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WAR, CITIES, TRASH: SOME MIDCENTURY PASTORALS

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"All these possibilities are present in the *Arcadia*—
romance and realism, poetry and psychology."

—Virginia Woolf,
"The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia"

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War, Cities, Trash: Arcadia & Utopia at Midcentury

In the early 1950s, W.H. Auden considered two "dream pictures of the Happy Place," a world in which suffering, duty, and the ravages of time do not exist. Auden says we imagine such places as Edens (Arcadia) or New Jerusalems (Utopia). The differences are temporal—Arcadias are past, Utopias are future—but it's clear that, for Auden, Utopias entail actual danger since they necessarily include "images of the Day of Judgment," visions of the cleansing and purifying rites by which worthy Utopian wheat is separated from unworthy chaff. Hitler, Auden observes, was a Utopian and utopia, Auden claims, is thus "serious."[1] By contrast, Arcadia was psychological or technical, a problem of representation rather than an attempt to recreate reality. The writer of Edens "has to devise a way of making outward appearances signify subjective states of innocence and happiness to which, in the real world, they are not necessarily related"; such writers fabricate a "wish-dream which cannot become real."[2] Rather than a fact that might (is intended to) destroy the world, Arcadia exists in the space of the writer's head, in her poems or tales, as a fantasy or wish disconnected from the claims of that world.

Utopia was serious for Auden and it has been serious for literary studies as well. Utopian thinking, utopian plans, utopian movements, even the word itself, have occupied an outsized role in literary and cultural studies over the last decades. The "states of innocence and happiness" Auden ascribes to writers of Edens, meanwhile, have remained more or less identified with

[1] First delivered as a lecture, the essay "Dingley Dell & The Fleet," can be found in W.H. Auden, *The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays* (New York: Random House, 1962), 409. Auden writes of Utopia's frequent coincidence with aggressive fantasies: "Even Hitler, I imagine, would have defined his New Jerusalem as a world where there are no Jews, not as a world where they are being gassed by the million day after day in ovens, but he was a Utopian, so the ovens had to come in" (410).
[2] Ibid., 414, 410.

pastoral—and pastoral with them.[3] Theorists, critics, and historians know a lot about utopia in the twentieth century: as programs orienting diverse populations and political movements; as texts (mostly novels) and aesthetic practices; as "a way of thinking, a mentality, a philosophical attitude" for groups ranging from urban planners to drug developers.[4] This dissertation began with my sense that critics, scholars, and general readers know less, or don't believe it is particularly important to know more, about pastoral in the mid-twentieth century, years when utopian projects and rhetorics were in full flower and pastoral criticism proliferated. Yet Auden's essay, with its reference to World War II, to concentration camps, to Hitler himself, flags the possibility of highly specific incarnations of both imaginaries. Arcadia and Utopia, utopia and pastoral, accrue qualities, habits, landscapes, and emotions contingent on historical events, real-world rhythms. Dream-pictures suggest ways of being, doing, moving, creating—world-making on the one hand, world-retreating on the other.

Auden's account of mental retreat cannot itself be extricated from what George Orwell would call, in another essay written during World War II, "world processes." But the world is most often the condition or climate from which pastoral shrinks, or shies away. Pastoral has seemed to propose the psychological subject Auden sketches, one committed to devising alternate realities that soothe, placate, restore "subjective states" in a purely mental or fictional realm. Auden describes a model of self-regulation familiar from Freudian psychoanalysis: pastoral is one mechanism by which an individual seeks pleasure at the expense of reality. Best known for his work on the historical avant-garde, Renato Poggioli also contributed to midcentury

[3] In terms of modern and contemporary aesthetic production, "pastoral" has tended to attach narrowly to poetry and verse traditions. The prevalence of anthologies of pastoral poetry suggests this trend: see most recently *The Arcadia Project: North American Postmodern Pastoral,* editors Joshua Corey and GC Waldrep (Boisie, ID: Ahsahta Press, 2012).
[4] Rosemary Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia: An Intellectual History of the New Town Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 4.

debates about pastoral. His historical study of "The Pastoral of the Self" likewise suggested that from depictions of the world "out there," Renaissance and Romantic pastoralists turned inward, creating a garden "in here," free from external control and social bonds. By the late eighteenth century, Poggioli claimed, pastoral became a vehicle for narcissistic introspection and autobiographical musings, a space in which one devised a world to one's liking—a dream, or a wish, of newly emancipated Enlightenment individuals for and about themselves.[5]

Poggioli's portrait didn't just historicize pastoral; first published in 1959 in *Daedalus,* the journal of record for the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, his article simultaneously inscribed pastoral in midcentury's literary-critical field. In the mid- and late-twentieth century, that field was increasingly consumed with interpretative procedures determined to hoist the "repressed" ideological content of a work into view.[6] Under these conditions, certain critical commonplaces developed that extended a longer tradition of considering pastoral as deceptive cover for social realities on the one hand, private fantasy on the other. As critics brought to the surface its unconscious desires and ideological complacencies, Arcadia regularly failed to offer politically useful models of social organization let alone transformation.[7] Or the pastoralist's longing after innocence and happiness conjoined with mass culture industries excoriated by

[5] Renato Poggioli, The Pastoral of the Self," *Daedalus,* Vol. 88, No. 4, Quantity and Quality (Fall 1959), pp. 686-699.
[6] Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015). Felski describes critique as the literary critical paradigm of the twentieth century; critique prizes looking "behind the text—for its hidden causes, determining conditions, and noxious motives" (12).
[7] In "Varieties of Literary Utopias" (*The Stubborn Structure: Essays on Criticism and Society* [London: Methuen, 1970]), Northrop Frye opined that continuing to nurture the utopian imagination augured well for potentially penetrating social critiques. Since utopias are premised on what current social conditions lack, developing speculative and constructively imaginative projects allows writers to communicate both the limits and potentials of existing social norms to readers. Pastoral by contrast strips down or pares away social bonds. Rather than Utopians' desire to construct and overlay new conceptual terms, to create hyper-rational cities and social rituals, Arcadians' or pastoralists' interest in the limits and essentials of social life, Frye argued, proved not importantly political but individual. Pastorals were less about a writers' attempt to analyze his or her own society and more about dream, fantasy, and wish-fulfillment.

