented to maintain three or four points which I consider essential and I showed him the threads he could finish the design" (*LI* 253-4). As Stephen's first broadcast on Joyce, "The James Joyce *I* Knew" on 8 October 1946, indicates, this faith in Stephens came as a surprise. Their first meeting in London ended when "[Joyce] turned his chin and his specs at me, and away down at me, and confided the secret to me that he had read my two books; that, grammatically, I did not know the difference between a semi-colon and a colon; that my knowledge of Irish life was non-Catholic and, so, non-existent, and that I should give up writing and take to a good job like shoe-shining as a more promising profession" (Stephens, "James Joyce" 149). When Joyce got in touch with Stephens later in Paris, Stephens was surprised but flattered; having discovered that they shared the

[112] Stephens broadcast regularly for the BBC from 1937-50 on his own work as well as that of fellow Irish writers including A. E., W. B. Yeats, Thomas Moore, and J. M. Synge.

same birthday, Joyce decided to strike up a friendship, about which Stephens was always skeptical.[113]

The two writers met frequently in Paris, and Joyce's idea of having Stephens complete the *Wake* became a formal request by 1929.[114] In November of 1929, Joyce wrote to Weaver: "James Stephens was over here for a week. I saw him nearly every day and explained to him all about the book, at least a great deal, and he promised me that if I found it was madness to continue, in my condition, and saw no other way out, that he would devote himself heart and soul to the completion of it, that is the second part and the epilogue or forth. I was very glad to speak with him and we will leave it at that for the moment" (*LI* 288). Exactly what Joyce told Stephens remains a mystery and nowhere in his broadcast about Joyce does Stephens hint at his potential role in completing *Finnegans Wake*, let alone the "four points" that Joyce considered essential, but Stephens's broadcasts are informed by these experiences even if he refused to reveal Joyce's secrets.

Instead, Stephens reads from the beginning of the passage he gushed over in his negotiations with Joyce over potentially finishing the *Wake*, the "Anna Livia Plurabelle" episode, preceding his reading with a note on Joyce's "pure prose" (Stephens, "James

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[113] Joyce shares his discovery in a letter to Weaver, "The combination of his name from that of mine and my hero in A.P.O.T.A.A.Y.M. is strange enough. I discovered yesterday, through enquiries made in Paris, that he was born in Dublin on the 2 February 1882" (LI)

[114] Although the two hadn't yet decided on the details, Joyce is happy to report to Weaver, "[Stephens] seemed to be much impressed and moved by my proposal to hand over the work to him if I found my sight or the opposition demanded it and said I could rely on him to help me in anything. But he says I will do it and added that A. L. P. is the 'greatest prose ever written by a man'" (*LI* 282).

Joyce" 154). Stephens claims "In a sense the thing which we term pure would have little intellectual or emotional value: it should have gone beyond the relative exchange we call value…In *Finnegans Wake* Joyce was trying to write pure prose. When we have said all that we can say about this book we will make two statements only: we shall say, "It is unreadable," and we shall add, "It is wonderful" (Stephens, "James Joyce" 154).

But while references to the *Wake* in "The James Joyce I Knew" are vague, Stephens significantly expanded his take on the work in a 1947 broadcast, "*Finnegans Wake*."[115] Remaining true to the *Wake*'s investment in opposites, Stephens neatly balances conflicting statements. First, Stephens claims, "I would call *Finnegans Wake* Joyce's autobiography; factual, imaginative, spiritual" but he just as quickly dispenses with the author, "Sometimes I think that when you are discussing a book you had better get rid of the author" (Stephens, "*Finnegans*" 1). Joyce's love for Dublin "was both innocent and wicked" and Joyce, "Where he liked he disliked a lot: where he disliked he liked also. He rather dislikingly liked every thing that happened" (Stephens, "*Finnegans*" 1-2). Following from this sense of opposites and contrariness is a deep skepticism, "Thank heaven, I am not whatever it is, and I don't have to whatever it may be, and if

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[115] A quick note on my choice of copy-text is in order—whenever possible I have, for the reader's convenience, cited published versions of scripts rather than the copies at the BBC WAC. The beginning of this broadcast is reproduced in *James, Seumas, & Jacques* but I quote from the BBC script wherever possible. Although the BBC script is damaged (particularly the bottom of the second page) and incomplete, it gives a better sense of how Stephens incorporated quotes from the novel; not only the quotes themselves, but Stephen's comments on them were removed by the editor in *James, Seumas, & Jacques*. Similarly, it appears that comments on Joyce in the *Ulysses* broadcast were "almost identical [to those made in "The James Joyce I Knew"] and therefore omitted" (xxiii). Nonetheless, from the descriptions in the editor's introduction, it seems that the typescripts of broadcasts in Stephens's hands are more complete than those archived at the BBC.

you listen with only one ear you may be glad you didn't listen with the other—But perhaps my reading is all wrong anyhow" (Stephens, "*Finnegans*" 3).

But for all the doubt surrounding this work, there is a central distinction to be made:

> Every other book is written in prose. This book is written in speech. Speech and prose are not the same thing. They have different wavelengths, for speech moves at the speed of light, where prose moves at the speed of the alphabet, and must be consecutive and grammatical and word perfect…Now it is soliloquy, now it is dialogue, it becomes at times oration and tittle-tattle and scandal, but it is always a speech, and, however it be punned upon by all the European and a few of the Asiatic tongues, it is fundamentally the speech that used to be Dublin-English…and even when it is serious it isn't as serious as all that, for it easily makes up in abundance and exuberance for all that it lacks in meaning. The meaning isn't lacking, but it isn't meaning as the crow flies: 'tis rather, meaning as the bee bumbles, honey here and honey there and heather-honey on the mountain. (Stephens, "*Finnegans*" 1-2)

Though wrapped in a folksy delivery, Stephens here presents new and exciting insights into the *Wake* that the other commentators missed. Rather than the *Wake* serving as a prompt to affect, or pure music, Stephens argues that, as speech, the *Wake* must be read differently—not linearly, but rather as accumulating meaning slowly, through clusters of themes and ideas, which Stephens's image of the bee captures so well. Here the *Wake* is still for the common reader to tackle but not in the purely aesthetic manner proposed by other critics. Instead, the *Wake* is composed of different kinds of speech, and Stephens is wise to point out that looking at the *Wake* as Dublin-English is a promising approach. Only by recalling the importance of the Dublin-English transmitted to Joyce's apartment in Paris, where it mingled with the King's English of the BBC and was incorporated into

Joyce's last work, can we adequately appreciate the dynamic interaction between broadcasting and modernism.

"Attached to it Daily and Nightly Like an Umbilical Cord"

Joyce's struggles with his eyes partly explain some of the appeal of wireless, but radio played a much larger role in his life than simply serving as a pleasant distraction—it was his main means of keeping in touch with Ireland. Sean Lester, who met Joyce briefly in 1940, quotes the author's answer to the question of why he doesn't return to Ireland as "I am attached to it daily and nightly like an umbilical cord" (Lester 225). The pronoun's antecedent slips uneasily between Ireland and radio; at this point in Joyce's life, the two had become almost interchangeable as becomes increasingly clear as Lester's diary entry continues:

> the family, who had gathered by this time, joined in protest, as it was true he kept Radio Eireann going on the wireless all the time…Joyce then began to discuss with [Giorgio] all sorts of details of the daily program; the son was outraged by the quality of opera broadcast…We laughed together over the last 'question-time', when the three girl typists gave some screamingly funny replies…Then Joyce remarked that one of the competitors, the one who got top-marks on the previous Sunday, when asked who had won such and such a literary prize two years ago, had replied, 'I am not sure, but I think it was Joyce;' there were short controversies with the competitor, but he was adjudicated correct. Joyce said that when the Dublin labourer gave this reply, which was correct, he stood up and bowed to the receiver. (Lester 225)

Joyce's biggest link with his birthplace was through his radio, which allowed him to hear the Dublin accent, Irish music (Joyce's former teacher, Vincent O'Brien, was Musical Director of the Irish station), as well as news, weather, and 2RN's most popular program,

Question Time.[116] Drawing on a combination of memories and research, Joyce wrote *Ulysses* with unprecedentedly thorough local and historical detail and he supplemented these sources when writing *Finnegans Wake* with material he heard on the new medium of radio. Further demonstrating his attachment to the device, in even this short snippet of conversation, Joyce twice anthropomorphizes the radio, by bowing to it and by referring to it as an umbilical cord.

2RN, controlled by the Post-Master General with oversight by the Dáil, was considered a crucial part of state building. Michael Heffernan, the Parlimentary Secretary, told the Dáil in 1928 that: "special prominence is, of course, given in programmes to the Irish language, Irish history, music and all subjects of importance to the development of the national characteristics of our people" (qtd. in Watson 17). Thus 2RN complemented the relatively small percentage of Irish-language broadcasts (only 4.2% in 1935) by regularly broadcasting Catholic mass, Gaelic games, and programming aimed at the rural agricultural population (Watson 21). Most likely what appealed to Joyce, however, was the predominance of music, which composed 80% of the programming in the 1920s and 67% in the 1930s (Watson 25). This was not considered by all to be a good thing, however, with one editorial from the *Evening Herald* summarizing the complaints of many: "So far the fare has been poor. There has been more than enough instrumental and vocal items with never a humorous talk, a lecture, or an expert dissertation, or a business chat" (qtd. in Pine 157). Séamus Clandillon, the Station Director, had such difficulty paying performers that he pulled in whoever he

[116] For more on Joyce's singing teacher, Dr. Vincent O'Brien, see Pine 138.

could find in the GPO to sing a song; his wife was featured so regularly that she earned the nickname "Maighréad Ní On Again" (Gorham 25; Pine 157). The memoirs of 2RN employees all give the sense that, at least during the interwar years, Radio Éireann was predominantly a source of Irish vocal and instrumental music, making the service a close match to HCE's inquisitors, the Four, who weave countless songs into their reminiscences on Irish history.

In addition to the radio playing an important part in Joyce's private life, occupying—at least according to this anecdote—much of his day and night, the radio was also a major player in his public life. That the name "Joyce" became the correct answer to a question on a popular program shows how successful and well known he had become; that the answer was first controversial then adjudicated correct was also representative of Joyce's experiences with radio as part of his public persona. At least at first, Joyce's treatment on radio mirrored that of the publication of *Ulysses*, essentially banned outside of Paris. Sylvia Beach was able to broadcast on *Ulysses* and *Work in Progress* on Paris radio in May of 1927, but any mention of *Ulysses* was explicitly banned on the BBC. Harold Nicholson, concluding a series of talks on modern literature on the BBC had his broadcast dedicated to *Ulysses* in November 1931 cancelled at the last minute. Only after a public outcry and letter in the *Times* signed by forty well-known authors and publishers did the BBC relent, and only partially. Nicholson's broadcast was rescheduled for December but he was forbidden from referring to *Ulysses* by name.[117] A few years later,

[117] For more on the Nicholson affair see Hutchins 175-8 and McCleery & Finkelstein. For later BBC broadcasts related to *Ulysses*, see Newton.

in July of 1937, Frank O'Connor was scheduled to give a talk on Joyce over Radio Eireann; it too was mysteriously cancelled at the last minute (Cohn & Peterson).

These developments hurt Joyce, who was desperate not only for publicity but more precisely for a greater circulation and air of respectability. Alistair McCleery points out that Joyce's "unstinting efforts towards 'respectable' publication by a recognized publisher in London" were motivated in part by the desire to overcome the negative associations of a private printing in Paris, "the source of much of Europe's pornography" (McCleery 59). The Nicholson affair became one of many obstacles to T. S. Eliot's attempts to publish *Ulysses* with Faber; in a "memorandum of relevant facts" drawn up on the circulation of *Ulysses* in England—after a meeting between Eliot, Morley, Joyce, and Leon—the fourth item was: "The BBC censor refused to allow Mr Harold Nicholson's lecture discussing ULYSSES over the Radio. Only after three weeks of continual tergiversation and under the threat of Mr Nicholson's resignation did he finally give way with the condition that the title of Ulysses would not be mentioned" (*LIII* 291-2).

Nicholson, who had met Joyce on a trip to Paris in 1922, wrote to Joyce and Beach about his difficulties with the BBC administrators, furthering Joyce's sense of persecution from the top. Joyce had strong support from Nicholson and Linda Matheson, the Director of Talks, but the poet Alfred Noyes held a private luncheon in order to convince John Reith that the talk should be censored. Provided Noyes agreed to back the BBC publicly, Reith (always averse to controversy) agreed to cancel the talk himself. Noyes attempted to start a polemic in the *Times* but the plan backfired in that the protest

of authors and publishers—in addition to Matheson's resignation—got much more press and created a new controversy that Reith sought to quiet by allowing Nicholson's modified talk. This plot, on top of Joyce's earlier negative experience recording a passage from *Ulysses* at a BBC recording studio—he complained after the fact that the engineers had no idea who he was and that the recording stopped halfway through his passage—was more than enough to frustrate Joyce's attempts at literary respectability.

Despite these difficulties, Joyce remained interested in promoting his work over the radio. Only three years after the Nicholson affair, Joyce coached actress Rachel Behrendt in reading sections of his *Work in Progress* for a 1934 party in his honor by a society figure, the Honorable Mrs. Reginald Fellowes. Joyce's biographer, Richard Ellmann, records that Joyce attempted to get a larger hearing for the performance: "he sought to have Rachel Behrendt's reading recorded by the British Broadcasting Corporation, and Maria Jolas talked at his request to Harley Granville-Barker about it. But the BBC was not interested" (Ellmann 669).[118]

Rebuffed again, Joyce had not entirely given up on the BBC; buoyed by another French broadcast and the book publication of *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce finally secured interest from the BBC in 1939. Joyce had a hand in Alfred Péron's broadcast on the *Wake* over Paris radio; he boasted to Louis Gillet, "Next Thursday, at eleven a.m., M. Alfred

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[118] These actions of self-promotion through mass media were not unique to Joyce. Lawrence Rainey, identifying various "institutions of modernism," has helpfully revealed some of the myriad ways in which modernists including Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot were involved in self-promotion and controlling their public image. Given the number of writers employed by the B.B.C., its sizeable audience, and its ability to absorb, promote, and repurpose modernism, the B.B.C. can be said to constitute one of the "institutions of modernism."

Péron will speak about *Finnegans Wake* on Radio Paris P.T.T. This will be the first voice to break the silence in these parts" (Gillet 21). Anxious to build on this momentum, Joyce (through Paul Léon) and his London literary agent and solicitors wrote the BBC and finally managed, in July of 1939, to get an interested reply from the BBC, who wanted to broadcast Joyce reading from the *Wake* on the Northern Ireland service.[119] It seemed—at least for a few days—that Joyce's promotional efforts would finally pay off. Unfortunately Joyce had to cancel his projected trip to London, where he would record his reading, because of his daughter Lucia's worsening condition and the increasing probability of war. The BBC proposed possible replacements; Harold Nicholson and Samuel Beckett were both considered because of their familiarity with the text. Joyce and Léon wrote to Monroe Saw and Co. that "Samuel Beckett would be willing to do the broadcast for the BBC" but by this point interest in the project had fizzled in London and nothing came of the dialogue (qtd. in Beckett, *Letters* 661). This was as close as Joyce would come to broadcasting during his lifetime.

In addition to promoting his own work and reputation, though, Joyce was also anxious for radio publicity for Giorgio.[120] Joyce was often consumed with worry about

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[119] For more on this potential broadcast and Beckett's involvement, see Schreibman. W. B. Yeats gave broadcasts on BBC Belfast twice in 1931 and once in 1934; see Yeats 219-29 & 249-53.

[120] When Pound wrote Joyce in the fall of 1937 asking for copies of Purcell's sonatas, Joyce inquired, "Is any of this music vocal and for a low voice? If so perhaps Giorgio could sing it over the radio. He will broadcast from Poste Parisien on Tuesday next at 7.45 but of course he had to sing what they chose…" (LI 397). Joyce's note simultaneously plugs Giorgio's upcoming broadcast and attempts to spread some of Pound's promotional generosity to his son.

both of his children and he used radio to both follow and cultivate Giorgio's singing career.[121] Given Joyce's concerns, it is not surprising that he tuned into his son's broadcasts and was awed by the virtual sense of presence. Writing about Giorgio's second trip to the US, Joyce wrote Lord Carlow: "He sang a few times over Columbia Station during his short stay and, in fact, I had a new wireless set rigged up for the occasion with the aid of an antenna on the balcony made out of one of my many walking sticks—not the ambassadorial Irish blackthorn—and we heard him singing across the ocean as clearly as if he had been in the next room…" (*LIII* 422-23).[122] Joyce's experience of the uncanny, disembodied radio voice recalls that of early commentators on wireless, for whom the experience was not unlike a séance; this is a striking example of how radio created a sense of intimacy even over great distances. Joyce's later comparison of the radio to an umbilical cord becomes less extreme in this context, as the experience

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[121] More than many of his other correspondents, Joyce confided in Harriet Shaw Weaver concerning his children and in a particularly personal letter, Joyce ties together his concerns about his influence with those of the radio: "On many sides I hear that I am and have been an evil influence on my children. But what are they doing away from that evil influence?" (LI 367) In the same letter Joyce betrays his concern that Giorgio is misunderstood, forced to play the stage Irishman, and that he might abandon his father and settle in America:

> He went over to America, we were told, for four months. He has been there now a year. He is at present on crutches. He sang twice over the radio to the natives who love poor old Ireland and insist that, if he is to please them, he must forget all about the umusical [sic] countries of Europe and croon to them about *Mother Machree* and *A Little Bit of Heaven*. (LI 367)

[122] Carlow's Corvinus Press issued *Storyella as She is Syung* in 1937.

of hearing Giorgio across the Atlantic created a significant affective response, connecting parent and child.

Despite his own frustrations with the BBC, Joyce was anxious to secure Carlow's help in setting up an audition for Giorgio, giving Carlow a *New York Herald* review of one of Giorgio's broadcasts to pass on to the BBC.[123] Joyce's paternal pride suffered considerably when Giorgio was "failed by the invisible Jury of the BBC," an experience quite familiar to Joyce (*LIII* 450). Writing George Rogers, Joyce fumes:

> That high court issued its verdict, to wit, that his voice was well below the required standard and that no one saw reason to include his name on their list for some future date. Since Giorgio is so reticent I turn to you. What the deuce did happen at that audition? Did you feel something in the atmosphere, a row, some hostility, haste, unpreparedness, etc. Or stage fright completely destroyed his voice and he really sang in a way to deserve the offensive sentence. "Below the level of Great Britain in the art of singing!" In the name of St. Cecilia's heavenly ugola, even if my own lion's roar is half spent, I never expected this donkey's kick! (*LIII* 450-1).

Rogers was unable to comfort Joyce, reporting that Giorgio "sang very well and was grossly undervalued" (*LIII* 450 n.2.). Part of Joyce's exasperation stemmed from the fear that his own reputation had hurt his son's prospects, confirming his earlier worry that despite his feelings for his children, he might make things more difficult for them. By referring to the BBC sardonically as a "high court" and appealing to national pride, an unusual move for Joyce, he echoes the Four and invokes a history of English persecution of the Irish.

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[123] Also in Giorgio's absence, Joyce sent another copy of the *Herald* review to Radio Luxemburg, and was pleased to announce that his son "made an excellent impression" and secured a regular appearance on the station (*LIII* 410-11).

These incidents reveal an author who was fascinated with and used the technology for keeping in touch with his home and—he hoped—with his readers. One way to parse radio and nationalism is put forward by Benedict Anderson, that radio speeds up a process performed by books and a vernacular national language. What Joyce and radio from the time show, however, is that radio disregarded terrestrial borders even as it cemented cultural ones. As such, radio became a crucial means of working through and performing the role of an ambivalent exile. Joyce can safely soak up these forms of Irish culture and music when he wants (which was quite frequently) without the perceived danger / discomfort of actually living within the physical borders of Ireland. At the same time, he was well aware that broadcasting had drastically altered the relationship between authors, publishers, and readers. Joyce's promotional efforts reveal an interest on his behalf in the common reader that was not often duplicated by his supporters during his lifetime. Given how much radio was on Joyce's mind, it is no surprise that it enters his writing. But we need to pay close attention to the ways in which he references and uses radio in his work, as this changes with the development of radio in the interwar years.

WiP in the *transatlantic review*

In Joyce's notebooks, and in the *transatlantic review*, radio emerges as an analog to the style of *Work in Progress*. Joyce began the composition of the *Wake* the same year that the BBC began regular broadcasting, and radio figures in significant ways in the first serialized publication of an episode from the *Wake* in Ford Maddox Ford's *transatlantic review* in 1924. This episode, nicknamed "Mamalujo" after the four gospels, implies that

the Four—an amalgamation of the four gospelers, the Four Masters (Irish Chroniclers), the four shores of Ireland and four senile, lecherous men—both broadcast with and listen to wireless as a means of disseminating their views on Irish history and spying on the affair of Tristan and Iseult. This use of radio gives the installment a contemporary setting but more significantly suggests that the *Work in Progress* was as much a listener's as a reader's text. Print as an information technology accustoms readers to seek a "continuous narrative," but the radiophonics of *Work in Progress* call for the ability to accommodate a set of serial narratives interrupted and then continued later (in other words approaching the narrative of *Work in Progress* as similar to a number of interrupted broadcasts). Even a small shift in reader expectations can go a long way in making the text clearer. In other words, at this point, the radio was a means for Joyce to think through and frame the syntactical complexity of his story. In addition to the historical coincidence (that Joyce begins *Work in Progress* the same year that the BBC starts regular broadcasting) and the formal similarities between *Work in Progress* and early radio reception, however, Joyce's notebooks help to contextualize his interest in and use of radio.

Scholars now know that Joyce started collecting material for his next work very soon after the publication of *Ulysses* in 1922. Out of lists of notes came early sketches based on figures from Irish history, "Roderick O'Conor," "St. Kevin," "Tristan and Iseult," and "Mamalujo" (Crispi 5).[124] In terms of genetic history, the "Tristan and Iseult" and "Mamalujo" episodes were originally written together, but Joyce subsequently

[124] For more on the genetic history of the *Wake*, see Crispi and Slote. The Introduction gives a helpful overview and further details are provided in each chapter.

separated the two, completing the last sketch in October 1923 and then revising it for publication in the *transatlantic review* in April 1924. Joyce liked Ford's temporary title "Work in Progress," also used for contributions by Ernest Hemingway and Tristan Tzara, so much that Joyce maintained the title throughout serial publication, even when future installments appeared in other periodicals including *Contact*, *Criterion*, *Two Worlds*, *Le Navire d'Argent, This Quarter,* and—from 1927 to 1938—in *transition*.

The segment published in the *transatlantic review* is foundational in many ways—though it appeared fifteen years before *Finnegans Wake*—featuring portmanteau-laden prose as well as important structural principles and thematic concerns that Joyce would maintain through book publication. The text also includes misleading structural elements. Broken into four major parts, one for each Gospel, "Johnny" (*WiP* 216), "Marcus" (*WiP* 217), "Lucas" (*WiP* 219), and "Matt" (*WiP* 220), the episode frustrates readers expecting each section to revolve around (or perhaps be narrated by) one of the Four and in neat succession.[125]

Even a cursory glance at *Work in Progress* at this stage, not to mention the sketches and drafts that predated it, frustrate the dreams of what Jean-Michel Rabaté calls "the reductive reader who imagines that a first-draft version of *Finnegans Wake* would be written in 'normal' English and would provide a 'basic text' from which the reader might produce a continuous narrative or a 'skeleton key'" (Rabaté 395). Instead—though the language would become more demented and riddled with multilingual portmanteaux in

[125] The Four are difficult to distinguish from one another, with David Hayman concluding that "Joyce has made them into paradigmatic elders and comic types rather than individuals," and each section features each of them about equally, disproving any focus (104).

subsequent installations—the garbled syntax of "Mamalujo" makes attempts to construct a "continuous narrative" difficult at best.

The first print appearance of *Work in Progress* utilizes frequent interruptions that suggest channel switching. A narrator introduces the segment as well as each subsection, referring periodically to the Four in the third person. This narrative is often interrupted by voices in the first person, but though this device is introduced the first time by a colon, "they used to be saying grace together right enough : here now we are the four of us," the signal is an anomaly (*WiP* 215). The remainder of the episode switches person mid-sentence as in, "But now that reminds me of the poor Marcus of Lyons and poor Johnny the patrician, and what do you think of the four of us and there they were now listening right enough, the four saltwater widowers" which switches between a first-person who speaks of the Four in the third person and a first person plural representing the Four directly (*WiP* 217). The already unstable narrative is then subject to further interruptions presented in parentheses—and often employing the language of phone calls—as in, "gallowglasses to find out all the improper colleges (and how do you do, Mr. Dame James? Get out of my way!) and all the horsepowers" (*WiP* 217).

In addition to echoing the phenomenology of radio reception in the 1920s, this segment of *Work in Progress* is also radiophonic in its tendency to appropriate previous texts and pre-existing genres. As Bertolt Brecht points out "from the beginning the radio imitated practically every existing institution that had anything at all to do with the distribution of speech or song" (Brecht 41). In other words, a night of broadcasting included drama, popular and classical music, news and weather forecasts, talks on

history, literature, economics, physics, international relations, and so on. Instead of dividing the episode into discrete subsections, the Four point to a number of other texts, and by doing so, demonstrate how the *Wake* proceeds in part by clustering references rather than through traditional narration. Many of the *Wake*'s sentences, too, pull from and suggest many different kinds of speech.

The episode narrates (and re-narrates) the attempts of the Four to make sense of Irish history from the perspective of old age and is comprised of a mash-up of a re-telling of Tristan and Iseult as a kind of Irish genesis story and references to *Ulysses*, the Bible, the Irish Chronicles, Yeats's infatuation with Maud Gonne, and Dion Boucicault's play "Arrah-na-Poghue" among many others.[126] Joyce's episode borrows from the narrative of Joseph Bédier's *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult*, in which King Mark is turned against

[126] In addition to the four gospellers, the excerpt in the *transatlantic review* refers to *The Annals of the Four Masters*, a chronicle of Irish history compiled in the seventeenth century. Of particular importance in "Mamalujo" is the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169 (often distorted to one of the *Wake*'s magic numbers, 1132). The division into four parts signals one of the structuring texts in the *Wake*, Giambattista Vico's *New Science*. The Wake borrows a circular structure and division into four parts from Vico's text, including a shorter summation of what came before—the *ricorso*—as the last section. At the very end of the excerpt in the *transatlantic review* there is a hint of the *Wakean* language to come, rich in polylingual punning and portmanteaux: "and another more for old luke syne and she haihaihail her kobbor kohinor sehehet on the praze savohohole shanghai" (*WiP* 223). In keeping with the old men's nostalgia, lines from "Auld Land Syne" are subjected to different levels of distortion as they reappear in different sections; in this incarnation Luke and the song title are fused. Figuring prominently as well is Dion Boucicault's play "Arrah-na-Poghue," or Arrah of the Kiss, which narrates a prison-break following the passage of a note—in a kiss—from Arrah to her imprisoned foster-brother. This kiss and that between Tristan and Iseult are variously combined in the memories of the Four. For more on other *Wakean* intertexts see Atherton.

the lovers through the jealousy of "four felons at court" (Bédier 57).[127] In *Work in Progress*, the four felons and King Mark are combined but when The Four are depicted spying on the wooing of Tristan and Iseult, their surveillance takes place at least partially through radio, rather than from a tree as in Bédier's version (Bédier 63).

While radio figures in the published version of *Work in Progress* and the style corresponds with broadcasts, Joyce's notebooks help contextualize the extent to which radio inspired the sketch. Joyce's composition process has been described as accretive, with Joyce adding sometimes substantial segments to each successive draft of an episode. The beginning of the process was Joyce's practice of keeping notebooks that featured a mixture of notes from his reading, personal life, and what David Hayman helpfully identifies as "notes on narrative" (Hayman xiv). Joyce culled phrases and ideas from these notebooks as he wrote and revised drafts, typescripts, and proofs.[128] In the early notebook VI.B.10, which has been dated August-October 1923 by Roland McHugh, Joyce made a series of notes related to *Ulysses* and the *Odyssey* before compiling notes that would be used for "Roderick O'Connor," "Tristan and Isolde," and "HCE."[129] Other

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[127] The first official broadcast from 2RN, on January 1, 1926, concluded with the Prelude and Liebestod from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*; for more see Pine 149.

[128] These notes were central to the project throughout the sixteen years of composition; in the thirties Joyce had his amanuensis copy the unused portions from his many notebooks to a new one so that he would have a single, convenient source for this material as he wrote and revised.

[129] For more, see Hayman's introduction (JJA 31: xi-xviii). Of the "Tristan and Isolde" notes in this particular notebook, some were phrases that were incorporated and remained through book publication, like "love seat (1.5)" which appears in II.4 as a "fifteen inch loveseat" (*FW* 384.22). Other phrases such as "2 reel film / film goer / screenstruck"

notes were more organizational in nature, including a series pertaining to radio. After "inquisitions/objective fable…" Joyce created a list labeled "stories:"

> Monologue
> 1 - - 2
> 2 n n 1
> 2 - - 2
> polylogue (broadcasters) (VI.B.10—37; JJA 31: 97)

The "stories" Joyce is attempting to organize are those told by the Four, and this list presents a series of options running the gamut from monologue to polylogue, with various permutations in between.[130] From this note, we can begin to see how radio emerges as an important medium for thinking about the *Wake*'s structure. Radio provided a basis for Joyce's experiments with a style of interleaved narratives, interruptions, and general lack of clarity in determining who was saying what in the book.

Although the phrases from the notebook referring to radio were not directly incorporated into the text—neither "polylogue" nor "broadcasters" appear in this instantiation of *Work in Progress*—the importance of this pre-planning is nonetheless obvious even at this stage, not to mention subsequent drafts, when both terms are incorporated in the *Wake*.[131] For one, the note is expanded on in the version published in the *transatlantic review*, "But sure that reminds me now, like another tellmastory

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(VI.B.10.107; JJA 31: 132) remained unincorporated in the main text despite Tristan's appearance as a film and rugby star.

[130] The options presented in the note include a monologue becoming a dialogue, a dialogue becoming a monologue, two dialogues separated by two interruptions, and so on.

[131] For example, polylogue returns in morphed form in *Finnegans Wake*: "Pollylogue" (*FW* 470.09).

repeating yourself, how they used to be at the end of it all at that time (up) always, tired and all, over their singing (up) the top of the voice of Mamalujo sitting round two by two, the four confederates…" (*WiP* 222). This incarnation of the Four, like the note from the notebook, plays with monologue ("*the* voice of Mamalujo") becoming divided "two by two," and then further separated, "the four confederates." In fact, the episode as published continues this interest in the permutations of the Four, referring to "The whole twice two four of us" (*WiP* 218) and "(up one up two up one up four)" (*WiP* 221).

Not only was the *Work in Progress* conceived as a polylogue, but casting the Four as broadcasters inserts them into a circuit of listening and speaking that updates Bedier's *Tristan & Isolde* with a new technological medium. Giving the spying of the Four a technological cast, they are described as "listening in," the term for radio audition, twice on the first page alone. The phrase—later shortened to simply "listening," as we use it today—was derived from the fact that early amateur users eavesdropped on transmissions not directly addressed to them, a state of affairs that changed when the BBC and 2RN began regular broadcasting with an international audience in mind. Nonetheless, the term was used throughout the interwar years in all aspects of radio literature and—demonstrating how wide-spread the use of this term was at the time—in 1923 and again in 1925 the Abbey Theatre staged a one-act play by Sean O'Casey, *Cathleen Listens-In*, "a satire of contemporary politics employing the radio idiom as a metaphor for eavesdropping" (Pine 44). The ambiguity of radio broadcasting characters' speech and simultaneously spying, or "listening in" on them is established in the *transatlantic review* excerpt and is reinforced throughout the composition of the *Wake*. In II.3, which features

various pub tales in HCE's bar, for example, the radio in Earwicker's pub is described as a "daildialler," reporting on the work of the Irish parliament but also perhaps transmitting the conversations of the pub's customers (*FW* 309.14). This theme is then expanded in IV.1, a summary and recapitulation of the rest of the book, as Earwicker both broadcasts, "Eireweeker to the wohld bludyn world," and is slowly awakened as a radio plays in the background (*FW* 593.3). Much more dramatically, in III.3 the Four interrogate a sleeping Shaun, HCE's son, by sending and receiving radio transmissions from his prostrate body.