Marxist critics and viewed suspiciously by cultural studies following the Frankfurt school—in this view, pastoral remained little more than a kitsch object used to hawk fantasies of an apolitical good life.[8] Or pastoral was accused of harboring dangerous national myths, origin stories feeding fantasies of the "conservative Right," in which universalized, departicularized subjects exist in happy but ahistorical "states of nature."[9]

Such myths and cultural codes were broken, exposed, resisted by a host of midcentury critics, and yet these powerful accounts created a version of pastoral we still more or less live with: pastoral is often described as a mechanism, a thing done to reality in order to obscure, mystify, or render useful to dominant culture the material conditions and actual processes of history. An instrumentalized pastoral code might seem at odds with a sealed-off pastoral subject making his own Happy Place of the mind, but the point is that the processes feed back into each other by willfully ignoring experiences on the ground. Insofar as critics pursue the affective or emotional dimensions of literature—those who might be interested in the social uses of pleasure and fantasy—pastoral is also suspect. Ann Cvetkovich describes how her work on "public feelings" such as depression, melancholy, shame and failure "resists *pastoralizing* or redemptive accounts of negative feeling that seek to convert it into something useful or positive."[10] The

[8] In *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), Raymond Williams accused the Georgians of mixing up projections of the idealized rural past with reverence and observation of the present—their "external preconceptions" "capture" the real things of the world and freeze them in cultural commodities like books, anthologies, and magazines that erase the "real land and its people," writing over them with a "suburban and half educated scrawl" (256).

[9] See Renato Poggioli who declared "there is no political pastoral but of the conservative Right… a pastoral of the Left is conceivable only in terms of a nonviolent resistance against an authority" (*The Oaten Flute* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975]), 30. In *A Book of English Pastoral Verse,* editors John Barrell and John Bull reiterate: "At the outset, the Pastoral is a *mythical* view of the relationship of men in society, at the service of those who control the political, economic, and cultural strings of society" (*A Book of English Pastoral Verse* [New York: OUP, 1975]), 4.

[10] Ann Cvetkovich, *Depression: A Public Feeling,* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 5-6, emphasis added.

accent here lands on pastoral's bad-faith fulfillment of the wish it proposes or sets in motion. And here too the critic must resist pastoral's charms. Pastoral's critical history thus arranges and rearranges our sense of its concerns, locations, forms, and possibilities; it has always existed as the interaction of critical work and literary artifact, as discourse about itself and the world in which its dream picture might offer sustenance or come up short.[11]

This project in contrast considers pastoral less a message in need of interpretation than a way of describing the world; I seek out pastoral engagements that might yet exceed or resist capture by our habitual interpretative procedures. Pastoral descriptiveness can entail representations of natural landscapes or rural locales, threatened lifeways—typical contents of "pastoral." But descriptiveness as I read it also encompasses critical methods and positions, publication scenarios and scenes of reception, cultural and disciplinary exchanges by which we can map rather than demystify cultural production. Arcadia, as Virginia Woolf's epigraph suggests, might yet generate diverse practices and approaches. Recent work on utopian literature can steer this shift in orientation. While scholars have moved away from considering utopias as "an intellectual construct in assorted individuals' heads" to thinking through the broader historical and social conditions which fund particular "style[s] of imagination," no such attempt has been made with pastoral.[12] Indeed, rescue missions for pastoral tend to sift good from bad, claiming it is interesting insofar as it transcends or overturns itself. Exposing the wish has

[11] See Renato Poggioli: "The Poetics of Pastoral" in *The Oaten Flute.* In this chapter, Poggioli develops a genealogy of the main arguments associated with pastoral criticism; he notes the typical reactions to pastoral are apology or condemnation. These polarized reading formations tend to reinscribe pastoral dichotomies onto the conditions of its reception. Paul Alpers notes something similar in his reading of Schiller's *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry,* a work that has exercised outsize influence on modern critics of pastoral: "pastoral still seems to us to be defined by the problem of man's relation to nature and the phenomena and issues which Schiller derives from it" (Alpers, *What Is Pastoral Poetry* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996]), 31.

[12] *Utopia/Dystopia: Conditions of Historical Possibility,* edited by Michael D. Gordin, Helen Tilley, and Gyan Prakash (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 4, 5.

remained the default critical operation. However, utopian projects have received renewed critical interest not because they index a representation that turns out to be false, unrealized, or unrealizable, but because they induce something specific to the time and place of their construction. The editors of a recent collection of essays on utopian thought claim such projects "always draw on the resources present in the ambient culture."[13] Pastoral in this dissertation is a similarly ambient phenomenon. While I focus on "assorted individuals' heads," I do so to establish how internalized experiences of crises—from war to environmental degradation—precipitated cultural moods, climates, or atmospheres that reused and recast pastoral's repertoires.

The three chapters of this dissertation explore how social, spatial, and symbolic arrangements and affiliations in midcentury British and American culture were imagined and organized through recourse to changing patterns, visions, and techniques of pastoral. While our critical habits have reified pastoral as "about" idealized landscapes or nostalgic longings, central to pastoral is the notion of singer or shepherd, a representative figure with ties and attachments to forms of living and patterns of life.[14] This midcentury pastoralist then differed from the utopian in tone and style. They were less invested in changing or remaking the whole world than articulating strategies for coping with specific scenes or moments within it. The writers in this dissertation were at one point charged with or took on "representative" status: strongly identified

[13] Ibid., 4.

[14] See Paul Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?* for an excellent introduction to the long history of Western "ideas of pastoral." Alpers also emphasizes the figure of shepherd or herdsman in pastoral's "representative anecdote." Leo Marx would eventually highlight the "liminal" position of shepherds to society as one of the central principles of pastoral; "shepherd-like liminality" persists even as actual shepherds disappear from pastoral works. All these interventions echo Annabel Patterson's claim that pastoral is the mode through which intellectuals and artists—figures at some remove from the worlds they are both part of and apart from—speak about their dilemmas. See Leo Marx, "Does Pastoralism Have a Future?" *Studies in the History of Art,* Vol. 36, Symposium Papers XX: The Pastoral Landscape (1992), pp. 208-225 and Annabel Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

with a certain type of short story (Sylvia Townsend Warner), anointed poet of a generation (Richard Brautigan) or guru for a movement (Paul Goodman). These identifications were neither lasting nor monolithic but functions of celebrity and the marketplace as well as local contingencies, practical necessities, personal proclivity. Each chapter tries to model how pastoral works at this mid-level or "meso-scale" of representativeness, where utopia's macro-ambitions don't figure but something more than fantasies of individual contentment are wagered.[15]

Chapters are loosely organized around geographical units such as nation, region, and local/global "community." While pastoral's use to national literatures is well known, the mode also drew national literatures into new arrangements. George Orwell's "English pastoral" novel, *Coming Up for Air* (1939), was actually written while Orwell was convalescing in Morocco and the conditions of the pre-war Maghreb cannot be cleanly excised from the book's account of English national culture on the brink of rupture. Richard Brautigan's "American pastoral" *Trout Fishing in America* (1967) first appeared in the context of the trans-Pacific journeys of the Beat avant-garde.[16] William Empson wrote *Some Versions of Pastoral* (1935) while studying Buddhist statuary in Japan. This line of inquiry suggests that pastoral's literary critical history as a nationalizing project has failed to account for the mode's more circuitous paths through