In line with the developments of early radio—with amateur operators coexisting, albeit increasingly uncomfortably, with the BBC—what we would consider telephone conversation mingles with the broadcasts. For example, references to telephone conversations are intertwoven with those to radio, "And again they used to give the grandest universal lectures (hello, Hibernia!)…(Matt speaking!)…(Lucas calling, hold the line!)…Johnny Mac Dougal speaking, give me trunks, miss!)" In addition to common telephonic phrases like "hold the line," the reference to trunks invokes "trunk line" or a direct telephonic connection (*WiP* 218). Yet at the same time, "hello, Hibernia," is much more clearly a broadcast, especially in that it is directed not to an individual, but a country. Roland McHugh glosses "hello, Hibernia!" as a reference to a "BBC radio broadcast to US, 1925: 'Hello, America!'" but as we see, this couldn't have been the case because the passage was published in 1924 and drafted even earlier (McHugh 388).[132] McHugh's confusion is instructive, however, in that the Four seem to be engaging in "psadatepholomy" or pseudotelephony, a confusing blend of technologies that remains a

[132] It may be a reference to a trans-Atlantic phone call.

constant in different versions of the *Work in Progress* (*WiP* 218).[133] Further, the Four are "the four master waves of Erin," representing the four provinces, but also playing again on radio waves.[134] On the one hand, this confusion fits with the workings of the dream state but it is also a reality of the early days of radio, when amateur and professional stations vied with one another for listeners-in and respectability.

The first print appearance of *Work in Progress* established a number of important characteristic features including the use of technology to help explain the confusing style.[135] Techniques used in the *transatlantic review* are magnified in one of the last chapters to be written, II.3, revealing that the Four remain associated with radio, that radio is associated with both broadcasting and listening/spying, and that radio remains a structuring principle used to connect disparate subsections, originally drafted as individual sketches.

Critics of the *Wake* have shown interest in the relationship between radio and technique (Theall & Hayman) or style (Lewty & Connor) or the dreamer (Bishop). These studies all serve a valuable purpose in modernist scholarship, of articulating the complex

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[133] Broadcasts began, of course, with an introduction similar to that of a phone call, with the BBC, for example, opening with "This is London Calling."

[134] In fact, when the Four are expanded in *Finnegans Wake*, they broadcast from the four different provinces, and (as was the case in Ireland at the time) there is rivalry between the three southern provinces (served by Radio Eireann) and Northern Ireland (served by the BBC).

[135] Like many early analyses of the novel, early readings of "Mamalujo" tracked literary references, while more recently, a number of critics have turned to "Mamalujo" to explore Joyce's parody of the gospels and national historiography. See, for example, David Spurr, "Writing in the Wake of Empire" and Christy Burns, "Parodic Irishness."

relationship between technology and writing.[136] Though seemingly unfamiliar with Joyce's listening habits and the importance of radio even in Joyce's earliest sketches, critics have long realized that radio was important in the *Wake*. As early as 1944, Campbell and Robinson wrote about II.3, "the radio is blaring and the customers are pushing each other about, swapping yarns" (196). These critics often base their interpretations around II.3, which is replete with specifically radio interruptions: a weather report (*FW* 324.24-34), static (*FW* 314.8-9), a news update (*FW* 324.35-325.2), an advertisement for a motion picture (*FW* 330.23-4), an "excerpt from John Whiston's fiveaxled production, *The Coach With The Six Insides*," (*FW* 359.23-4) an announcement for the continuation of "*Fearson's Nightly*," (*FW* 359.27) and "the dewfolded song of the

[136] Friedrich Kittler often over-states the importance of inscription technologies on literary creation, claiming of Rilke's poem "Primal Sound," for example, that the poem "leaves no doubt whatsoever about which contemporary developments were most important to literature in 1900. Instead of lapsing into the usual melancholic associations of Shakespeare's Hamlet or Keller's Green Henry at the sight of a human skull in candlelight, the writer sees phonographic grooves" (Kittler 43). Kittler even uses the *Wake*, through McLuhan, as a reflection of the competition between literature and film (Kittler 246). But unlike the phonograph and telephone, which have captured the imagination of media historians, where acts of inscription and reproduction could take place in private, the radio was emphatically public, always engaged with an audience that was large and uncountable. Readings of technology and the *Wake* have tended to take the book out of the world, or at least most of it. Instead, I show that the *Wake*'s engagement with radio reflects the geopolitical struggles of the interwar years as well as—in the novel's war and post-war reception—changing conceptions of modernism, when the *Wake* was decoupled from the forbidding heights of international modernism and instead rescued or recuperated for the common reader as the work of a lone, idiosyncratic Irishman, James Joyce.

naughtingels" (*FW* 359.32) among many other programs. It also includes a description of a radio in the diegetic realm, in this case HCE's pub.[137]

More recently, James Connor has suggested "the sudden jumps from image to image [in *Finnegans Wake*] are similar to the jumps on the old wireless from channel to channel" (Connor 23). Connor and Jane Lewty point out that poor reception in the 1930s meant that listeners would often hear multiple languages unintentionally, as receivers regularly picked up competing waves; "In those days...radio air was full of noises, wandering signals, high altitude skips, and super heterodyne screeches, and anyone who listened to it had to gradually attune themselves to a cacophony of voices all speaking at once" (Connor 18). This cacophony has a clear parallel in the overlapping stories of the pub's customers in II.3.

In words that could be applied to the style throughout *Finnegans Wake*, one listener writing in to an amateur magazine complained about "a cacophonous miscellany of bestial and obscene noises" emanating from their set (qtd. in Lewty). In other words,

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[137] The description of Earwicker's radio was added to II.3 in 1936 from notebook pages listing technical notes on the medium, likely culled from advertisements, for example:

Bypass condenser
Input voltage
For all earth
The 2nd being
Twintriode
Univalve
As modern
As tomorrow (BL 47479 f. 75; JJA 54:180)

These notes, as well as an adjoining group under the header "ear" were combined to form a paragraph (*FW* 309.11-310.21) that links radio terms with parts of the human ear, suggesting in part how technology functions as prosthesis.

reception was often a battle for each individual user; not only would those surfing the waves pick up a miscellany of languages and noises, but those hoping to listen to a particular station would as well. Butt and Taff combine voices at the end of their skit in II.3 to ascribe their experience with poor reception to, "[m]agpyre's babble towers scorching and screeching from the raveindove" (*FW* 354.27-8). The radio towers are "babble" towers in that it is difficult to make out what they are saying, but this also sounds the tower of Babel, the destruction of which spread a multitude of languages and confusion around the earth according to the story in the Old Testament. The confusing sounds emitted by these towers are scorching, which implies that they're both burning and quick, and screeching, producing a terribly unpleasant, loud sound. Both ravens and magpies are traditionally associated with bad luck and are known for their imitative abilities, whereas doves are associated with peace and are often employed in religious iconography as a symbol for the Holy Ghost. Furthering the association with death and scorching, magpie is combined with funeral pyre, the wooden structure used for cremation. Here the combination of raven and dove (or perhaps 'raven in dove' or 'raving dove') encapsulates in one portmanteau word the complications surrounding the use of radio. In other words, the medium carried with it the promise of peace and understanding between people, while it also had a magical aura from the world of superstition, a grating, disturbing sound, and finally, the ability to 'drown' out other voices. In place of a wolf in sheep's clothing, radio was a raven in dove's feathers and both "Mamalujo" in the *transatlantic review* and II.3 in the *Wake* make this point.

The *Wake*, however, has a tendency to spread themes and plots across the entire work, and a more extensive consideration of radio as employed throughout the *Wake* suggests different meanings at different times. By focusing on "Mamalujo" rather than II.3, I show that radio was important to Joyce throughout the composition of the *Wake* (rather than exclusively late in the text's history). To limit our understanding of Joyce's use of radio to the first appearance of *Work in Progress* and its extrapolation in II.3 is to miss a great deal, as these structural uses give way to more social and political uses, joining up with the *Wake*'s critique of both the British empire and the new Irish state. Only later, after Ireland has established its own station and radio becomes increasingly a part of daily life rather than a novelty, specifically in the mid 1930s, will Joyce connect the Four with 2RN and HCE with the BBC in order to form one of the clearest clusters of postcolonial statements in the *Wake*. I read the use of radio in III.3 first, returning to pull new meanings out of the pub scene (II.3) in the conclusion.

HCE and Radio

The role and meaning of radio changed in the *Wake* alongside its technological and social development, reflected in the edits and additions Joyce made in the mid 1930s. David Hayman has pointed out that II.3—a late addition, begun in 1935—is highly radiophonic.[138] But Joyce clearly had radio on his mind as he expanded earlier chapters as

[138] The first drafts of II.3 weren't completed until 1935 and the first draft of the opening radio description wasn't started until December 1936. II.3, or "the scene in the pub," continues the structural use of radio that was evident in "Mamalujo" though this later chapter does so in a more pronounced fashion. The number of speakers and languages is increased dramatically, as are the number and type of interruptions. II.3 is, like most

well and nowhere is this more noticeable and significant than in III.3. Here the radio references take on specific national characteristics and are a particularly powerful and clear example of how the *Wake* was engaged in the geopolitics of the interwar years, specifically by mapping and critiquing the ways in which broadcasting was used to further nationalism, and in the case of England, empire. Sharing Hyde's suspicion of the "foreign influence" in Ireland, various characters in the *Wake* interrogate a Dublin patriarch and publican, HCE, who is accused of exposing himself in a public park and of being a foreigner, a "broadcaster…(Hear! Calls! Everywhair!)" (*FW* 108.22-23), and, more damningly, a BBC announcer, or "Big, big calm announcer" (*FW* 534.7). Like the BBC, which organized Empire Day broadcasts, speeches from the King, and talks on the empire, HCE stages an elaborate defense of his imperial past. While HCE is associated with British radio, three of his four interrogators are from 2RN, the Irish national

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chapters, composed of a number of sketches combined: The first, "The Norwegian Captain," (*FW* 309-332.35) recounts the story of a Norwegian Sea Captain who orders a jacket from a Dublin tailor for his wedding to a local girl. The tailor is unable to fit the Captain who claims that the tailor can't sew. The tailor retorts that the Captain was impossible to fit because he is a hunchback. The Captain refuses to pay and returns to sea. This tale is told by the publicans, who weave in accusations about the misconduct of the barkeep, Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, one of the many manifestations of HCE. It is possibly told by the Four or at the very least—based on occasional characteristic expressions like "aped one…based two…seed three…And furthemore"—they seem to be listening to it (*FW* 314.10-15). This tale concludes and Kate, who works at Earwicker's bar, interrupts the festivities to summon HCE to his family. Next the patrons request "Butt and Taff," a comic television duo who tell the story of "How Buckley Shot the Russian General." This is followed by HCE's monologue and conviction, followed by "Roderick O'Conor," a tale of a miserly king who drinks the dregs from the bottles of his departed guests and appears almost unaltered from 1923 as the *ricorso*. Nonetheless, linking Roderick O'Conor with HCE, Joyce made a late addition to the description of the "house of the hundred bottles": "radio beamer tower and its hangars" (*FW* 380.15-16). Like "Mamalujo," II.3 started as a cluster of references in a notebook from 1923, VI.B.3, in this case to the comic story told by Butt and Taff, of an Irish soldier fighting in the Crimean War, "How Buckley Shot the Russian General" (Crispi 27).

broadcasting service, and their most prolonged examination of HCE, in III.3, takes place through a surreal séance composed of broadcast exchanges.

HCE is firmly linked with the BBC; when he speaks through Shaun in III.3 to counter the accusations of the Four he identifies himself as the calming voice of a BBC announcer, "Calm has entered. Big big Calm, announcer" (*FW* 534.7). More importantly, HCE's defense draws from George V's 1932 Christmas broadcast—written by Rudyard Kipling—a source made clear by HCE's references to his "invisible friends" (*FW* 546.29) across his "volted ampire" (*FW* 549.17).[139] HCE's position, with "everybody connected with him," is at once a testament to his strength—his ability to build monuments and empires—and also part of his downfall, broadcasting his failed attempt to defend himself (*FW* 557.35). In this sense, Joyce captures the paradox of national broadcasting. Ostensibly meant to boost the idea of the nation, it also inevitably pulls in the opposite direction, undermining the sense of firm borders.

The sketches of what became III.3, begun as early as 1924, initially described the third watch of Shaun, in which he falls asleep and is interrogated in a kind of séance by the Four; eventually Shaun's voice grows weaker and gives way to that of HCE, who defends himself from accusations of sexual impropriety. This basic plot structure (the interrogation of Shaun leading to that of HCE) remains consistent in its appearance in *transition* 15 (February 1929) and the second part, which was separated, expanded, and published as *Haveth Childers Everywhere* in 1930. Though separated for *Haveth Childers*

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[139] The inaugural Christmas Broadcast began, "Through one of the marvels of modern science, I am enabled this Christmas Day, to speak to all my peoples throughout the empire." For more see Kipling.

Everywhere, the second part (III.3B) was reintegrated into the text for book publication and follows the first (III.3A) without a break in *Finnegans Wake*.

In the version published in *transition*, the Four conduct an investigation of Shaun but—despite their association with radio in the *transatlantic review*—largely confine themselves to metaphors related to hypnotism and telephones. Only in 1936, working from the *transition* proofs, does Joyce restore the sense of the Four as broadcasters and listeners-in, but he does so in a new way that reflects the realities of the time and the development of 2RN and the BBC. In the earlier *transition* version from 1929, the representative of Ulster makes a simple complaint that Munster is asking a question out of turn, "Your crackling out of your turn, my Moonster firefly. And sir my queskins first, foxyjack!" (*transition* 228). Returning to this passage in 1936, in a first pass through, Joyce adds between these two sentences: "2 R. N. and Longhorns Connach, stay off my air!" (BL 47486a-111v; JJA 61:84). Now in addition to differentiating the Four, they are identified with Irish radio.

In fact, this and later rounds of revisions include the proliferation of many such references. These include a combination of the ancient Irish instrument with its newest technology, "the wireless harps of sweet old Aerial" (BL 47486a—146; JJA 61:219), a pun on the lonely listener-in and the nickname of the Irish radio service, "I'm athlone in the lilting of Killarnies" (BL 47486a—146; JJA 61:219), a description of a listener-in tuning into foreign songs, "pricking up ears to my phono on the graund and picking up airs from other over the aether" (BL 47486a-147; JJA 61:220), and a description—likely copied directly from a program guide—of the end of the night's transmission, "All halt:

Sponsor programme and close down" (BL 47486a—176; JJA 61:249). All of these additions reinforce Irish radio's reputation as nostalgic, traditional, and part of the State's attempt to link its current existence to the mythic past. Joyce's next pass through is much less radiocentric, though he adds another reference to the international span of early radio: "In this wireless age any owl rooster can pick up bostoons" (BL 47486b—458; JJA 61:447).[140] Continuing his late addition of radio references, on the galley proofs of the *Wake* in 1937, Joyce added a new twist on his early polylogue note: "his dream monologue was over, of cause, but his drama parapolylogic had yet to be, affact" (BL 47487 f. 185v; JJA 62:340) as well as a reference to his favorite 2RN quiz show: "question time drew nighing" (BL 47487 f. 187v; JJA 62: 344).[141]

Joyce continued to augment the "crackling out of turn" passage, with the version in *Finnegans Wake* reading:

> Dis and dat and dese and dose! Your crackling out of your turn, my Moonster firefly, like always. And 2 R. N. and Longhorns Connacht, stay off my air! You've grabbed the capital and you've had the lion's shire since 1542 but there's all the difference in Ireland between your borderation, my chatty cove, and me. The leinstrel boy to the wall is gone and there's moreen astoreen for Monn and Conn (*FW* 528.27-33)

This speaker complains about Munster and Connacht explicitly, conflating Leinster (the province that includes Dublin) with 2RN, the Irish radio call-sign. Although a large transmitter was built in Athlone, which straddles Leinster and Connacht, most broadcasts

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[140] In a few places, Joyce elaborates earlier notes, adding "and turn widamost ear dreamily to the drummling of snipers, hearing" before his previous addition "the wireless harps of sweet old Aerial and" (JJA p.412).

[141] Thanks to Jean-Michel Rabaté for pointing me to these late additions. For Rabaté's very different gloss on "question time," see Rabaté 407.

originated in Dublin. The division of the Four becomes more obvious with this reference, as Ulster was serviced by the BBC, which transmitted from Belfast. The partition of Ireland is referenced in another phrase from the Four, "Tune in and pick up the forain counties," where "counties" replace the expected "countries" as foreign (BL 47486a—165; JJA 61: 238).

There was much mutual suspicion between 2RN and the BBC, particularly as the BBC was free of advertising whereas 2RN—like most stations on the continent—included limited advertising in order to supplement the income from licenses (hence the sponsor programme referenced above). Nonetheless most employees at 2RN looked with admiration on the BBC and the BBC was eager to transmit more Irish music so the two would occasionally collaborate on concert broadcasts. Giving the Ulster character's paranoia a contemporary grounding, however, cooperation between the two stations was stopped for many years after complaints from Ulster listeners that the BBC inadvertently broadcast an Irish nationalist song specifically calling for the death of the English.[142]

While the influence of broadcasting on the structure of the *Wake* is an example of the ways in which radio and literature were quickly intertwined, it also serves as one of the ways in which the *Wake* was increasingly concerned with empire. Linking HCE with the BBC, the novel deploys a much more thorough character differentiation than in most other sections. HCE is consistently linked with England with some of his more important nicknames, or elaborations, including "High Church of England" (*FW* 36.29), "He'll Cheat E'erawan" (*FW* 46.1), and "everybody connected with him" (*FW* 557.35). While

[142] See Ireland folder at BBC WAC.

HCE's transmission and confession are free from commercial interruptions (like the BBC), the Four stop to advertise the town of Drumcollogher in Limerick County, referencing a song by Irish songwriter Percy French (*FW* 540.9-12). Even though as the interrogation progresses the Four become increasingly sympathetic to HCE, observing at one point that: "He's not all buum and bully" (*FW* 550.4), the Four consistently maintain their Irish location, advertising "Steving's grain," (*FW* 550.6) a fictional food product playing on Stephen's Green in Dublin, and giving the Irish shipping news: "The S. S. Padraic's in the harbour" (*FW* 550.7).[143]

The text extends its fascination with how building monuments also undermines the constructor. If on the one hand the radios found in HCE's homes (Earwicker's pub and Roderick O'Conor's castle) are a testament to his power, they also undermine it. The most condensed version of this larger pattern is when HCE's "house of the hundred bottles with the radio beamer tower" turns from a means of showcasing his power into the system that allows his persecutors to find him (*FW* 380.15-16). For example, it reports on his escape from his trial, attempting to inform others in order to bring him to justice: "Cracklings cricked. A human pest cycling (pist!) and recycling (past!) about the sledgy streets, her he was (pust!) again! Morse nuisance noised. He was loose at large…" (*FW* 99.4-7).[144] Similarly, in I.3, HCE's trial takes place on film, television, and radio, when: "Mass Taverner's at the mike again!" (*FW* 54.21-22) and in "Mamalujo" it is used

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[143] That said, I do not want to reduce the Four to 2RN; the fact that Northern Ireland complains about 2RN shows an important differentiation of the Four, which goes along with the *Wake*'s tendency to challenge and complicate essentialisms.

[144] This plays on a number of highly publicized escape attempts thwarted by wireless communication, some of which were further adapted for film. For more see Paul Young.

by the Four to spy on HCE as Tristan (*FW* 383-99). In II.3, pub customers gave the radio to HCE and it takes part in the building case against him; only after the radio and television in the pub have broadcast their programs does a mob come for HCE (*FW* 373-80).

The most significant cluster of radio references, is not in II.3—which, as I've indicated earlier, has garnered the most attention from scholars since a radio is physically present in the pub—but rather from the culmination of HCE's many trials in III.3. Unlike in II.3 where the radio only occasionally—and accidentally—slips out of tune with 2RN, in III.3 the interrogation of Yawn and HCE begins by switching back and forth between HCE in the form of the BBC and the Four as 2RN.[145] After Yawn recedes into the land and stops speaking to the Four, they have to adjust their reception and ask "whoishe linking in?" (*FW* 499.35) followed by a slightly premature, "Now we're gettin it. Tune in and pick up the forain counties! Hello!" (*FW* 500.35-6). The transmissions they receive from Yawn are wide-ranging though typically compact, switching from catchphrases from Parnell and Oscar Wilde to statements from a supposed witness to HCE's indiscretion in the park who contradicts himself enough to call his testimony into question (*FW* 501-28), at which point HCE gives his most elaborate defense (*FW* 532-54).

More importantly, radio serves as one of the means of distributing his self-undermining defense of empire-building. HCE's long-winded and unconsciously self-incriminating defense implicates him as he simultaneously denies indiscretion and admits

[145] As in II.3, however, radio is used to suture two originally separate sketches—the interrogation of Shaun (as Yawn) and "Haveth Childers Everywhere."

that he can't afford to confess to it, "On my verawife I never was nor can afford to be guilty" (*FW* 532.18-9). Littered with references to cities and empires, this section of the *Wake* has just as much to do with HCE defending himself against the charges of his indiscretion in the park as it does with defending empire-building generally.[146] As Rabaté points out, III.3 brings out a Swiftian side of Joyce; HCE's defense is interrupted by lists taken from B. Seebohm Rowntree's *Poverty: A Study of Town Life* (1902) detailing the impoverished houses in the city of York, giving the lie to HCE's claims to spreading progress and comfort. Showing how his treatment of ALP is representative of larger patterns, HCE reveals the violent nature of his lessons "with fairskin book and ruling rod, vein of my vergin page, her chastener ever I did learn my little ana countrymouse in alphabeater" (*FW* 552.36-553.2); elsewhere he boasts, "I am known throughout the world wherever my good Allenglisches Angleslachsen is spoken" (*FW* 532.9-11).

The investigator of "the letter," which here takes the form of a "radiooscillating epiepistle to which…we must ceaselessly return" posits a figure who "got up for the darnall same purpose of reassuring us…that the ear of Fionn Earwicker aforetime was the trademark of a broadcaster with wicker local jargot for an ace's patent (Hear! Calls! Everywhair!)" (*FW* 108.18-25). In other words, part of the defense of HCE was that he was a broadcaster who, despite calling everywhere, used a local argot. As with all of the other defenses of HCE, however, this one too carries a double meaning— "wicker" deriving from the Swedish *vica*, to bend. In other words, this supposedly localizing

[146] HCE's 566th birthday is celebrated by many throughout his empire, echoing well-publicized anniversaries broadcast throughout the British Empire (*FW* 497.4-36).

feature may actually point to HCE's foreign roots as well as to his attempt to bend his words to appear more respectable.

Reversing the direction of interrogation in III.3, the BBC becomes a major site for the scrutiny of the prostrate body of the *Wake*, yet these investigations take place in England and are transmitted to India, realizing the *Wake*'s suggestion that "In that earopean end meets Ind" (*FW* 598.15-16).[147]

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, I want to return to the description of the radio in Earwicker's pub, which combines a number of radiophonic terms with a host of other themes:

> their tolvtubular high fidelity daildialler, as modern as tomorrow afternoon and in appearance up to the minute, (hearing that anybody in that ruad duchy of Wollinstown schemed to halve the wrong type of date) equipped with supershielded umbrella antennas for distance, getting and connected by the magnetic links of a Bellini-Tosti coupling system with a vitaltone speaker, capable of capturing skybuddies, harbour craft emittences, key clickings, vaticum cleaners, due to woman formed mobile or man made static bawling the whowle hamshack and wobble down in an eliminium sounds pound so as to serve him up a melegoturny marygoraumd, eclectrically filtered for allirish earths and ohmes. (*FW* 309.14-310.1)[148]

As Donald Theall points out, the paragraph can be read as a list of body parts that "include the cranium ('a howdrocephalous enlargement' [310.6]) and the brain

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[147] For more on the ways in which "[The] later phase of Joyce's work brings forward the level where the colonized assert their independence" see Brivic and Cheng (Brivic 195).

[148] Note the inclusion here of phrases copied from the notebook, "As modern as tomorrow," which remains unaltered, and "For all earth" which is modified to reinforce the idea of Dublin as universal city, "for allirish earths."

('harmonic condenser enginium' [310.1]), the mouth ('vitaltone speaker' [309.31]), the eyes ('circumcentric megacycles' [310.7])…and the ears ('umbrella antennas for distance getting' [309.17-18]) (Theall 77-78). This process is then compressed in references to parts of the inner ear, from the Eustachian tube to the hammer, anvil, and stirrup. By highlighting these connections, Theall posits that Joyce is helping to imagine both the ways in which audio technologies were offered as extensions of the body / prosthesis as well as the ways in which these new technologies had a role in the modern technological regulation of the body. While I do not disagree with this reading, its exploration of an established area in media studies (technology as prosthesis), leads Theall to miss the ways in which radio was emphatically public (unlike inscription technologies like film, the typewriter, and the phonograph) and to miss the much larger body here, the body politic.

The description of the pub's radio captures the sense of conflict surrounding early radio, specifically Ireland's uneasy position between the Church and England as it forges its own national identity. Ireland is figured here as a rude, or unsophisticated, colony that produced the Duke of Wellington and that was conquered in the past by invaders from the famed Viking city of Wollin, with which HCE is associated as an invader and conqueror. Playing on the strength of the Catholic Church in Ireland, the radio transmits "vaticum cleaners" invoking the Vatican as well as vacuum cleaners (which caused interference) and is "eclectrically filtered" adding eclectic, again suggesting church

censorship, to electric.[149] The idea of Ireland as a pure, Celtic and Catholic country is undermined here with the reminders of Viking invasions, the fact that Wellington—one of England's greatest soldiers—was Irish, and through multilingual punning that recalls the ways in which any language imports words from other languages, Irish included.

More than simply a way to ground the polyphonic narrative, the radio's description captures the contentious, even violent uses and debates over wireless, like Douglas Hyde's position in his inaugural broadcast that the radio would be used to wipe out the foreign influence.[150] The extent to which the *Wake* engages with interwar broadcasting and its attempted use to shore up the nation has been overlooked, as has the medium's importance in creating a reading public for the novel. By paying closer attention to these relationships, we gain a much richer sense of how a work as abstract as the *Wake* was nonetheless a vehicle for colonial critique by showing that though radio was intended to further nationalism, its polylinguistic and multi-discursive structure fostered transnationalism and undermined essentialism. It is fitting, then, that broadcasts on the *Wake* launched the text half way around the world.

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[149] Even before Eamon de Valera's conservative Fianna Fáil party came to power in 1932, the fledgling Irish state passed a series of censorship acts (most notoriously the 1929 Censorship of Publications Act), adding a government ban on items already prohibited by the Church. The "coupling system" simultaneously invokes the composers Bellini and Tosti as well as wireless pioneers Bellini and Tosi. This reference further suggests the martial applications of radio, as the Bellini-Tosi system, developed to help aircraft get bearings at night or in inclement weather, was used to help navigate zeppelins during the First World War. More than simply a way to ground the polyphonic narrative, the radio's description here captures the contentious, even violent uses and debates over wireless.

[150] Government reports touted the national service's ability to spread the use of the Irish language, to "cultivate an Irish taste in the matter of the arts," spread the "distinctive Irish character," and as President Douglas Hyde proposed, "to wipe out the foreign influence" (qtd. in Pine 116, 188).

CHAPTER 5

C. L. R. JAMES AND THE SUBJECT OF HISTORY: *THE BLACK JACOBINS* AS MODERNIST NOVEL

"I had made up my mind, for no other reason than a *literary* reason, that when I reached England I would settle down to write a history of Toussaint L'Ouverture" (James, "How I Wrote *The Black Jacobins*" 67; emphasis in original)

"I had a completed novel with me. But that was only me 'prentice hand. Contrary to accepted experience, the real magnum opus was to be my second novel" (James, *Beyond* 115).

Introduction

C. L. R. James's *The Black Jacobins* (1938; revised edition in 1963) is a spellbinding account of the slave revolt in San Domingo. Yet the text is unusual, self-consciously flitting between the literary conventions of history, tragedy, romance, manifesto, and Bildungsroman among other genres. David Scott, in *Conscripts of Modernity* (2004), compares the two editions of *The Black Jacobins* to argue that the second, revised edition tightens a generically unwieldy first edition that vacillates unsettlingly between romantic and tragic emplotment. Madison Smart Bell's recent biography, *Toussaint Louverture* (2007), faults James's text for a different inconsistency. Bell notes that James "has the attitudes of a fairly dogmatic Marxist, yet the avowed Marxist disbelief in the power of 'extraordinary men' to influence history simply evaporates in James's portrait of Toussaint Louverture" (298). In this reading, James's roles as historian and biographer work at cross-purposes with his Marxist beliefs with unnerving consequences for the book. That *The Black Jacobins* swerves violently between various genres without fitting squarely in any one of them is, for Bell and Scott,

a failure of construction. But *The Black Jacobins* is anything but a botched fabrication. *The Black Jacobins* is a modernist novel.

Whereas previous writers employed "elementary conceptions" that lent "themselves willingly to narrative treatment," James claims that the expression of the "violent conflicts of our age" require equally complex, revolutionary literary forms (James, *Black* x). In response, James created a work full of jolting temporal shifts, oblique character motivations, unanswered and *unanswerable* questions. *The Black Jacobins* veers dynamically between different genres. Settling temporarily into the tracks of the Bildungsroman, the book pivots to tragedy, then morphs into anti-imperial manifesto.

James's masterful handling of this material has not preempted arguments about the text's failure for two related reasons. First, there is a critical consensus that James turned, after his novel *Minty Alley* (1936), from fiction to activism (and that these realms are irreconcilable). Nicole King, for example, argues that: "When [James] left Trinidad for England he assumed it was to develop further as a writer. But James was to become an activist, and the 1936 publication of *Minty Alley* represented the conclusion of James's public career as a fiction writer" (King 33). In contrast to King, I argue that James not only continued to write fiction, but that he developed as a writer in a remarkable burst of creative innovation between his arrival in London in 1932 and the publication of *The Black Jacobins* in 1938.[151]

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[151] Further, arguments like those of Bell and Scott, that *The Black Jacobins* is unsound because it is composed of narrative threads that work at cross purposes to one another stem from an inability or unwillingness to imagine a genre that includes all of these

The larger obstacle to grappling with the idiosyncrasies of the first edition is David Scott's widely influential reading in *Conscripts of Modernity*. Scott's account of James's development during this twenty-five year period has dominated scholarly understanding of *The Black Jacobins*, not to mention the interdisciplinary problem of narrative emplotment in the postcolonial era more broadly. In Scott's persuasive re-reading of *The Black Jacobins*, he identifies a shift in James's presentation of Toussaint from an exemplary instance of self-emancipation and agency in the first edition (1938) of *The Black Jacobins* to one of tragedy in the second, revised edition (1963).[152] Scott bases his argument on a careful collation of the two editions, focusing on the largest substantive change: the insertion of six paragraphs to the beginning of the last chapter. In this section, James meditates on the narrative structure of tragedy and its applicability to Toussaint. As James's additions make clear, the defeat of Toussaint is "universally looked upon as a tragedy," his story "contain[s] authentic elements of the tragic," and "not even Shakespeare himself could have found such a dramatic embodiment of fate as Toussaint struggled against, Bonaparte himself" (James, *Black* 289, 292). The insertion of this meditation amplifies references to the drama of tragedy already in the book, variously

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genres. A notoriously capacious form, the modernist novel is just such a genre. The violent yoking together of tragedy, comedy, and even the scientific and sociological treatise has long been the remit of the modernist novel. From the painstakingly detailed description of how water passes through various municipal systems in order to flow into Leopold Bloom's kettle in *Ulysses* to the technical description of weather patterns in Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*, the modernist novel voraciously consumes extra-literary discourses. This tendency is explored, among other places, in Franco Moretti's *Modern Epic* (1994).

[152] Paul Miller points to the tragic plot of *The Black Jacobins* as well, but reads Toussaint's split from the masses as "stemming from the structural dynamic of the Enlightenment" (Miller 1085).

figured as "tragedy," "drama" and "a cross between a nightmare and a bad joke" (James, *Black* 43).[153]

The additions clarify and extend an argument James advanced in the first edition about Toussaint:

> His personal weakness, the obverse side of his strength, played its part also. He left even his generals in the dark. A naturally silent and reserved man, he had been formed by military discipline…Nobody ever knew what he was doing…
>
> Yet Toussaint's error sprang from the very qualities that made him what he was. It is easy to see to-day, as his generals saw after he was dead, where he had erred. It does not mean that they or any of us would have done better in his place…Tousassaint's failure was the failure of enlightenment, not of darkness. It needed another 150 years before humanity could produce and give opportunity to men who could combine within their single selves the unrelenting suspicion and ruthless ferocity necessary to deal with imperialism, and yet retain undimmed their creative impulse and their respect for the attainments of the very culture they fought so fiercely (James, *Black* a 240-1).