[15] Writing of the "humanistic middle," Paul Saint Amour has recently declared that scholarly commitments to polarizing terms like "macro" and "micro" have left us at a loss for how middle-scales work, how the fiction of frictionless representation is generated in methods that seek exemplarity from single texts, for example, or claim grand narratives by effacing local and contextual circumstances. See Paul Saint-Amour, "The Medial Humanities: Toward a Manifesto for Meso-Analysis," *Modernism/modernity print+,* Volume 3, Cycle 4, https://modernismmodernity.org/forums/posts/medial-humanities-toward-manifesto-meso-analysis

[16] On Brautigan's international reception see Barnard Turner, "Richard Brautigan, *Flânerie,* and Japan: Some International Perspective on His Work" in *Richard Brautigan: Essays on the Writings and Life,* edited by John F. Barber (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co, 2007). See also Shohreh Laici "Trout Fishing in Tehran," *World Literature Today,* March-April 2018. Laici notes there are a "slew of characteristics that have made him [Brautigan] a major author in Iran: existentialism, identity crises, consumer society, the environmental crisis, the idea of self, Zen philosophy, choosing a lifestyle opposed to the American dream, repetition, his poetic style, his haikus, grotesque characters from the suburbs, death…" (22).

globalizing, mediatized space. From the English countryside of World War II, this dissertation probes the ways in which pastoral was seized as a cultural trope and undergirded disciplinary discourses not just in British or American or trans-Atlantic contexts, but as a mode suited to capturing the complexities of shifting geo-social, political, and literary time and space. I pay attention to the circulation of these arguments: what conferences writers attended, which little (and not so little) magazines they published in, the countries they traveled to and wrote from, what sorts of audiences they addressed and how they did so. Investigating the means by which—and scenes from whence—writers imagined themselves as representative allows for a more capacious sense to emerge of pastoral's utility as cultural inquiry.

Real-world and rhetorical positions inflected midcentury pastorals in myriad ways. In chapter one, for example, I focus on landscape and national belonging at a moment in British history when national culture was particularly febrile, during the aerial attacks of World War II. The countryside was a site of contested feeling, a peaceful scene of country air that was nonetheless subject to aerial representational practices such as bird's-eye views—and actual aerial events like the Blitz. Novels from Virginia Woolf, George Orwell, Rex Warner, and the short stories of Sylvia Townsend Warner—as well as radio broadcasts, newspaper images, and popular magazines—all drew on pastoral to negotiate the moment's contradictory cultural politics, where British traditions and lifeways might be simultaneously risible and threatened. The chapter traces "World War Pastorals" through an archive of countryside war writing that interrogated, and sometimes re-inscribed, assumptions undergirding pastoral as a national project. These writers were highly conscious of international frameworks that resituated nations, and in particular the English nation, within new geopolitical realities, and they turned to modes

of mass media, including radio, to reimagine pastoral positions of passivity, detachment, and complicity as possible alternatives to oppressive conditions of war culture.

My second chapter examines "Cosmopolitan Pastorals" as those which figure the dilemmas of intellectuals as they speak to, for, and about others. The city and the region became topics of intense debate in midcentury spatial discourses that paired pastoral with the promise of new forms of social organization typically thought to be the purview of urban and regional planners, but which were frequently topics treated by literary critics and cultural commentators as well. England and the US were drawn into proximity through these debates, particularly with the republication of Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1898; 1965, introduction by Lewis Mumford), a title that alerts us to the deep resonances between planning and pastoral. Paul Goodman is the chapter's key figure as his works across gestalt psycho-therapy, physical planning, social criticism, and literature reworked pastoral to figure new forms of relation between readers and writers, past places and present communities, social and spatial forms. Goodman's contributions to these debates proposed ways of conceptualizing space at odds with either Howardian or utopian planning discourse. Such differences were matters of social vision but also tone and critical style. For Goodman, planners obsessed with achieving "the right style in planning" failed to understand that what was at stake was conceiving and articulating social goods at all. His quirky, queer pastorals addressed missing psychological dimensions in midcentury planning discourse by proposing a fluid, shifting attention to the built environment that renovated pastoral's pedigree, and he negotiated a "contact-boundary" between writer and reader based in his earliest experiments with pastoral precepts and conventions.

In the third chapter, I excavate the material dimensions of "Trash Pastorals" in the 1960s American counterculture. While pastoral is primarily understood as harboring anti-modern

messages—whether through its fantasies of retreat or nostalgic representations of landscape—I look at the biographies of the era's most infamous examples in order to adduce how pastoral took on meanings inextricable from its appearance as "thing" as well as theme. The chapter follows Richard Brautigan's pastorals through disparate spaces and scenes: from initial appearances as free literature and at community readings to items featured in little magazines and finally codified as best-selling collections, I find that these works accrue interpretative layers inextricable from shifts in vernacular uses and understandings of pastoral's cultural presence and significance. Mediation of symbolic geographies and typologies—country/city but also abundance/waste and leisure/labor—are grounded in ephemeral artifacts and community actions as much as they result from enduring verities or conventions. While the counterculture's recycling of pastoral tropes was widely recognized by contemporary critics, Brautigan both thematizes and literalizes reuse. His anthropomorphic strategies in which trash is granted lively co-presence with human protagonists nuance highly schematic accounts of the era's pastorals as environmental kitsch. Finally, reconsidering the original publication contexts of his works foregrounds pastoral as part of a mosaic approach to a culturally and temporally plural global community. As Rebecca Walkowitz has argued, "enlarging what counts as the object also brings new visibility to the social dynamics of production, allowing us to see how the multiplicity of object reveals a more complex sense of an artwork's origin and intended audience."[17] Rather than seamless imagining of alternative forms of community, this section highlights the made-ness of midcentury pastoral, its awkward or naive joining of histories, places, and styles.

[17] Rebecca Walkowitz, "What is the Scale of a Literary Object," *Modernism/modernity Print+,* Vol. 3, Cycle 4, https://modernismmodernity.org/forums/what-scale-literary-object

Modal Possibilities

Although Auden was not alone in thinking of pastoral as a "picture" or representational practice characterizing discrete literary or aesthetic objects, pastoral is better understood as a mode. Less tightly organized than genres yet no less historically situated and attuned, modes are diffuse categories of expression. Unlike genres, which have undergone critical rethinking, modes remain "surprisingly unexamined concept[s]."[18] Scholars now focus on genres' relations to social worlds and collective feelings, to how genres are produced by acts of receiving. As one means of organizing experience, genres fail to fit into historically settled abstract categories but carry on expressive feelings or get emplotted as citational acts. Rather than members of sprawling hierarchical systems, genres have been revealed as the interface between social reality and literature.[19]

Modes on the other hand are not quite a bundle of attributes or the appearance, however altered or hybrid, of a specific kind of object. Harder to register, more fugitive and fleeting, modes are typically adjunct to genres, confined to literature proper even as modal effects seem all but destined to dissipate beyond the text. Alastair Fowler has remarked that "a mode announces itself by distinct signals, even if these are abbreviated, unobtrusive, or below the

[18] Paul Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?*, 44.