The second edition erases the last sentence, giving greater weight to the image of enlightenment vs. darkness but also shifting attention away from the present moment. By 1963, the book was no longer a manifesto or call-to-arms for growing independence

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[153] The other substantive change comes at the beginning of Chapter 10. In the first edition, Toussaint's break with Rigaud is painted as an unfortunate necessity: "Rigaud was the ally of France against him, and Rigaud had to be destroyed before the French came" (185). When James revised this chapter opening, he amplified the narrative of tragedy: "Toussaint in his twelve years of politics, national and international, made only one serious mistake, the one which ended his career" (224). In the first edition, the "Russian Socialist Revolution might still fail," (237) whereas by the second edition the "Russian socialist revolution failed" (283). The imperialists were transformed from "treacherous snakes" (227) in the first edition into "insatiable gangsters" (271). Examples of the tragic that survived from the first to the second edition can be found here: (25, 177, 197-8, 365, 373).

movements in Africa. Instead, it was a reflection of the failure of these revolutions to stimulate the kind of change James had hoped to see.

Scott argues: "James's introduction of the literary-philosophical problematic of tragedy into the broader questions of colonialism, revolution, civilization, and enlightenment is a move that offers, I think, a provocative point of departure from which to challenge the conventional Romantic organization of the narrative relation between pasts, presents, and futures" (Scott 11). Here Scott uses James's amplification of tragedy to question the practicality in the present moment of continuing to utilize a romance narrative of anticolonial emancipation found in the writings of seminal postcolonial critics such as Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire. For Scott, these writers focus on the negative, repressive aspects of colonialism as something that can be surmounted with independence. Citing the failure of Bandung, the New Nations project, and the ways in which "anticolonial utopias have withered into postcolonial nightmares," Scott contends that postcolonial scholars in the present need to ask different questions than their predecessors—not how the negative structures of colonialism can be overcome but rather how do we understand the positive and negative effects of modernity *tout court* (Scott 2).

Scott thus stages a convincing argument for the continued relevance of *The Black Jacobins* to postcolonial thinkers by adjusting the reader's sense of genre. The intensified tragic arc of the second edition allows for the delineation of limits that must be recognized in order to move forward. Given later disappointments, it is understandable that James strengthened the tragic plotting of his book. But something is also lost in privileging the second edition's tighter tragic emplotment. James secured his work with

the strings of tragedy but did so at the expense of other possibilities, not the least of which is *The Black Jacobins* as manifesto, Bildungsroman, even Kunstlerroman.

David Scott made *The Black Jacobins* central to our understanding of postcolonial problematics by stressing its politics. But while I in no way disagree with Scott, it is also clear that reducing *The Black Jacobins* to its second edition runs the risk of a different kind of blindness, one that misjudges the text's affinities to and interventions in the interwar years. Now that Scott's reading has become central, we run the risk of overlooking and obscuring the politics of *The Black Jacobins*. Rather than reading the text from the perspective of the present, as Scott (and the later James) did, I propose situating the text from the opposite vantage point—from its past.

Readings that overlook the literary qualities of *The Black Jacobins* are symptomatic of a tendency to divide postcolonial writing from a modernism that has mistakenly been labeled metropolitan and often reduced to a set of its White practitioners. A focus on James's writing qua writing, however, reveals a complex relationship between anticolonial critique and modernism, Trinidad and the metropolis, activism and the writing of fiction. While many efforts to countenance colonial writing have involved the consideration of works written after the war years, this chapter instead returns to James's 1930s corpus. My focus on the first edition of *The Black Jacobins* challenges recent teleological accounts of James's development—including his own—which posit his early works as his "apprentice hand," mere stepping stones on the way to greater works like *Beyond a Boundary* and the second edition of *The Black Jacobins*. Instead, I propose that

the challenges posed by the first edition are worth returning to for Caribbean and modernist studies alike.

One of the contributing factors to the generic inscrutability of *The Black Jacobins* is that the text is a palimpsest. Each new iteration reveals traces of its previous inscriptions even as it seeks to overwrite them. James's revisions to *The Black Jacobins* are but two moments in a longer history of James circling back to the story of Toussaint. James's 1933 BBC broadcast is one such text that is all the more significant for its near, but incomplete, suppression. Published just five years after his broadcast, *The Black Jacobins* rebukes "the anniversary orators and the historians [who] supply the prose-poetry and the flowers" for centenary celebrations of emancipation (James, *Black* 63). In a work that jumps rapidly and often between the time of its writing in the 1930s and the late eighteenth century, this gripe is part of a larger argument that imperial strategies from the earlier period survive and continue in the present. As James notes, the imperialists' monopoly of the mass media forestalls reform: "It is on colonial peoples without means of counter-publicity that imperialism practices its basest arts" (294).[154] But what if colonized peoples could challenge imperialism but were unsuccessful? As one of the "anniversary orators" himself, James knew the answer all too well.

On Monday, 29 May 1933 between a talk on "Science in the Making" with Julian Huxley and a program of "Edwardian Melodies" by the BBC Theatre Orchestra, the BBC's many listeners were surprised to experience a thirty-minute interruption of the

[154] In the second edition, James expands this idea: "Maitland and his kind made [Voltaire, Rousseau, Jefferson, Cobbett, Tom Paine, Clarkson, and Wilberforce] into subversive enemies of society. They had their reasons. So have their counterparts to-day. They fill our newspapers and our radios" (James, *Black* 223)

BBC's artificially genteel radio voice. At a microphone in Portland Place, James's recognizably British accent from his years in the Queen's Royal College, enlivened with a tinge of regional cadence, recounted his family's history as slaves and the effects of emancipation on Trinidad. James was an outlier in a series in which all of the other speakers were White.[155] Included as an afterthought, James was asked to speak only after the novelist Richard Hughes turned down the invitation, having never been to the West Indies.[156] The form of James's broadcast was conventional: he gave a chronological account of the West Indies before and after emancipation. But the content of James's broadcast was radical. Arguing for an end to Crown Colony government, James incited an immediate reaction: "Colonial Officials in England, and others, began their protests to the BBC almost before I had finished speaking" (James, *Beyond* 118).[157] Yet James's

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[155] The other speakers included Reginald Coupland, Sir John Harris, Lady Simon, and Professor Webster. Coupland's work is thoroughly derided by James in *The Black Jacobins*. Of Coupland's *Wilberforce* (1923) and *The British Anti-Slavery Movement* (1933), James writes: "Both these books are typical for, among other vices, their smug sentimentality, characteristic of the official approach of Oxford scholarship to abolition. As the official view, they can be recommended for their thorough misunderstanding of the question" (James, *Black* 386). James would likely have been equally disapproving of the other speakers. A review of Sir John Harris's *A Century of Emancipation* (1932) says: "It is withal a glowing romance of the efforts of a few Sir Galahads whose victories are not on the battlefield but in the council chamber. Their monuments are not in Trafalgar Square; nor have the emancipated themselves fittingly honored their liberators" (Logan 333). Lady Simon (Viscountess Kathleen Rochard Simon, DBE) was the author of *Slavery* (1929). I have not yet been able to determine the identity of "Professor Webster."

[156] Hughes was approached because of the Caribbean setting of his novel *A High Wind in Jamaica* (1929).

[157] In addition to remembering the controversy it caused, the other memory that James shared in *Beyond a Boundary* was the way in which the broadcast linked James at a microphone in London with his friends in Nelson: "Constantine and Norma, and many

early sense of triumph was soon abetted. Disappointed by the failure of what he considered an eminently reasonable proposal, James realized that simply combating the prevailing British primitivist attitude toward West Indians would not be enough.[158] Nor would the broadcast's logical, measured structure continue to serve his ends.

Separated in time by only five years, James's broadcast and *The Black Jacobins* are nevertheless worlds apart in perspective and style. The broadcast and his earlier writing employ "literary facility, wide reading and a by now ingrained habit of seeking order, logical sequence, development, perspective" to the matter at hand (James, *Beyond* 115). *The Black Jacobins* too drew on wide reading, with James supplementing his examination of English and French histories with primary research in *Les Archives Nationales*, *Les Archives du Ministère de la Guerre*, and other archives in Paris and London. But the hallmarks of his earlier style, "order, logical sequence, development, and perspective," proved elusive. Reflecting on the complexities of its own form, testing boundaries between fact and fiction, and forging an experimental structure determined by its revolutionary subject, the form of *The Black Jacobins* is as bold as its hero.

James forged an innovative structure to reflect the revolutionary energy of the slave revolt. In sharp contrast, his broadcast and pamphlet, in order to convey James's argument that colonized people were eminently rational, took more conventional form. Rather than arguing, though, that *The Black Jacobins* is modernist while the broadcast

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friends and acquaintances in the North of England, listened to the broadcast. Daughter Gloria was allowed to stay up to hear" (118).

[158] Chiding himself later, he reflects: "Correcting this error I fell into another one" (James, *Beyond* 118).

merely modern, we should see the constantly shifting formal and generic features of James's interwar writing as the modernist part. If modernism is a break, as I propose in the Introduction, these five years represent a period of violent rupture. This rupture takes the form of a break in linear temporality that was hinted at in the broadcast and embraced and magnified in *The Black Jacobins*.

Unlike the other authors in my study, for James the BBC was not a site of major experimentation but rather one where the failures of insufficient innovation were brought painfully home. Radio, but especially the BBC, has largely been seen as a force for good in Caribbean writing. Una Marson's BBC program *Caribbean Voices* has been consistently depicted as the clearinghouse and patron of Anglophone writers. Poet Kamau Braithwaite goes so far as to say that *Caribbean Voices* was "the single most important literary catalyst for Caribbean creative and critical writing in English" (qtd. in Emery 150). Scholars keen to overturn hypercanonical modernism's exclusion of writers of color have eagerly echoed this account (Kalliney, Neigh, Emery). James is a useful contrast to this model, a cautionary tale rather than a romance narrative. In a move reminiscent of mistakes by Toussaint, James used his time in front of the microphone to challenge power, but he did so in an outmoded form that failed to harness the revolutionary energy of the present. This failure, as well as the hope of the broadcast, is inscribed in *The Black Jacobins*.

Two narratives, one of linear progress and one of painful remainder, collide in the broadcast. James had not yet embraced this—in *The Black Jacobins* he does and runs with it, creating a dazzling, complex modernist novel. In order to restore attention to the

widely maligned first edition of *The Black Jacobins*, this chapter begins by examining its curious features, with a focus on its programmatic preface. Using a definition derived from exclusively European novels to register the formal concerns of the book, this intervention highlights its purposeful complexity. The following sections take up the feature of *The Black Jacobins* that least corresponds with the modernist novel—its rejection of a narrative of nihilistic disorder behind an illusorily structured reality. Having established *The Black Jacobins* as a modernist novel, the chapter then considers the book as a palimpsest, revealing James's BBC broadcast as the textual unconscious of the book. In the conclusion, I argue for the importance of the first edition's generic instability as a response to and a representative of the tumult of the interwar years.

The Black Jacobins as Modernist Novel

The Black Jacobins, full of doubt, uncertainty, and suspicion, reads more like a modernist novel than a conventional history. Like other modernist novels, *The Black Jacobins* willfully upsets generic expectations and conventions. A highly self-conscious verbal artifact, the book pauses periodically to reflect on its construction. Ostensibly about the island of San Domingo at the end of the eighteenth century, the novel expands outwards in both space and time. Events in San Domingo are presented against the backdrop of actions in France, England, and The United States, as well as the British colonies of Jamaica, South Africa, and Ireland. The book is packed with abrupt temporal shifts from the 1790s to the 1930s. Further, published in the United States by the Dial

Press, *The Black Jacobins* joined a catalogue renowned for its strengths in modernist writing.[159]

The Black Jacobins proffers a different politics than hypercanonical examples of the modernist novel but it shares many representational strategies and formal features. The first edition deserves further scrutiny in part because of its appearance in the ranks of so many other canonical modernist works. Published within a year of *Finnegans Wake* (1939), Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas* (1938), and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* (1938), the first edition is a particularly useful example for arguments against the narrative that colonial modernism was belated and watered down. *The Black Jacobins* was not influenced by a previous interwar modernism; *The Black Jacobins* unfolded alongside it temporally and in critical dialogue politically.

In addition to a chronological association, however, *The Black Jacobins* shares formal features and concerns with works identified in even the most notoriously Euro-centric takes on modernism. Malcolm Bradbury's and James McFarlane's *Modernism* (1976), for example, draws examples from and presupposes an international movement, but one whose coordinates stretch from Ireland to Russia and no further. Nonetheless, many of the characterizations of the modernist novel derived from these traditions describe *The Black Jacobins* quite well. We can deploy them now not as yardsticks

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[159] The Dial Press—in addition to Eliot's *The Waste Land*—published, among other titles, Ford Maddox Ford's *Transatlantic Stories* (1926), Elizabeth Bowen's *The Hotel* (1928), and *XLI Poems* (1925) by e. e. cummings. *The Black Jacobins* entered the English market in a less literary context, published by the anti-fascist and anti-communist imprint Secker & Warburg alongside George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* (1938). The first editions in both countries contained far more elaborate maps and images than the later reprints, extending the book's already hybrid nature.

against which to measure the fitness of *The Black Jacobins* but rather as a narrative that—precisely because of the geographical blindspots of its creators—helps to resituate James in a conversation from which he was subsequently excluded while also delineating the contours of James's departures from European norms.

Bradbury and McFarlane introduce characteristics of the modernist novel in the form of four major preoccupations: "with the complexities of its own form, with the representation of inward states of consciousness, with a sense of the nihilistic disorder behind the ordered surface of life and reality, and with the freeing of narrative art from the determination of an onerous plot" (393). *The Black Jacobins* shares three of these concerns while energetically repudiating the "sense of nihilistic disorder."

The preface of *The Black Jacobins* makes explicit the complexities of the book's form. Based on events from the close of the eighteenth century, the book reaches back to models from ancient Greece and Rome and forward again to those in the twentieth century that attempted to narrate the horrors of "the booming of Franco's artillery and the rattle of Stalin's firing squads" (James, *Black* xi). After opening with a warning about the difficulty of writing history, the book concerns itself with "obscure creatures" (338), "secret negotiations" (326), and "undecided battles" (308).

Mysterious from start to finish, *The Black Jacobins* is sandwiched between two programmatic statements of epistemological skepticism. The book further upsets the expectations of historical writing by refusing a pose of objectivity, situating itself between history and literature. Precisely where the book should stake its claims to rigor and veracity—in the Bibliography—James presents the clearest exposition of the book's

struggles with incomplete material, constrained perspective, and fragmentary methodology. Here James counterintuitively argues for the value of reactionary histories—debunked throughout the preceding pages—over those with claims to impartiality. For James, Anglo-American studies:

> are of little value, for the writers, particularly in England, usually try to be what is known as "fair to both sides." Thus the reader is led to see most of the explosive incidents of the Revolution, which was really a series of gigantic explosions, as unfortunate excesses. A reactionary historian might miss much of the creative actions and ideas of the revolutionary forces, but he would hardly fail to portray the clash of an irresistible conflict, of suddenly emergent forces pursuing unsuspected aims. In a revolution excesses are the normal, and the historian who does not accept that does not accept the revolution and cannot write its history. (James, *Black* 385)

Better, according to this logic, to have a passionate history that gets specifics wrong than a balanced one that misconstrues the revolution in its entirety. The complexity of *The Black Jacobins* emerges here as a result of the irreconcilable need for objectivity on the one hand and narrative propulsion on the other.

In the Preface to the first edition, James articulates a sensibility of radical upheaval that necessitates the formal experiments essayed in *The Black Jacobins*. The Preface works incrementally up to the declaration that it both represents and was formed by "the fever and the fret" of the interwar years. At first James attributes the remarkable "transformation of slaves, trembling in hundreds before a single white man, into a people able to organize themselves and defeat the most powerful European nations of their day" to "the work of a single man—Toussaint L'Ouverture" (James, *Black* ix). This narrative—useful as it was for the book jacket—is then complicated in what follows not only in the Preface, but in the book as well. James instills a hermeneutics of suspicion in

his reader by next claiming that L'Ouverture "did not make the revolution. It was the revolution that made Toussaint. And even that is not the whole truth" (James, *Black* x). James offers a Marxist reversal to the "great man" narrative by highlighting how L'Ouverture was subject to the limitations of his time and environment. But, curiously, James just as quickly rescinds this reading. Neither master narrative, it seems, is capable of capturing the "whole truth."

James's Hegelianism might suggest that he was attempting a dialectic between traditional historiography based around the abilities of great men to make history on the one hand and a Marxian emphasis on the role of impersonal forces on the other. James identifies and critiques the tendency of the day to a "personification of the social forces, great men being merely or nearly instruments in the hands of economic destiny" (James, *Black* x). But James resists an easy synthesis: "As so often the truth does not lie in between" (James, *Black* x). Instead, James proposes a narrative that, while drawing on both of these perspectives, is innovative, fragmented, indelibly marked by the chaotic moment of its composition.

From James's standpoint, "The writing of history becomes ever more difficult" (James, *Black* x). His reflection on historiography, though, tellingly mines literary theory rather than the work of contemporary historians like Georges Lefebvre whom James praises elsewhere. Instead James invokes William Wordsworth's concept of "recollection in tranquility," to posit a definitive break in the twentieth century:

> The analysis is the science and the demonstration the art which is history. The violent conflicts of our age enable our practiced vision to see into the very bones of previous revolutions more easily than heretofore. Yet for that very reason it is

> impossible to recollect historical emotions in that tranquility which a great English writer, too narrowly, associated with poetry alone (James, *Black* xi).

In the beginning of this passage, the writing of history is both science *and* art—scientific in research and analysis but art in the writing or presentation. The book thus questions at the outset a pretension to transparency assumed (or sought after) in historiography. Instead, the work is announcing itself as a verbal construct, and one shaped with an eye towards art. The book self-consciously joins a canon of writing, revealed through the reference to "practiced vision" and previous "English writer(s)." James more than posits his book at the end of an illustrious line of authors responding to the French Revolution; he argues that he has surpassed them. The historical perspective of the 1930s has granted James sounder vision than Wordsworth. The parallels between the two periods are even reinforced grammatically—a single sentence encompasses both "our age" and "previous revolutions."

Practicing what Helen Tiffin calls "canonical counterdiscourse," James raises the specter of Wordsworth as both tribute and challenge. James frames the book in overtly literary terms by invoking Wordsworth, rather than one of the many historians *The Black Jacobins* elsewhere credits with innovative writing. Posing Wordsworth's as a partial view, James establishes *The Black Jacobins* as a further refinement of English poetics. In this quintessential modernist move, James holds up a literary precursor only to establish the gulf between their aesthetics. James dispenses not only with the Romantic ideology of Wordsworth but also introduces a level of fragmentation unimaginable even to those most committed to the powers of the human imagination.

Conjuring Wordsworth in particular, James summons not just a well-known author, but another history-altering preface in particular, Wordsworth's Preface to the 1802 edition of *Lyrical Ballads*. Wordsworth's Preface was more incendiary than the poems it introduced, calling not simply for poetry as "emotion recollected in tranquility" (its best-remembered phrase) but for a revolution in poetic diction and subject matter. Wordsworth's reorientation of poetry toward the "real language of men" and the "humble and rustic life" provides a model and precursor for James's history from the bottom up.[160] The characters in *Lyrical Ballads*—beggars, discharged soldiers, the rural poor—parallel the "masses" that both Toussaint and James struggled to represent.

Wordsworth is not simply a well-known author picked at random, but one whose work was also influenced by the French Revolution and specifically the role of Toussaint Louverture, who Wordsworth memorialized in a sonnet, "To Toussaint Louverture" (1803). Wordsworth's fascination with Toussaint is an example of the influence of

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[160] In a 1946 letter to Constance Webb reporting his thoughts after seeing the film *Love Letters* (1945), James revisits the importance of Wordsworth, and specifically the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*: "I was struck by what [Jennifer Jones] was doing with her lines. They were commonplace. But in emotional scenes by sheer acting, emotional power over restraint, she gave them a genuine poetic quality. Over and over again it happened. Then it struck me. *This is our modern poetry*. Remember T. S. Eliot and his poetry coming back to ordinary speech. Now Dryden did it—and Wordsworth, whom *we must read*, did it—and stated the case in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*" (James, *Reader* 151; emphasis in original). James shares Wordsworth's disdain for popular novels as well (Wordsworth 599), when *The Black Jacobins* criticizes the literary culture in Le Cap: "the chief reading of the population consisted of lascivious novels" (James, *Black* 32). Wordsworth also called into question the easy distinction between poetry and prose: "…there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition" (Wordsworth 602).

colonial peoples on English literature that James was interested in recovering.[161] As a body of work composed in a peaceful England while revolutions unfolded elsewhere, Wordsworth's *Ballads* offer a parallel to James's book: "It was in the stillness of a seaside suburb that could be heard most clearly and insistently the bombing of Franco's heavy artillery, the rattle of Stalin's firing squads and the fierce shrill turmoil of the revolutionary movement striving for clarity and influence" (James, *Black* xi). But while James identified with Wordsworth's physical remove from revolution, James argues that it was no longer possible to achieve an intellectual distance from the turbulence. In sharp contrast to the Romantic emphasis on the power of the individual imagination to shape writing, James insists on the imposition of outside forces. If "tranquility today is either innate (the philistine) or to be acquired only by a deliberate doping of the personality" then the commotion of the time should be reflected in his work (James, *Black* xi). James is not bashful about the significance of contemporary turmoil: "Such is our age and this book is of it, with something of the fever and the fret. Nor does this writer regret it. The book is the history of a revolution and written under different circumstances it would have been a different but not necessarily a better book" (James, *Black* xi).

That James obsessed over the craft of writing follows from his previous work. Describing his intellectual life in Trinidad, James recalls catholic reading that included T.

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[161] Aldon Nielsen recalls: "Frequently, as in "The Making of the Caribbean People," James pointed out to his audiences that writers from the Caribbean had played an important part in the creation of new aesthetic forms in European literary history, including such names as Alexander Dumas, Leconte DeLisle, Saint-John Perse, and Aimé Césaire" (Nielsen 14).

S. Eliot's review, the *Criterion*.[162] James came to England in March of 1932 with the aspiration of becoming a novelist and a contract with the *Port-of-Spain Gazette* for ten articles describing his experiences in London. James had published a series of short stories in Trinidad, founded a little magazine, and headed directly to Bloomsbury with his first novel, *Minty Alley* (1936), under his arm. But in addition, James was invited to England specifically to write. At the request of West-Indian cricketer Learie Constantine, James quickly decamped to Nelson to help Constantine with his memoir, published as *Cricket and I* (1933). In addition to *Minty Alley*, James brought the manuscript of his first genre-defying biography, *The Life of Captain Cipriani: An Account of British Government in the West Indies* (1932).[163] After discussing the work with Constantine, James agreed to a private printing, funded by his patron.

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[162] As for so many Caribbean writers, Eliot's poetry loomed large in James's imagination. The second edition of *The Black Jacobins* quotes "The Dry Salvages" from Eliot's *Four Quartets* (1943). In a later lecture, James cites Eliot and Pound as examples of New World writers who changed English literature: "The criticism of literature, the break-up of the tradition of Wordsworth and Milton was done by two Americans, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. They reorganized the poetic language of England" (James, qtd. in Nielsen 14-5).

[163] James later recalled that *Cipriani* was "written for a Trinidad audience and out of a conviction that I had in moral necessity to do something to help the cause before I left Trinidad" (James *Autobiography*). Within a year of publication, however, James's sense of audience shifted. Originally published in a small, private printing in Nelson, parts of James's argument were picked up for wider distribution by the Hogarth Press the following year. While the proximity of Virginia Woolf and James has brought deserved attention to his Hogarth Press pamphlet, scholars have missed almost entirely the version with the biggest audience—the broadcast and then, following that, republication in both *The Listener* and the *Port-of-Spain Gazette*. This oversight of James's broadcast and its subsequent remediations not only testifies to an impoverished account of what was a complex media ecology in the twentieth century but more importantly fails to account for the ways in which the medium of James's argument was intimately tied to the argument itself.

James, despite his attraction to the *Criterion*, was not exclusively interested in the literary avant-garde, claiming: "I balanced the virtues of Thackeray, Dickens, and Fielding against the vices of Hemingway, Faulkner and Lawrence" (65). Read one way, this suggests that James entertained the idea of rejecting modernism. Other Caribbean writers certainly did. Jamaican novelist Michael Thelwell laments Caribbean writers who demonstrate an affinity for European interwar modernism as an "excuse and justification for a general retreat from [a] wide-ranging engagement with social and moral questions" (qtd. in Gikandi 3). James makes a related argument in one of his first published reflections on moving to England. Of a meeting in Bloomsbury with Edith Sitwell, James writes:

> After a while I asked her a question on which I have definite views of my own. There is a lot of experimentation in all modern art today, in technique particularly. People are writing free verse, verse which I believe Shakespeare and Keats and Shelley would find it difficult to recognize as kindred to their own work. Some people say that poetry must find new forms. It is my belief, though only a belief, that a great poet is first and foremost a poet, that is to say, a man of strong feeling and delicate nerves, and secondly a technician and interested in technique. (James, *Letters* 27-8)

This juxtaposition of feeling and technique would seem to dismiss modern writers on account of too great a focus on craft.

Another reservation James expressed about the literary avant-garde was one of class—better for a revolutionary hero to emerge from the proletariat than to be imposed on them by the educated classes, no matter how well intentioned. This was a hard lesson for James, but one that he embraced during the composition of *The Black Jacobins*. At the end of the book, as James prophesies the emergence of future Toussaints, he makes

this distinction clear: "From the people heaving in action will come the leaders; not the isolated blacks at Guys' Hospital or the Sorbonne, the dabblers in *surréalisme* or the lawyers, but the quiet recruits in a black police force, the sergeant in the French native army or British police…" (James, *Black* 377). This dig, aimed at Aimé Césaire, who was "adopted" by André Breton and the surrealists, suggests that James was still suspicious of the efficacy of modernist experimentation to the anti-imperial struggle.[164]

The *form* of *The Black Jacobins* suggests something different. Despite a suspicion of "vices" in the moderns, James did not reject them altogether. Instead, James is an example of a pattern identified by Simon Gikandi whereby: "Caribbeam writers cannot adopt the history and culture of European modernism, especially as defined by the colonizing structures, but neither can they escape from it because it has overdetermined Caribbean cultures in many ways" (Gikandi 3). Caribbean writers like James deploy modernist formal strategies even as they suspect European modernism of varying levels of collusion with imperial regimes. Only a few weeks after James's article on Sitwell, he offers a different take that captures this ambivalence: "Even though I see the Bloomsbury life for the secondary thing that it is, nevertheless both by instinct and by training I belong to it…" (James, *Letters* 54). Three of the Hogarth Press's best-selling authors influenced James throughout his career: Woolf, Eliot, and Freud. James's sense of ease in

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[164] James came to appreciate the works of Césaire. By the time of the second edition of *The Black Jacobins*, James praises *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* as "the finest and most famous poem ever written about Africa" (James, *Black* 399). Césaire's biography, Toussaint L'Ouverture, however "lacks the fire and constant illumination which distinguish most of the other work of Césaire" (James, *Black* 389).

Bloomsbury contributed to his ability to publish with the Hogarth Press, the organ of the Bloomsbury group.[165]

James's was not a straightforward recapitulation of his European models, but a creolization.[166] One example of James's blending of native and foreign models is in his use of both European and Caribbean source material. The bibliography of *The Black Jacobins* mirrors the book's concern with "the close parallels, hitherto unsuspected" between events and people in San Domingo and France (James, *Black* 385). James cites letters written by Toussaint as well as correspondence from French administrators and soldiers, including Napoleon's brother-in-law, Leclerc. Similarly, Haitian historians such as Antoine Michel appear next to French writers such as Georges Lefebvre. These forms of creolization mark *The Black Jacobins* as distinctly Caribbean even as they put the text in conversation with contemporary European experiments to which literary scholars have devoted more attention.[167]

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[165] James's letters to Constance Webb reveal the importance of Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* to James's vision of the minority writer, as James sought both space and income to support their writing careers. See James, *Special*.

[166] Additionally, James claimed nineteenth-century models as native Caribbean models and showed how supposed European models were already influenced by Caribbean writers. James hoped to help Africa, but he felt that Caribbean culture was largely European. Though he was suspicious of Anglo-American modernism, he saw that the ruptures in representational strategies could be useful in the context not only of rewriting Caribbean history, but of projecting a post-colonial future for African and Caribbean states as well.

[167] Placing texts written by former slaves next to those by their French oppressors, James's methodology anticipates the work of the Subaltern Studies Group. Edward Said recognized James as a precursor and inspiration to these thinkers even while delineating significant differences between James and Ranajit Guha. See Said, *Culture and Imperialism* 239-61.

Like the works of Proust, Joyce, and Mann, *The Black Jacobins* fuses its disparate materials together through the repetition of leitmotifs and these derive from Caribbean and French sources. One of the leitmotifs in *The Black Jacobins* is a voodoo song that opens the fourth chapter:

> Eh! Eh! Bomba! Heu! Heu!
> Canga, bafio té!
> Canga, mouné de lé!
> Canga, do ki la!
> Canga, do ki la!
> Canga, li! (James, *Black* 85)

In a text that otherwise makes a consistent case for the European culture of Caribbean peoples, for a painful but productive severing of ties with Africa, this irruption is all the more startling. Here in *The Black Jacobins* it sits uncomfortably, untranslated.[168] The vengeful violence it calls for against the white masters is precisely what Toussaint seeks to tamp down in his hope for an egalitarian, multicultural future. It could, then, have been passed over by James. It remains in the text not for moral reasons, but because James (to borrow from Glissant) "considers it an aesthetic constituent, the first edict of a real poetics of Relation" (Glissant 29). Only a text with a wide range of reference, from Wordsworth to voodoo song, can do justice to the complexities of Caribbean culture. The violence of the song is but one of its features—in addition to its cultural link to Africa, the song stands metonymically for the ability of popular culture to challenge structures of

[168] In James's revised playscript he translates the song: "White man—vow to destroy / Take his riches away / Kill them / Every one" (James, *Reader* 69).

exploitation. The song performs some heavy lifting in a text otherwise interested in exploring Toussaint's links to French culture.

The other prominent leitmotif in *The Black Jacobins* derives from Abbé Raynal: "A courageous chief only is wanted. Where is he?" (qtd. in James, *Black* 25).[169] Raynal's prediction, that a leader would emerge to organize a successful slave revolt, finds its way into Toussaint's vision well before Toussaint himself joined the insurrection: "It was a book famous in its time and it came into the hands of the slave most fitted to make use of it…Over and over again Toussaint read this passage" (James, *Black* 24-5). Just as Toussaint returns to Raynal to refresh his revolutionary ardor, so too does the text of *The Black Jacobins*. Raynal is echoed when Toussaint hears about the revolution in France (James, *Black* 82), when he belatedly joins the uprising (91), when Toussaint joins forces with the Governor, Laveaux (171), and at the conclusion, when James predicts that a new leader will emerge after "reading a stray pamphlet of Lenin or Trotsky as Toussaint read the Abbé Raynal" (377).[170] The repetition of the "courageous chief" refrain works to recenter the otherwise sprawling narrative on Toussaint but it also introduces new shades of meaning with each appearance, problematizing the relationship between revolutionary masses and their leaders.

The Black Jacobins participates as well in the modernist novel's polyphony and multilingualism, challenging what Lawrence Venuti calls the "translator's invisibility."

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[169] The passage appeared in Raynal's *Philosophical and Political History of the Establishments and Commerce of the Europeans in the Two Indies* (1770).

[170] These are but a few examples of the Raynal leitmotif. Other instances appear on pages 55, 198, 250, and so on.

Written primarily in English, the book nonetheless gestures towards its polylingual genesis by including regional diction like "gourde" (245), a local currency, as well as francophone place-names: "La Croix-des-Bouquets" and "Port-Républicain" (204). James silently translates many of the primary sources but the footnotes retain the French titles of primary texts, gesturing towards the text's multilingualism. Further, James retains dates from the French Republican Calendar: "Prairial" for 20 May to 20 June, and so on, shifting the already unstable temporality of the book into yet another register. These occasional clues call attention to and maintain the "foreignness" of source materials, signaling their "linguistic and cultural difference" (Venuti 34). These strategies of estrangement call further attention to the constructedness of a highly self-conscious text.