[19] "The relation between literary producer and consumer will be reflected in the form of the genre," declares Susan Stewart in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993)*,* 7. See also: Stewart, "Notes on Distressed Genres," The Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 104, No. 11 (Winter 1991), pp. 5-31. More recently, see: Dimock, "Genres as Fields of Knowledge," *PMLA,* Vol. 122, No. 5, Special Topic: Remapping Genre (Oct., 2007), pp. 1377-1388 and Bruce Robbin's "Afterword" to the same issue; Duschinsky and Wilson, "Flat Affect, Joyful Politics, and Enthralled Attachments: Engaging with the Work of Lauren Berlant," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society,* 28 (2015), pp. 179-190; Berlant, "Structures of Unfeeling: *Mysterious Skin,*" *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society,* 28 (2015), pp. 191-213.

threshold of modern attention."[20] Modes are amorphous, sensed or "implied" (a word that crops up repeatedly in Fowler's passages on them), and they extend the possible afterlives of genres into more "plastic forms." However, modes have been understood in two "almost opposite" ways: they are on the one hand this "extension of notionally fixed genres… into more plastic categories."[21] But "mode" is also used to mean the manner of literary representation—dramatic, narrative, or, in the classic Aristotelian categories, "mixed." Gérard Genette, in this vein, described modes as matters for linguistics, not literature. Modes in this sense arise independently of literary precedents and are merely "ways of representing actions in language."[22] They are "situations of enunciation…based on the transhistorical and translinguistic fact of pragmatic situations."[23]

While these two definitions of mode are kept apart in genre theory, it's not hard to see how an extended genre might come to be associated with something like a "situation of enunciation" over time and in more vernacular or ordinary contexts. Indeed, we use something of the two senses at once when we say, "Y is being so *dramatic!"* We mean that Y is presenting something in an exaggerated fashion, but our sense of that exaggeration has roots in commonplaces around theatricality and performance—Y is being theatrical, as though Y were an actor in a play. When we categorize Y's behavior we do so without reference to the explicit

[20] Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 107.
[21] David Duff, *Modern Genre Theory* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 2000), 17.
[22] Gérard Genette, *The Architext: An Introduction,* translated by Jane E. Lewin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 70. The "architext" is part of Genette's theory of "transtextuality," an approach that allows us to see "everything that brings it [a text] into relation (manifest or hidden) with other texts" (81). For Genette, modes, genres, and "objects" intersect in the "architext" which is, he claims, "everywhere—above, beneath, around the text, which spins its web only by hooking it here and there onto that network of architexture" (83). The architext is a kind of medium that allows texts to be received as communicating objects.
[23] Ibid., 74.

history of drama or theatricality. We mean only that a way of enunciating has taken place. But our ability to name this situation "dramatic" comes from a longer history, unacknowledged but resonant, that is entangled with literary ideas. Modes extend genres out into rhetorical ether but modes also coalesce into Genette's pragmatic situations that occur seemingly without reference, or with minimal reference, to conventions of the genre invoked. It's unlikely we'd ever say, "Z is being so *pastoral*," but "pastoral" does appear in a surprising number of pragmatic situations, a handy descriptor that might convey an incredible range of meanings dependent on context, situation, tone or intonation—the purview of linguistics—as well as shared cultural and historical senses of literature.

Pastoral contains both literary and linguistic aromas, then: we might consider it as the invocation of generic traits that have receded below the level of conscious use and the name for enunciations grounded in particular situations, scenes, and scenarios. While pastoral continues to be linked to genres, especially poetry, this dissertation proposes a more capacious understanding of the mode at midcentury, a time when pastoral was more various and nebulous than our current critical frameworks allow. Margaret Ronda makes this point in her recent book on post-1945 American poetry. Reading counterculture writers Diane di Prima and Gary Snyder (who also make guest appearances in this dissertation), Ronda's sense of pastoral at midcentury closely aligns with Paul Goodman's calls for "Neolithic conservatism" in *New Reformation* (1970). For Ronda, as for Goodman, pastoral enabled the imagining of alternatives radically at odds with reigning "economic and liberal-humanist logics" and focused instead on "nonmodern scenes of simple subsistence and essential pieces of knowledge passed down through the generations."[24]

[24] Margaret Ronda, *Remainders: American Poetry at Nature's End* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 86. Ronda does not mention Goodman and the contradictions between tradition/transmission of generational "knowledge," on the one hand, and "revolutionary" youth and counterculture movements, on the other, that his career highlights.

By selective deletion of current realities, writers including Goodman could identify the unclaimed potential of the distant and more recent past. The pastoral "radicalism" Ronda situates primarily in Bay Area poetry and activist scenes was longstanding—in Goodman's case its origins lay in his work from the 1930s—while the Bay Area itself hosted several competing "versions" of pastoral politics and poetics which I exfoliate in my final chapter.

Ronda notes that a "mode of pastoral thinking becomes increasingly 'impossible'… in subsequent years." She continues: "Certain pastoral themes—simplicity, innocence, being-in-common, the nonmodern, primitivism—become increasingly unavailable… particularly in relation to the possibility of a radical break from capitalist realism."[25] Pastoral in the 1970s and beyond highlighted an artificial or, as Ronda puts it, "citational" relationship to nature that took shape within changing critical formulations of ecological precariousness and responsibility and the overwhelming fact of global capital. But representativeness also received critical scrutiny; if certain pastoral "themes" have sputtered, its midcentury appeals to shared values and styles of speech—aspects of being-in-common but also potential erasures of difference—are now likely to be read as examples of ideological distortions servicing false universalism, while notions of the artist's special status smack of retrograde or modernist elitism. It's not just that themes germane to this or that "mode of pastoral thinking" atrophy or dissipate but, I'd argue, pastoral *as a mode* becomes much less pronounced. While Ronda remarks that this has to do with our contemporary inability to imagine economic regimes other than capitalism, pastoral's wane as a critical and creative practice also suggests a certain paucity in our engagements with the possibilities of the present. Writing about Sidney's *Arcadia* in the 1930s, Virginia Woolf declared, "We like to feel

[25] Ibid., 88.

that the present is not all."[26] And yet, Woolf went on, Sidney's inventions didn't deny present realities so much as create new ones. In the following chapters, writers attempt to re-imagine their present moment, to expand whatever zones might constitute "now" (or "here") through establishing relationships between contradictory states and so expand reality: to include peace in war, to relate country and city as sites of mutually informing experience, to turn trash into art.