The Black Jacobins focuses, too, on the "inward states" of its artistic hero, Toussaint. James goes to great length to capture Toussaint's *weltanschauung*:

> Despite the treachery of France he still saw himself as a part of the French Republic "one and indivisible." He could not think otherwise. The decree of the 16th Pluviôse had marked in his mind the beginning of a new era for all French blacks. His experiences of French Commissioners, his fear for his people, his hard sense of reality, had driven him along the road of independence. But there was a limit beyond which he could not go. (James, *Black* 364).

Facing a slow death in the mountains of Jura, Toussaint continues to appeal to Bonaparte, citing his service to the French Republic. Toussaint could and did expect treachery from the local whites, even from French Commissioners, but never from the leaders of the revolution in France. Because the ideals of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* were inviolable to Toussaint, he failed to appreciate Bonaparte's interest in restoring slavery in San

Domingo. This mentality, both noble and self-destructive, contributes to the tragic turning point in James's narrative. Once in the forefront of the slave revolt, Toussaint later watches it overtake him.

But while James can reconstruct Toussaint's general feelings on France, much remains a mystery. Why did Toussaint, mistreated by an unjust system that he was bent on destroying, break from so many of his comrades in his insistence on racial harmony and compassionate treatment of former slave holders? How did the man who risked his life to save his master and mistress, eventually sending them to safety under the care of his brother, come to lead the slave revolt? For James, these questions are answered only through recourse to Toussaint's good nature and enlightened aims, yet these aims were also those of the revolution and "it is impossible to say where the social forces end and the impress of personality begins" (James, *Black* 249). This uncertainty is only compounded by Toussaint's inscrutability: "Nobody ever knew what he was doing" (James, *Black* 249). Throughout the text Toussaint morphs, changes, and grows, but he is consistently "self-contained, impenetrable and stern" (James, *Black* 147).

Toussaint cultivated an air of mystery that perplexed his fellow soldiers, the Haitian people, and subsequent biographers. Toussaint's methods were too subtle even for his fellow Generals, with Christophe (one of Toussaint's closest confidants) abandoning the revolution after a secret meeting with Leclerc that was initiated by Toussaint himself, though not to that end (James, *Black* 326). Worse, by keeping his plans and goals secret, Toussaint bewildered the masses. When Toussaint continually made peace with the plantation owners and asked for their input on his government

"Toussaint explained nothing, and allowed the masses to think that their old enemies were being favored at their expense" (James, *Black* 284).[171] Elsewhere the narrator is left to guess at the causes behind Toussaint's actions: if it is hard to understand what Sonthonax was doing, "it is no easier to understand Toussaint's side either" (James, *Black* 190).[172]

The extensive use of conditional statements is supplemented by other mysteries, many of which are posed as unsolvable. Toussaint declared war on the local whites even though "it is probable that" he feared the barbarism that would follow…(James, *Black* 107); on the next page James speculates that "He probably hoped for some attempt at better treatment" (James, *Black* 108). In other instances, the nature of war meant that written records were purposely avoided, with characters like Rigaud sending messengers to convey "things he dared not write down" (James, *Black* 203). Other problems emerging from the historical record are less easily solved through inference, however: "What exactly did Moïse stand for? *We shall never know*" (James, *Black* 277; emphasis mine); "With the packet that contained Roume's appointment were two other packets. What did they contain? *We do not know*" (225; emphasis mine). Over and over again, the text grapples with such quandaries. Throughout the text, character motivations are

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[171] Another example is found on (287); also Toussaint "shut up within himself, immersed in diplomacy, went his tortuous way, overconfident that he had only to speak and the masses would follow" (James, *Black* 240).

[172] James is forced to guess at the reasons for Toussaint's outburst to Vincent (James, *Black* 267). Elsewhere he presents Toussaint as an artist: Toussaint wrote and spoke like a philosopher (206); was even better than the other writers in the revolution because he meant what he wrote (198); Referring to the "style and accent of Toussaint" (155), James argues that Toussaint was "the born writer" (159).

occluded, mysterious, subject to speculation at best and often remaining stubbornly unknowable.

Not only does *The Black Jacobins* play with the trope of the unreliable narrator, but it kicks free of "an onerous plot" by leaving events and actions unresolved. The core of James's book—the story of Toussaint—and though framed by a host of interruptions, proceeds more or less chronologically. Modernist novels do not eschew chronology; they instead reveal conventional modes of temporal organization as imposed structure on something that is infinite. *The Black Jacobins* focuses on Toussaint rather than the revolution itself as a convenient means of delimiting an ongoing revolution. As James makes clear, the slave revolt started before Toussaint was involved and continued after his removal, and eventual death, in a French prison. The first edition skips to the moment of writing at innumerable important points along the narrative. After the temporally unstable Preface, the Prologue explicates the history of Columbus and the fate of the native peoples who were largely worked to death. Even here, as the book imparts the background to the importation of slaves into San Domingo, the present erupts through the surface of this history: "Ours too is an age of propaganda" (James, *Black* 7). The body of the text is steadily interrupted by references to events unfolding in Ireland, in Africa, and on the continent: the rise of Hitler, the Spanish civil war, and the Russian revolution.

The book's commitment to follow Toussaint's life does not provide the predictable narrative structure associated with life-writing. As I point out earlier in this chapter, Toussaint's recent biographer Madison Smartt Bell identifies the presence of a belief "in the power of 'extraordinary men' to influence history" in James's writing (Bell

298). But regardless of James's motivations in thinking of history in this way, the effect is to keep the narrative at one remove from the revolution itself. The conjunction in the book's subtitle, *Toussaint L'Overture and the San Domingo Revolution* shuttles between identification and disidentification—the revolution was partly coterminous with Toussaint but also at odds with him. Rather than appearing as one unified force, the revolt in James's hand is a perpetually unstable set of alliances between groups and individuals with various agendas and interests. Toussaint achieved his greatest successes when he was able to unite these groups but it was never a permanent state of affairs. Even his generals were deeply divided, such that after the removal and then death of Toussaint, Dessalines "had himself crowned emperor" and massacred the remaining whites, both unthinkable under Toussaint's control (James, *Black* 370).

The Black Jacobins features many of the concerns identified by Bradbury and McFarlane. But what about the nihilistic disorder behind the ordered surface of reality? The book goes to great lengths to disrupt "the ordered surface of reality" and expose European delusions. Behind England's self-image as the pioneer of emancipation, James reveals a more complicated history in which the English tried to conquer and reestablish slavery on San Domingo. Similarly, behind the French narrative that the French revolution destroyed slavery, James shows equivocation beforehand and Napoleon's attempt to reverse it after the fact. In both cases, the book pulls the mask off of a rosy story. But it does not reveal a nihilistic disorder; if anything, James reveals a considered economic order behind decisions that link *The Black Jacobins* with the powerful

arguments in James's political writings, which work incrementally and logically, employing traditional rhetorical techniques, up to a clear suggestion for action.

Reading the Palimpsest

The Black Jacobins derives this sense of order from James's previous writings. But as the previous section of this chapter argues, unlike James's earlier work, *The Black Jacobins* is a highly disjointed text. In the first edition in particular, the modernist fragmentation shares an uneasy coexistence with more conventional narratives. The book is partially a heroic account of Toussaint's many victories as well as the story of the birth of Haiti as the first Black post-colonial state. On the other hand, *The Black Jacobins* presents Toussaint as a tragic hero and also reflects obsessively on the challenging circumstances of its own composition. In this sense, James's text is similar to the case-histories of Sigmund Freud, which also sit uneasily between science and art.[173] Both writers deal not only with revolutionary material, but also with the difficulties of trying to narrate repressed histories. These difficulties worried both writers and forced them to return to their material again and again, producing palimpsestic texts. In James's case, as his first extended treatment of the legacy of slavery, his BBC broadcast forms the textual unconscious of *The Black Jacobins*.[174] Read relationally, these texts form one larger text.

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[173] James's sense of Freud's importance to literature is indicated, among other places, in his 1954 essay, "Popular Art and the Cultural Tradition." See James, *Reader* 247-54.

[174] James's other texts are palimpsestic as well, with James plucking sections of *Cipriani* out for re-use in *A Case* and recycling statistics from these works in his broadcast. As he makes these connections, James begins to cite his other work. His statement in the broadcast that "the civil services are over ninety percent colored" is quoted directly from

Steven Marcus's and Susan Stanford Friedman's readings of Freud provide a model and language for understanding connections between James's history and the modernist novel. Like the case-history of Dora by Freud, James's text:

> [i]s neither linear nor rectilinear; instead its organization is plastic, involuted, and heterogeneous and follows an inner logic that seems frequently to be at odds with itself; it often loops back around itself and is multidimensional in its representation of both its material and itself. Its continuous innovations in formal structure seem unavoidably to be dictated by its substance, by the dangerous, audacious, disreputable, and problematical character of the experiences being represented and dealt with… (Marcus 64)

James's history of Toussaint is a radical literary experiment that incessantly stops in its narrative tracks to reflect on the possibilities of its own construction. James's two literary interests collided in *The Black Jacobins* in powerful ways but ones that, like his earlier writings, remained unsatisfying to him. Like Freud's work, James's has a textual unconscious that "symptomatically reflects and partially effects" conflicts that it seeks to overcome (Friedman, "Hysteria" 41). As long as James saw the San Domingo revolution as a stage in a continuing struggle for Black sovereignty, its history could never be complete and its story would remain fragmentary and open.

Like Freud's analysis of Dora, *The Black Jacobins* is marked by James's "return over the years to add new observations, new interpretations, and new theories in subsequent editions…None of these texts is fixed. Each is a site of revision and interminable process" (Friedman, "Hysteria" 45-6). James narrated the story of Toussaint

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Cipriani (James, "Century" 855; *Cipriani* 13) whereas the following statements, "the medical and legal professions over seventy-five percent" and "if we haven't had more posts, it is not because we were not qualified to fill them" are both slight rephrasings from the biography (James, "Century" 855; *Cipriani* 13).

in a host of works written and re-written over the course of his long career. As early as 1931, James begins to narrate Toussaint's story, in a short anti-racist essay, "The Intelligence of the Negro" (1931). Anticipating later work, James concludes his essay by saying: "I think I have written enough. I would have far preferred to write on Toussaint L'Ouverture for instance. But I have thought it necessary to reply to Dr. Harland's view of the negro…" (James, "Intelligence" 236).[175] Well before he published the first edition of *The Black Jacobins*, James wrote and saw into performance a play based on Toussaint's life, *Toussaint L'Ouverture* (1936), which starred Paul Robeson at the Westminster Theatre.[176] The first edition of *The Black Jacobins* (1938) had fallen out of print in the 1960s and when it was republished in 1963, James made substantial edits to the main text as well as adding a new chapter, "From Toussaint L'Ouverture to Fidel Castro." Even then, having revised the text after twenty-five years of perspective, James remained unsatisfied. After a request from a theater in Ibadan, Nigeria, James revised and renamed his play in 1967. This play was then adapted by the BBC in 1971, the same year that James continued to tinker, even if only speculatively, in a series of three lectures entitled, "How I Would Rewrite *The Black Jacobins*."[177]

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[175] The essay was dedicated to countering a pseudo-scientific argument for white superiority and James laments that he could not give more time to Toussaint's history. The necessity of James's reply to Harland can also be evinced by the fact that Alfred Mendes, with whom James collaborated in the creation of Trinidadian "yard fiction," also expressed racist views in the *Beacon*. For more see Rosenberg 125.

[176] For more on the play's textual and performance history, see Sweeney.

[177] The second version of the play was performed again in London in 1986. For more see James, *Reader* 423-4.

As this complicated textual history reveals, James made a habit of returning to, pillaging, and modifying his previous texts. The first edition of *The Black Jacobins* is an uneasy combination of James's advocacy for Caribbean and African peoples [e.g. his pamphlets and essays, *The Case for West Indian Self-Government* (1933) and "Abyssinia and the Imperialists" (1936)] on one hand and his interest in Toussaint's specific story, in historiography, and in literature on the other.[178] These two interests were only linked extra-textually in the theatrical version of *The Black Jacobins* produced in 1936. The proceeds from the performances went to benefit the cause of Abyssinia, but the diegetic world of the play itself was strictly confined to the turn of the nineteenth century. Similarly, both the *Case* and James's essay on Abyssinia restrict themselves to the present and near-past.

James's broadcast, on the other hand, participates in the bold innovation of *The Black Jacobins*, the violent disruption of imperial temporality. The broadcast offended listeners not because of its treatment of the history of slavery (which was rather tame) but because it yoked this history to the present moment in stark opposition to the grand narrative of progress. This disruption of the comforting narrative of linear temporal progression, a collapse of the past into the present through the returning specter of past injustices, constituted—in the eyes of the Colonial Office—an example of unpardonable temporal mayhem.

Operating on three levels simultaneously, the broadcast was too subtle for James's

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[178] "Abyssinia and the Imperialists" was published in *The Keys*, the journal of the League of Coloured Peoples, and argued that the crisis was a wake-up call for Blacks everywhere.

immediate political purposes of dispensing with Crown Colony government in the West Indies. The first and most obvious of the broadcast's appeals was to what James assumed to be a good-natured but sadly misinformed English public. James had no illusions about the fact that most of his audience was unfamiliar with the West Indies. He later recalled, "I visualized my audience as people who had to be made to understand that West Indians were a Westernized people" (James, *Beyond* 118).[179] Given this audience, James makes a number of appeals to common culture, saying: "you may want to know what kind of life Negroes in the West Indies live. Well, there is work, cricket, football, tennis, books, dancing, debating societies, music, vegetating at home; much the same as you have here"

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[179] Though I lack space to devote to an extended treatment of the subject here, the acoustic qualities of James's voice helped to reinforce his message. This is the "politics of the voice" identified by Mladen Dolar in his reading of Althusser—the voice in addition to the pure expression of logos:

> On the one hand there is the process of becoming a subject by recognizing oneself as the addressee of that call which would then be a version of His Master's Voice issuing positive prescriptions; on the other there is at the same time a voice which interpellates without any positive content…If in the first case…ideological domination and autonomous subjectivity work hand in hand, as Althusser has forcefully shown, then in the second case one becomes a subject only by fidelity to the "foreign kernel" of the voice which cannot be appropriated by the self, thus by following precisely the heteronomic break in which one cannot recognize oneself. The ideological interpellation can never quite silence this other voice, and the distance between the two voices opens the space of the political. (Dolar 122-3)

Dolar's focus on the voice as an object helps to refocus our attention on the complex relationship between phone and logos in the radio broadcast. On the one hand, James makes logical appeals to English listeners, attempting to interpellate fellow-subjects of the Empire to live up to its democratic and egalitarian aspirations. James created a broadcast that defamiliarized the expected BBC voice, opening a space in which listeners are confronted with an excess over and above his literal message that nonetheless reinforces that message.

(James, "Century" 856). James stressed that West Indians had British educations and he goes on to provide statistics on literacy to buttress his claims that West Indians were prepared for the vote. Unlike in the accounts of the Colonial Office, the West Indies emerge in James's broadcast as highly modern, filled with trains, automobiles, and electricity as well as a sizeable Black middle-class of lawyers, teachers, clerks, and judges.

James unleashed a two-prong attack—one was to reorient Caribbean history from the point of view of Caribbean people rather than European discoverers or administrators. Lisa Brown argues that in Caribbean life-writing: "the use of 'real life' experiences enacts the dismantling of social, economic and political forces that limit self-discovery and expression" (Brown 276). James employs what Brown calls the "relational model of autobiography," which "subordinates the 'I' of traditional autobiography with the 'we' of the family and society" (Brown 277).[180] After recalling the specific histories of his great-great-grandparents, his grandparents, and parents, James links the family to the society at large: "There you have roughly the history of thousands of middle-class families in the West Indies" (James, *Century* 855). James's reorientation towards West Indian figures was particularly striking given the context of James's broadcast, with the other speakers concerned almost exclusively with the history of English leaders of the emancipation movement. Such characters are completely elided in James's account, which instead

[180] Brown argues that early "we" histories like James's were typically proto-nationalist but that the genre has evolved recently to become more "personal and life-saving" (Brown 277).

focuses on the slaves' efforts to emancipate themselves.[181]

Contrary to the habit of the Colonial Office of discussing the empire in vast generalizations, James immediately personalizes his installment by recounting the adventures of specific members of his family. Rather than Emancipation exclusively coming as an enlightened gift from the British, James stresses the agency of his great-great-grandfather who—well before experiencing his own freedom in 1834—worked as a carpenter to buy the freedom of his wife and two children. One of these children was James's great-grandmother, who gave birth to his grandmother in 1846. This grandmother, through the work of nonconformist churches, was taught to read and write at a young age. She appears in the broadcast as one of James's common heroes; he recounts a story in which a lawyer mistakenly assumes that she was illiterate: "The solicitor suggested that she should make a cross and he would sign. My father tells me that in all his life he had never known the old lady so angry, and though rather shaky in the fingers she insisted on signing" (James, "Century" 855). Though she was eighty-seven at the time of the broadcast, James notes that she "is still able to go to church and follow the service in her prayer-book, as she has done all her life. I mention this because too many people believe that the West Indians even today are a primitive people slowly emerging into civilization" (James, "Century" 855). In numerous ways, James's family history is used to prove and ground his larger claims.

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[181] Nowhere in James's broadcast was emancipation something granted or given. It is instead solely the business of the slaves; of his great-great-grandfather, James says: "In 1833 *he became* absolutely free" (James, *Century* 855; emphasis mine).

On his mother's side of the family, his grandfather became the first colored engine-driver in the Trinidadian railroad system and, when his wife died, sent his mother "to live with some nonconformist old maids" (James, "Century" 856). The result was mixed for James—on the one hand he fondly remembers in his unpublished autobiography reading his mother's books but on the other it contributed to strict discipline in his house: "Victorianism to me is not a thing to be amused at in books, but a very vivid and sometimes painful memory" (James, "Century" 856). James's father was a teacher and then inspector of schools and James himself attended Queen's Royal College and went on to teach there and at the Government Training College before coming to England to work as a writer.

On one level, James's narrative is one of social progress, with each generation of his family enjoying increasing levels of freedom and education.[182] This is mirrored in the linear organization of the broadcast's narrative in that it starts with his great-great-grandfather and works incrementally up to his own situation. As a whole, the broadcast begins with a consideration of life before emancipation, continues to a chronological history of the West Indies following emancipation, and ends with a description of the present state of things.

This personal portion only constitutes about a third of the broadcast, however. James quickly expands outwards. James sought to remind his audience that Crown Colony government was meant to be temporary and that it was an anachronism in a

[182] James points to the West Indian cricket team as evidence of the representative nature of his family's history: "Of the eleven of them there are two teachers, two sanitary inspectors, three or four doing clerical work of some kind connected to business, one a cashier, another a solicitor" (James, "Century" 855).

democratic world. In doing so, he draws from his earlier manifesto/biography of Arthur Andrew Cipriani. The book and its message were inspired by Cipriani, the Trinidadian commander of the British West India Regiment in the First World War, who, upon returning home, used his celebrity to advocate for trade unionism and win a seat on the Legislative Council.[183] Rather than proposing independence, Cipriani called for the end of Crown Colony government and the expansion of education and workers' rights.[184] Taking his cues from Cipriani, James argued in his broadcast primarily for political reform rather than revolution: "many of the better educated Negroes feel that the time has come through a free political life to begin building up some sense of background…There is no treason in this. The West Indian Negro…is the most loyal subject in the British Empire " (James, "Century" 857). The broadcast shared the same philosophy espoused in *The Life of Captain Cipriani* that West Indians are more than sufficiently educated, Western, and advanced to rule themselves.

James concludes his broadcast on a positive note with an anecdote about an English typist he had recently employed who stands in metonymically for the listener.

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[183] Three chapters of this biography, *The Life of Captain Cipriani: An Account of British Government in the West Indies* (1932) served as the basis for his later Hogarth Press pamphlet as well as his BBC broadcast. While James was helping Constantine with his memoir, *Cricket and I* (1933), the two prepared James's biography of Cipriani, with Constantine paying for a small print run in Nelson, Lancashire. Though the broadcast makes no such claims, *Cipriani* contains remnants of European racist science even though James challenged this field in his article in *The Beacon* in 1931. In *Cipriani* James expresses a belief in climate having an effect on populations—but on both, not just Blacks (FT 230-1).

[184] Tied to the advocacy efforts of the Trinidad Workingman's Association [TWA], James's texts and broadcast only shortly preceded widespread strikes on sugar plantations and oil fields, leading to a Royal Commission that espoused many of the arguments by Cipriani and James.

James recalls, "When we had finished we walked down the steps together, she in front and I behind, for I had stayed to turn on the light. As we neared the end of the steps she said, 'Strange, isn't it, that your people used to work for mine and now I work for you?' At the bottom of the steps she waited for me and standing on the level we shook hands" (James, "Century" 857). James's anecdote records the mutually-beneficial nature of a multicultural England that does not forget its past even as it works towards a more equitable future. This moment is also classic James in that it shows racial cooperation as in *Black Jacobins*; in this ambition, he mirrors Toussaint who hoped to gain the support of French revolutionaries against the plotting of the colonial whites.

As he explains, the West Indies had a history of self-government but with Emancipation the whites—fearing the results of being outvoted by the newly freed slaves—agreed to give up legislative self-determination and revert to Crown Colony government. The move was meant to be temporary; as in British mandates, the justification for English intervention was to rule only until Trinidadians were ready to govern themselves, a moment that, James argues, had come.[185] James is careful to point to their advancement in order to argue that the time for self-determination has come but that, out of fear, the white population continues to defer it indefinitely, "Most, though not all, of the white people in the West Indies, say that the coloured people are not yet ready for full control, and that self-government will result in internal chaos…They say also that the islands have made great progress under the present system, which may very well be

[185] While James acknowledges the persistence of superstition among the laboring classes, he goes on to cite high literacy rates in both Barbados and Trinidad and to stress throughout his talk the extent to which West Indians are Westernized, educated people.

allowed to continue, or at least extended very slowly instead of attempting a risky experiment such as full democratic control" (James, "Century" 857). Compounding the problem, James notes that many coloured middle-class people were concerned that full democratic control will scare investors, put their livelihoods at risk, and subject them to the will of an unruly proletariat.

Opposing the slow path towards democracy, James argues forcefully, "The democratic party denies all this. We—and you will understand that I personally associate myself with the democratic movement—believe that such questions as education, labour legislation, the proper adjustment of taxation, and distribution of expenditure, are matters which can only be satisfactorily settled by a democratic constitution" (James, "Century" 857). For James there are two compelling reasons for self-governance: one, that it is essential in a fair society to have internal affairs decided democratically and, two, citing the psychological effects of being governed from abroad, James argues that the West Indian people will continue to feel resentful and inferior as long as local people are overlooked for important positions and denied the opportunity to make decisions. Both of these arguments assume and appeal to British good will, going against James's earlier narrative of self-emancipation. But, as James came to realize in the writing of *The Black Jacobins*, British prejudice stemmed in large part from historicist narratives.

James's broadcast partially disrupted linear temporality but its failure was so clear to James that its first print appearance was already supplemented. To get a sense of what James felt he was up against, we can turn to the BBC's periodical, *The Listener*. In addition to reprinting his broadcast, the issue included a disagreement that unfolded over

the course of a series of letters to the editor between Stanley Casson and James. Their exchange is an example of colonial writers challenging official views and tackling in public forums the same issues they addressed in their writing. Casson's talk and subsequent replies to James partake in the same views expressed by the Colonial Office despite the shift of focus away from government and towards the realm of art.

Casson's talk on "Negro Art" took place the week before James's broadcast and begins by discussing the different regions of the African continent and their corresponding genres and mediums, contrasting the terracotta sculpture of the Yoruba with the metal work of Benin. Typical of modernist appropriations of so-called primitive art, what is most interesting to Casson about these sculptures is their usefulness as a contrast with the decadence of Western Art and the sophisticated mind of the Western artist:

> While we could mould small figures in mud or clay as children, we never thought of keeping up the practice when we grew up; but the Negro has kept it up and he has grown up, without letting himself be affected by the distractions which lure away our eyes and minds in a civilized world. The Negro sculptor between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries was not seduced by the paintings of others, or misled by photographs into doing what he thought would please the public. He merely pleased himself. His work is the work of what I might call a grown-up primitive. And by primitive art I mean art that is produced by men who have the minds of simple children and the hands of grown-up men. (Casson 770)

In Casson's Manichean distinction, Negro art is valuable as an antidote to the rationality of Western Art—supposedly lacking tradition as well as access to photography, the Negro artist is more in tune with nature and himself. According to this view these artists "have the minds of simple children" and this is precisely their strength—they are unencumbered by the stifling traditions of the West.

In his letter to the editor, James frames his rebuttal by pointing to the "ethnological bias" of art criticism, while noting that the "writings of modern anthropologists" counter Casson's assumptions. James continues: "Mr. Casson admits that the Negro sculptor has a 'profound power of simplification' and he concludes that this is the gift of a simple mind. Personally, I doubt it. It is inconceivable to me how anyone looking at the Pahouin Venus…can continue to base his criticism on the theory, daily more and more discarded by modern anthropologists, that the mind of the African, in his so-called 'primitive' condition, was the mind of a child" (James, "Letter" 878). This debate continues for another round of letters in which Casson gives an example of a recent anthropological work that shared his opinion of the Negro mind. James's reply shows the depth of his knowledge and gives historical scope to the question, again using Western sources against Casson's argument about the primitive mind. In addition to citing the contemporary anti-racist anthropologists Franz Boas and Alexander Goldenweiser, James notes that even "books of the early voyagers" like Richard Hakluyt's *Voyages to Guinea* (1598-1600) testify to the advanced civilizations of Africa and conditions "superior to those of many modern European peasants" (James, "Letter" 963).

This critique was not confined to Casson's view but tapped into larger issues of representation of colored people in colonial exhibitions: film (with, for example, Paul Robeson requesting more realistic roles for Black actors), and the modernist appropriation of primitive art. The Woolf's Hogarth Press published James's pamphlet but another figure in their circle, Roger Fry, had written a review, "Negro Sculpture at the

Lefevre Gallery" in which he critiqued "how slow we have been in this country to adopt ourselves to the idea of the aesthetic importance of negro sculpture" but in which he also reinscribes the view that the art works are the product of "a profound instinctive feeling for plastic harmony" (Fry 289). The influence of "primitive" pieces on modern art has been well documented but as James points out, the supposed appreciation of the primitive was often tied to political subjugation.[186]

Conclusion

Certainly James's act of rescripting Caribbean history from the point of view of the Caribbean people is significant but his disruption of imperial temporality was just as radical and pointed. Reading the broadcast and *The Black Jacobins* together brings this out and reading these as palimpsests brings this temporal mayhem out in even starker relief. If we read James's work exclusively in the history or canon of Caribbean life-writing we risk downplaying another of its significant formal features and in turn miss its attendant politics.

As in his later work, James's appeal in his broadcast is framed within a Western, Enlightenment tradition; though critical of the specific ways in which British rule is being carried out, James does not advocate for a reactionary nationalism. The connections with

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[186] Gertrude Stein recalls the appeal, for Parisian painters, of African masks and statues in her *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. More recently William Rubin's *Primitivism in 20th Century Art*, based around a 1984 show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, inspired many responses including a chapter in Marianna Torgovnick's *Gone Primitive*, which gives a useful catalog and analysis of the tropes of "primitivist discourse, " as well as a chapter on William Rubin, "William Rubin and the Dynamics of Primitivism" (Torgovnick 8).

his later work, specifically *The Black Jacobins*, is crucial. The many parallels between *The Black Jacobins* and the broadcast help us to see that the book was not simply a way to use the mistakes of the Haitian Revolution and apply them to the coming revolutions in Africa—it was also a way to understand what had gone wrong in the much less distant past. But it is precisely this moment and this struggle that we risk losing if the second, revised edition of *The Black Jacobins* is understood as better and more useful because less formally challenging.

If we think of *The Black Jacobins* as a modernist novel, we need not overlook its tragic emplotment, we just see it as one feature in a significantly larger set. Franz Kuna points out that the twentieth-century novel often absorbed what would have been written as tragic drama in other periods: "It is the modern novel which has embodied most eagerly Nietzsche's formula of the 'Janus face' of modern man, who is doomed to exist tragically. The attempt to absorb and distil such a view of human existence has tended…to make many modern writers employ tragic, or tragic-comic, myths as underlying patterns or plots in their work" (Kuna 444). *The Black Jacobins* is constantly shifting its gaze backward and forward and uses Toussaint's tragic fate as a structuring principle.

The Black Jacobins is an artistic manifesto, proposing and practicing a passionate and highly subjective mode of historiography. It shows how a history from the bottom up is an ideal, but one that is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. But *The Black Jacobins*, for all its skepticism and radical formal innovation, often repeats arguments from James's

broadcast. One of Toussaint's greatest achievements is the abolition of the French version of Crown Colony Government in San Domingo. Before the uprising, writes James:

> The heads of the bureaucracy were the Governor and the Intendant. The Governor was the official representative of the King, with all this implies even to this day in the administration of distant colonies…There was some pretence at local self-government. Both at Le Cap and at Port-au-Prince there were local councils which registered the royal edicts and the decisions of the local government…But the Intendant, like the Governor in the British Legislative Council of to-day, could accept or reject their advice as he pleased (James, *Black* 34-5).

Here is the same complaint raised in James's broadcast—that the Governor exercised a despotic control over local affairs that should be decided democratically. One of Toussaint's most significant innovations was in a complete rewriting of the relationship between colony and motherland:

> What would strike any Frenchman, however was that the Constitution, though swearing allegiance to France, left no room for any French official…Absolute local independence on the one hand, but on the other French capital and French administrators, helping to develop and educate the country, and a high official from France as a link between both governments. The local power was too well safeguarded for us to call the scheme a protectorate in the political content of that dishonest word. All evidence shows that Toussaint, working alone, had reached to that form of political allegiance which we know to-day as Dominion Status. (James, *Black* 264-5)

We can see where the disruption of standard chronological time is headed in *The Black Jacobins*. More than a meditation on tragedy, or the distance between revolutionary leaders and insurgent masses, *The Black Jacobins* is about getting the formula right between Europe and the Caribbean as a necessarily ongoing, interminable process, something scholars fail to do by ignoring the challenges posed by James's radical aesthetic. Time, in the work of James, is not a linear force but one that is disjointed,

looping back on itself. Especially given that argument, we would be wise not to dismiss James's early work as somehow dated, resolved, or later improved upon. The generic inscrutability of *The Black Jacobins* performs the irresolvable conflicts of the age.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted, in this study, to offer an account of modernism not as the academy came to see it, but rather as it was presented to the multitudes at the time—on the radio. The wireless engagements of these writers help us see a different, looser modernism. It is more public, engaged, and—at least in an aesthetic sense—less radical than earlier instantiations. The complicated trajectories of BBC employees, their broadcasts, and the books and ideas they discussed offer historical grounding to claims of modernism's transnational engagements.

Forster enjoyed a second life as a critic, but one who engaged the colonies and largely turned his back to England. Often deployed in the novels of Salman Rushdie as a placeholder for colonial nostalgia, Forster's career had a much more complicated course—one that in many ways laid the groundwork for international literary celebrities like Rushdie himself. Positing Anand as a central figure who continued to experiment and refine modernist aesthetics into the 1940s and beyond is more than a challenge to the recent domestication of *Untouchable*—it confronts us with criss-crossing waves of influence that deserve more elaborate and nuanced study. As I hoped to show, other writers at the time were influenced in more oblique, even negative ways, but recovering the importance of radio to their oeuvre is nonetheless essential to understanding their reception. Joyce positioned himself outside both the BBC and 2RN out of a frustration with their politics and his status. But in an irony that only the *Wake* could have predicted, it was the BBC's imperial radio service that launched the *Wake* to new readers. H.C. E. did, in fact, transmit his story over the BBC. C. L. R. James was the most marginalized

figure in “Fiction on the Radio,” yet his work is now on the ascendency in the academy as it grapples with global economic inequality and the cultural politics of decolonization. Radio itself awaits a second life distributed in the newer sense of wireless. We can only ask what literature will follow when the technology is used, in the words of the *Wake*, to pick up “airs from other over the aether” (BL 47486a-147; JJA 61:220).

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