Such relationships were organized in part through the era's experiments with pastoral. Goodman himself provides an example of how the mode flowed through and invigorated myriad "expressive forms" in this period.[27] While modes signal, according to one critic, that the "ethos of the work informs technique and that technique implies ethos," both ethos and technique should be understood as highly responsive qualities, inflecting and in turn inflected by the atmospheres of the eras in which a given mode appears.[28] Goodman's long career spanning multiple genres is united by an underlying politics sensitive to social transformations and economic contractions in the years after World War II—a position he called, provocatively, "Neolithic conservatism" or "conservative anarchism"—but his works also share a familiar key or manner of presentation. He frequently framed arguments through acts of quotation that extend frames of reference in constellations of historically diverse sources, thinkers, and traditions even as he insisted he wrote from and about his immediate experience. Michael Vincent Miller has

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[26] Virginia Woolf, "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia," *The Second Common Reader* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1932), 32.

[27] See Leo Marx, "Does Pastoralism Have a Future?" in *Studies in the History of Art.* In the 1980s, Marx reconsidered pastoral, also identifying it as a mode capable of housing nearly infinite varieties and mutations of itself. Mode for Marx is "the broadest, most enduring and inclusive category of aesthetic kinds; it derives its character not from its formal properties, as a genre does, but rather from a special perspective on human experience, one that stresses the significance of certain conditions, aspects, or qualities of life to the relative neglect, necessarily, of others" (210). Like Paul Alpers, however, Marx understands "mode" as the portrayal of specific *content* rather than emphasizing, as I do, mode as the manner of and reason for portrayal in the first place. Pastoral in this case is a "way of saying," in addition to "what" is said.

[28] Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?,* 49.

addressed the lacunae in psychotherapy around Goodman's contributions, an absence or omission he links directly to the mode Goodman favored: "I suspect that most psychotherapists don't know what to make of Goodman's manner of presentation when he writes about therapy. On the one hand, I can imagine that the bureaucratic professionals of mental health would consider his psychological writing more 'literary' than 'scientific' and thus would have trouble taking it seriously… On the other hand, the high-voltage energy-releaser therapists often seem more interested in new techniques for cheer-leading their patients on to victory than in enriching their theoretical knowledge. Goodman fits neither mold very well."[29] At odds with existing "molds" or genres, Goodman's "manner" can be better understood through a category such as mode, an ethos that self-reflexively feeds technique.

Goodman's psychotherapeutic interventions might be traced, as I show in my second chapter, to early forays with pastoral. That is, acquaintance with the mode's precepts and positions—it was featured on his orals list at the University of Chicago—can be seen as one model for his "manner of presentation." In "2 Pastoral Movements," a composition written while Goodman was still a graduate student at the University of Chicago, the kinds of disciplinary cross-hatching Miller describes are in full flower. Goodman layers bodily sensations, close observation of the natural world, and scholarly meditation to suggest the flexibility of a mode that isn't mimetic—i.e. representational—but imitative of nature's "flows" in an isomorphic signifying process: "it is because the flow of the brook is like the flow of prose that we are called on for this imitation," Goodman apostrophizes to the "Pastoral Muse."[30] The piece blends

[29] Michael Vincent Miller, "Paul Goodman: The Poetics of Theory," http://www.gestalt.org/goodman.htm
[30] Paul Goodman, "2 Pastoral Movements" in *A Ceremonial, Stories: 1936-1940* (Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1978), 136.

literary echoes and proto-gestalt terminology while exploring the embodied experience of a leisurely repast in nature.

Rather than plug in "pastoral themes" that act as the contents of writing, however, Goodman uses pastoral conventions as compositional elements, a temper or mode of writing that funds nearly all his subsequent works. The consequences of this are most discernable in the way his writings continually draw on, as well as draw, gestalts. Gestalt images ask us to pay attention to the shifting relationship between foreground and background as we flip back and forth between two pictures contained within one another; in "2 Pastoral Movements," that movement *is* pastoral, an inherent feature or quality of the mode. In subsequent work, he would use gestalt approaches to organize entire books, such as his book on physical planning, *Communitas* (1946). But the pastoral movement concretized by Goodman's gestalts, in which both-at-onceness or suspension between two opposing realities or states can be entertained through ways of writing and seeing, appears throughout this dissertation and by writers not typically grouped together (Orwell was famously disparaging about Goodman's style, for example).

This approach to pastoral strays from previous critics' accounts. Working with literary objects such as poems, short stories, and novels; para-literature including planning tracts, psycho-therapy, social criticism, spatial theory, diaries and letters; media forms and presentational formats inclusive of free weeklies, radio broadcasts, photographs, small press journals, lectures, and monographs, I make the case that we should understand modes as loosened explanatory frameworks that can make sense of a variety of genres and forms of cultural production. This approach draws dissimilar objects and archives together so that new pictures might emerge of how literary ideas coalesce, do their work, and dissipate. This perspective seems particularly important in the case of pastoral, which has accrued a long rap

sheet. “Most modern studies define pastoral simply by saying what it is,” cautions Paul Alpers. “It turns out be a number of things. We are told that pastoral ‘is a double longing after innocence and happiness’; that it is based on the philosophical antithesis of Art and Nature; that its universal idea is the Golden Age; that its fundamental motive is hostility to urban life; that its ‘central tenet’ is ‘the pathetic fallacy’; that it expresses the ideal of *otium;* that it is founded on Epicureanism… Such definitions are heterogeneous in the literal sense.”[31]

Alpers makes important normative claims about pastoral. But bracketing the multiplicity of definitions swirling within and around pastoral obscures the ways modes function in vernacular as well as specialized senses; even offhand references index how readers and writers respond to, reproduce, and participate in meanings understood as pastoral. And pastoral might not always announce itself as such, to either writers or readers. The kind of competency Goodman demonstrates with pastoral—a competency that allows him to feed all manner of genres through his sense of the mode’s workings—is imperfect, coming as it must “indirectly, deviously, remotely, at haphazard, rather than by simple chronological lines of descent.”[32] Goodman’s use of pastoral might be “imperfect” or “heterogeneous” but, as Alastair Fowler notes, the very “possibility of return to earlier paradigms,” however they occurred and whatever they might mean in the present, constitutes an important feature of literature’s work in the world.

Pastoral at midcentury might then be better understood through local and temporary groupings—writers who found themselves outside London during the Blitz, say—or via evolving citational webs of historical and fictional speakers and styles of address such as Goodman’s. In this way, my project shares commitments with theorists who understand genres as “weak” categories. Wai Chee Dimock argues for “low-level theorizing” in genre research; no longer

[31] Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?*, 10-11
[32] Fowler, *Kinds of Literature,* 43-4.

mighty specimens inserted into taxonomies that ground accounts of the development of literature as such, genres might be grasped through "a phenomenal register," collected via observation about who is citing or cross-referencing who.[33] Rather than something we need either to resist or strengthen our definitions of, I think about pastoral as enticingly pliable and various. The pastoral mode as I describe it here directs or infuses particular works and takes shape through connections across multiple scenarios and between diverse actors; it is continually reformulated via scenes of composition, biographies of books, webs of citations, paths of circulation. Pastoral flows but also sticks. It absorbs and alters discourses, aesthetic forms, critical positions.

Reading pastoral from this slant position can illuminate an encounter between two figures in this dissertation. In 1930, William Empson was about to embark on the first of several sojourns in Asia—Japan, China, with visits to Korea and India—where he would write, among other things, *Some Versions of Pastoral* and a manuscript on Buddhist statuary that went missing for half a century. Sylvia Townsend Warner was working on *Opus 7* (1931), a long pastoral poem in heroic couplets about a witchy drunk with a green thumb named Rebecca. In April 1930 the two met for dinner. Warner described the encounter in her diary:

> I dined with W. Empson. I had gone a little frightened, fearing it might be a party of intellectual young things; but it was as though he had foreseen that I was a timid grandmother, for when I arrived it was to a very untidy room, with bottles and books on the floor, a delicious smell of frying, a saucepan of twopenny soup on a gas-ring and Mr. Empson cavalier seul. So nothing could have been pleasanter… We argued quite naturally about Eliot, and Windham Lewis [sic] and Richardson, and I found myself making gaffes quite comfortably. The argument was that I complained W.L. had A Message. He was of the opinion that poets should have a message, should be in touch with real life. I didn't see then, but I do know that they should be so much in touch etc. that they don't want to alter it. It is a drawing-room or study contact with real life which wants to move the groundsel off the landscape."[34]

[33] Wai Chee Dimock, "Weak Theory: Henry James, Colm Tóibín, and WB Yeats," *Critical Inquiry,* Vol. 39, No. 4 (Summer 2013), 732.
[34] Sylvia Townsend Warner, *The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner,* edited by Claire Harman (London: Chatto & Windus, 1994), 57.

Warner's indictment of the drawing-room, of leisured study and aestheticized views, recapitulates what Empson would soon identify as one of pastoral's oldest "tricks" in *Some Versions of Pastoral:* where nature is made to disclose the "beautiful relation between rich and poor."[35] There's a lurking aristocrat in Warner's final sentence, ordering and arranging his estate as well as his verse. Pastoral is not mentioned but seems indicted all the same. And yet both Warner and Empson were deeply engaged in pastoral criticism and experimentation throughout the 1930s and '40s. Indeed, Warner sketches a little urban pastoral, where Empson's untidy room offers an intellectual oasis free of chatter, stocked with ironic elements of the good life—books, bottles, and gas-rings. And Warner's final rebuttal underscores my earlier point about pastoral as a mode: its dynamics and presuppositions function as argumentation, a way of continuing the conversation, in addition to supplying this or that generic element (like groundsel).

Far from repudiating it, each writer found something usefully apropos about the mode. While Warner insisted that writers should "be in touch with real life," in her own pastoral, *Opus 7,* imagination and fantasy are important corollaries to realism rather than signatures of nostalgia or escape. Recalling the formal characteristics—end rhymes, intricate framing devices—of eighteenth-century pastoral verse, *Opus 7* imports observations on England's inter-war rural politics and capitalism's moral hypocrisy into its anachronistic couplets. Love Green appears as a typical English village; Rebecca's cottage, desired by all who pass, is surrounded by a riotous flower garden. But war, specifically World War I, animates the landscape: "I knew a time when Europe feasted well: bodies were munched in thousands, vintage blood / so blithely flowed that even the dull mud / grew greedy, and ate men."[36] Move the groundsel here and the consequences would be real. Rebecca draws on mysterious powers to grow her flowers, which she sells for

[35] William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral* (New York: New Directions, 1974), 11.
[36] Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Opus 7* (New York: The Viking Press, 1931).

money to feed her drinking habit. Not mystification but mystifying events rule Warner's pastoral. If there is logic to the world, Rebecca's last name suggests its limits: Random.

This conjunction of fantasy and contingency led Mary Jacobs to describe this poem as "truthful pastoral," noting that Warner's agile use of the mode failed to connect readers to some "mythical prehistoric past so much as unsettle our relationship to the historical present."[37] *Opus 7* also enfolds Rebecca's narrative within the poet's own compositional context, sketching a present scene of writing that situates the tale as one of retrospect but also subject to, and of, literary fashion. In the final stanza, the poet has returned to Love Green after Rebecca's death. Her first view of the scene had been cozy, picturesque: "Then on Love Green I looked / as children on an open story-book… Now from the page the picture blurs and dims, / wavers, discolours, perjures itself, dislimns."[38] Estrangement and psychologized description seem a far cry from a decorous and decorative story-book, the distance from childhood fantasy to adult vision perhaps. Yet if Warner's coordinates "then and now" encode aesthetic positions of Georgian and modernist, infantile and knowing, the poet herself doesn't participate in progressive narratives but finds a margin outside of literary fashion, a point from which to watch artifice and history merge and "dislimn"—literally become un-described, "as water is in water," noted Antony to Eros. This blurred world "perjures itself," and yet which vision is the lie? Indeed, the "historical present" of the poem is one made from previous distortions; Warner's pastoral paints Love Green as perjured and picturesque—perjured because picturesque—all the while remaining sensitive to the pleasures of artifice.

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[37] Mary Jacobs, "Sylvia Townsend Warner and the Politics of the English Pastoral 1925-1934" in *Critical Essays on Sylvia Townsend Warner, English Novelist 1893-1978* edited by Gill Davies, David Malcolm and John Simons (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 66. 81.
[38] Warner, *Opus 7.*

Distortion has been a prime target of ideology critique, the methodology that has characterized critical engagements with, as well as cultural metaphors about, pastoral for decades. If these writers' pastorals can be unmasked as ideological, doing so reveals the "non-pejorative" definition of ideology advanced by Paul Ricoeur and helps us to understand something about pastoral's ability to hold together opposite qualities or states of affairs. Rather than simple distortion, Ricoeur understands ideology as integrative—it constitutes social identity through praxis as well as symbols. Warner's English villages are a good case in point. *Opus 7* ended with a blurred, indeterminate picture of Love Green, but by World War II Warner was writing against attempts to inflate and brand nostalgic invocations of village life as representative of all England. Her short stories interrupted this seamless extension through acid particulars of the countryside during wartime while her characters unconsciously ventriloquize propagandistic media messages. When ideology distorts, Ricoeur notes, it does so to legitimize power of ruling groups.[39] Ideology is what is and the maintenance or extension of this is-ness constitutes the distorting effects that came to be associated with the term by thinkers such as Karl Marx; however, in Warner's war writing, pastoral enables the imagining of alternative styles of thought about or relation to what might be, given that social life is what (it) is.

This is close but not quite what Ricouer means by utopia, the "functional structure" of which is to propose alternative perspectives or imaginative variations because it expresses an extra-territorial space beyond the real, making possible a vantage that allows reality to look strange and be altered in the future. Both ideology and utopia have pathological tendencies, toward domination and escape. And here we circle back to Auden. "All the regressive trends

[39] "Ideology moves beyond mere integration to distortion and pathology as it tries to bridge tension between authority and domination." Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia,* edited by George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 14.

denounced so often in utopian thinkers," Ricoeur declares, hitting the pastoral high-note, "such as the nostalgia for the past, for some paradise lost—proceed from this initial deviation of the nowhere in relation to the here and now."[40] The pastoralist is no more than regressive utopian, crafting a wish-dream that cannot become real, or she is conservative ideologue, perpetuating dominant culture. But this schematic fails to allow for the disruptive and discomfiting tendencies of backward looks, the jostling of past circumstances and unsettling of present conditions that midcentury pastorals attempted to figure. If utopia allowed a view from nowhere, the writers in this dissertation crafted pastorals conscious that they were writing from somewhere, that the full measure of their "situation of enunciation" embedded them in communities, ways of life, and practices of writing and imagining undergoing radical change. They hoped such change might occur through mechanisms other than violence and wreckage (the legacy of a Hitler-esque utopia) and they developed the pastoral mode in ways that offered more than simply regressive escape. These writers sensed, even if they couldn't fully represent, that alternative worlds lurk within the existing one rather than somewhere "beyond" it.

Critical Topographies

In works by Paul Goodman, William Empson, Sylvia Townsend Warner and all the writers of this dissertation, the pastoral mode makes possible the co-existence of opposite values, types, attitudes, locations, temporalities. Such moments coalesce in a series of recurring figures, techniques, styles that appear throughout and across a surprising range of texts and scenarios: double-vision or gestalt arrangements, instances where past and present, high and low, unsettle, exchange, bleed through one another or take up the same space (Virginia Woolf, George Orwell,

[40] Ibid., 17.

Paul Goodman, Allan Ginsberg); dramatic renderings of new media's ability to coordinate and collapse oppositions such as inside and out, here and there (Rex Warner, Sylvia Townsend Warner, EM Forster); extravagant and exotic tropical effects that draw in multiple and opposing experiential registers, aesthetic practices, and geo-cultural formations (Richard Brautigan, *City Lights Journal,* William Empson). These formulations and effects are situated within historical moments, cultural debates in which pastoral notoriously appeared: world war, urban planning, the counterculture. They mark a distinctive body of midcentury pastoral works.

However, the model of transmission, reception, and usage I have in mind is more complex than mere "revival," as it attempts to take into account multiple trajectories: the cultural work pastoral achieved; the ways in which it was worked over or abbreviated by literary critical discourse; and how the mode was transmitted through new media landscapes, formats, and disciplinary communities. I attempt to track the complexity of pastoral's resurgence in these contexts rather than uncover, unmask, or dethrone instances of its use. The codas parallel the main chapters by exfoliating pastoral's passage through literary-cultural space as mood, method, and mosaic. Technologies such as radio, monograph, magazine, and photography helped to mediate pastoral at midcentury. I argue that such forms are not simply intermediaries communicating a pastoral "work," but contribute to the ways in which the mode took shape in these years.

Considering modes in this way highlights the utility of pastoral to writers and intellectuals attempting to think through mid-twentieth century situations characterized by new forms of violence, rapid change to the built and physical environment, and global capital's shifting moral order. Pastoral is not the only way to figure or sort out such situations, of course, but some collation of pastoral ideas—images, tropes, dynamics, conventions—can be found in a

wide range of works from the years under review here. Often, the sorting out happened in literary critical works *about* pastoral. For example, Ralph Piette has argued that William Empson used pastoral to think through the position of artist in wartime in his "Alice" essay in *Some Versions of Pastoral.* In Piette's account, Empson's valorizing of child logic in Lewis Carroll's novels also helped him access realms apart from a monolithic cultural imagination preoccupied with selfless acquiescence to the dictates of mobilization for war. Pastoral granted artists an "artificial identity" through which they might occupy imagined alternatives to dominant wartime culture.[41] Here, pastoral criticism performs the work of pastoral. That is, pastoral is both the Alice books, a stretched-out instance of a historical literary category, and pastoral is the manner in which Empson discusses them, the situation of enunciation specific to his moment of composition on the eve of World War II.

First published in 1935 but prescient about the coming war's mental climate, Empson's *Some Versions of Pastoral* begins a period of pastoral criticism and modal experimentation that stretches to the 1970s, the decade that coincidentally or not saw the republication of Empson's book. Seminal works of pastoral criticism were published in the years this dissertation examines, the 1930s through mid-1970s. Critical as well as social-historical conditions inflected and oriented horizons of reception and expectation, delimiting the sign under which "pastoral" could appear. As an object of study, the mode shaped methodologies and concerns associated with cultural criticism and American studies and it was identified early on as one of the zones through which literature and culture interpenetrated and exchanged. Works of midcentury scholarship such as Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* (1964) and Raymond Williams's *The Country and the City* (1973) read pastoral as national literatures that "leaked" into the political and

[41] Ralph Piette, "Empson, Piaget, and Child Logic in Wartime," in *Some Versions of Empson,* edited Matthew Bevis, (Oxford: OUP, 2007), 53.

economic life of the United States and England respectively. As Leo Marx argued, pastoral's tendency to supersede its status as literature, to "spill over into thinking about real life," presented situations in which literature connected to (or more often mystified) ideological commitments and ideologies themselves.[42] Pastoral extended or set into circulation representational habits, rhetorical codes and conventions, highly schematic visions that could be "unmasked" as participating in or shoring up cultural and political goals; however, Marx and Williams can be understood as participating in pastoral's situation of enunciation as well. In this reading, a monograph like Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* isn't simply neutral "literary criticism" about nineteenth-century pastoral, but itself a pastoral text structured by tensions between self and other, representative and group, that were particularly pressing in the post-World War II institutional–academic milieu to which Marx was a vibrant contributor.

Yet woven alongside, and sometimes within, critical accounts were less instrumental instances or examples and this dissertation attempts to rediscover ways in which pastoral contributed to midcentury situations which are far from over and debates to which we still have few answers: how to think when the whole world is at war; how to live with new forms of massively concentrated power; what to do in landscapes filled with junk. These are questions we increasingly share in common, even as experiences of state violence and trauma, centralized decision-making particularly in regard to the built and urban environment, and environmental degradation are significantly impacted and striated by race and ethnicity, by socio-economic class, by gender and geographical location. The framing of urgent questions around space, nature, and peace will depend on generating new, or regenerating old, modes and styles that communicate broadly and specifically, meaningfully and resonantly, common purpose across

[42] Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden* (New York, Oxford UP, 1964; reissue 2000), 130.

extremely different attitudes and ways of life. Pastoral's ability to work responsively between polarizing scales and fantasies, at the meso-level of contingent, shifting representativeness, might be the very thing that signal new possibilities for the mode. Representativeness is rarely monumental since social identifications and literary fashions are always changing. Who reads Paul Goodman now? As Lawrence Buell has noted, pastoral is at once socially disruptive and, because of its long association with "hegemonic groups," stabilizing of the status quo. Pastoral has "simultaneously been counterinstitutional and institutionally sponsored."[43] This cultural position, that is, reflects pastoral's organizing dynamic, which draws into proximity and dialogue opposing forces or states of affairs.

The writers and thinkers here effected artful, if not lasting, negotiations between institutions and counterinstitutions, identifying, in their way, the status quo as a site of possible social change. They were published in middlebrow institutions like *The New Yorker,* profiled by *Life* magazine*,* their ideas shaped cadres of graduate students. Paul Goodman's pastoral anarchism found unprecedented success (before it did not) with the New Left; Richard Brautigan digested radical community experiments like the Diggers' as well as Jack Spicer's avant-garde poetics and spat out a best-seller. If they're not quite canonical, these white, predominately male and decidedly mainstream authors could be said to have stabilized multiple status quos. And yet stabilization is a process, not a fixed or static state; it lacks the epistemological associations and teleological implications of "progress," for example. It's more likely to be recursive than linear, unpredictably fitful rather than uniformly steady, dependent on assorted factors contributing to a state of affairs that might stabilize only to destabilize again. Modes themselves hover below our typical thresholds of analysis; they are often absorbed in effects and procedures of the work

[43] Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of Ameircan Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1996)*,* 50.

"itself," and by consequence are taken for granted and ignored in the course of interpretation, or they evaporate into general culture. In calling pastoral a mode I mean it is both representational and not, located "within" individual works and beyond them, as a set of inherited ideas and pragmatic attitudes toward life and literature that represents "humanity's awareness of its location on thresholds between the complex and the simple, between art and nature."[44] This threshold might best be thought of as an atmosphere, mood, or ambience. And "in the air" is where I begin.

[44] Leo Marx, "Does Pastoralism Have a Future?" *Studies in the History of Art,* 222.

World War Pastorals

Virginia Woolf wrote "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid" over the summer of 1940. She didn't much want to. In June she mentioned the article between afterthoughts in her diary: "I was asked to write a life of Margaret Bondfield—I forgot to say: also to contribute to some Womens [sic] Symposium in USA; and Judith is the only one to get a First."[1] A month later she sighed about "an article for the pressing American lady"; by the end of August she was describing it as "that infernal bomb article for USA" and lamenting that the assignment prevented her "swim into [the] quiet water" of fiction and biography.[2] The London Blitz officially started one week later, on September 9, but those summer months in the country (the Woolfs were at Monk's House in the village of Rodmell, Sussex) were pocked with portents: "Again, back from London," she wrote July 4. "But its [sic] here that the events take place. Louie, toothless, but all agog: yesterday at 5 pm. pop, pop pop out over the marshes. She was picking fruit. Backfiring she thought. Told by someone it was a raid."[3] Written before the Blitz, this anecdote contains almost in full the experiences that would mark and mar the English countryside for the next years: war is sudden, intrusive, almost unassimilable to the textures and pursuits of country life. It circulates as rumor or hearsay, perhaps also as belated recognition of a close call or near miss. In the anecdote, country air has been invaded by war, by its rampant rumors as well as the "pop, pop pop" of its bombers. But as her "infernal bomb article" took shape, country air also occasioned Woolf's meditation on peace.

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[1] Virginia Woolf, edited by Anne Olivier Bell, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf Vol. 5 1936-1941* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1985), 295.
[2] Ibid., 305, 314.
[3] Ibid., 299-300.

Thoughts of peace at the onset of World War II were uniquely fraught. A recent book, *Literature of the 1940s: War, Postwar, and 'Peace,'* goes so far as to put the entire word in scare quotes since "the concept, though much anticipated, never really materialized, either literally or metaphorically."[4] The "peace" of the first world war haunted the imaginations of many, and in her essay Woolf targeted the fantasy that peace could be dictated by "writing 'Disarmament' on a sheet of paper at a conference table."[5] Peace was also by Woolf's moment linked to a failed policy of appeasement, with Neville Chamberlain's "peace for our time" echoing ironically as bombs began to fall. Steve Ellis has written about the period between Chamberlain's announcement of post-Munich "peace" and the beginning of sustained military engagement in May 1940 after Germany's invasion of Holland and Belgium, arguing that "during this period Britain had more time to rearm, but its writers also had more time to think, and the results of this thinking were often very uncomfortable."[6]

Throughout the Air Raid essay, Woolf does her best to strenuously, counter-intuitively, and uncomfortably "think peace into existence." But she also creates a virtuoso textual performance of an air raid: war sounds are documented in real time as the pop pop pop of guns, drone of planes, some "sinister sawing" overhead. Such sounds become the stuff of thought itself: "the hornet in the sky rouses another hornet in the mind."[7] While it feels as though Woolf dashed it off during an actual attack, we've seen she was working—and dreading working—on

[4] Gill Plain, *Literature of the 1940s: War, Postwar, and 'Peace'* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 14.
[5] Virginia Woolf, "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid" in *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt & Brace, 1942), 246.
[6] Steve Ellis, *British Writers and the Approach of World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 7.
[7] Woolf, "Thoughts on Peace in an Air Raid," *The Death of the Moth,* 244.

the article for months before the official Blitz began.[8] And yet the vision of peace that does emerge in Woolf's article is familiar, if hazy. Peace is organic (a matter of "fertile" seeds), embodied (accessed as "creative feelings"), situated in conventional scenes (the countryside) and summarized in popular slogans ("We must free him from the machine"). It's surprisingly difficult to locate Woolf's titular "Thoughts on Peace": is it rural equilibrium or atmosphere, those "innocent sounds of the country" that return once the guns stop? Is it a capacity that requires tending, care, attention—a kind of garden within the self? Drawing these questions into the orbit of Woolf's earlier anecdote creates a productive tension that will animate this chapter.

The two moments provide an example of how emotional or historical attachments to country peace and war's irruption into country spaces coexisted uncertainly, especially during the Blitz. Woolf's personal experience both informs and is deformed in her writing for a specific non-English audience. Such questions of the relationship between lived experience and literature, anecdote and address, are germane for writers who spent the war outside London in indeterminate or mediated relation to war. Woolf struggles in the no-longer peaceful country air to imagine peace; yet her article cannot "think peace" beyond very generalized "pastoral" pictures and bromides. Pastoral may be a cliché about peace, but pastoral dynamics saturate and motivate Woolf's essay. This struggle between conventional representations of peace as pastoral

[8] In fact, Woolf recapitulates key points from *Three Guineas* (1938), namely that militarism and patriotism are gendered modes of thinking underpinning English patriarchy, and that women's thoughts, "private thinking, tea-table thinking," are valuable for how they illuminate the reciprocal relationship between public and private worlds. For another take on this essay, see Rebecca Walkowitz *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006). In her reading, Walkowitz positions Woolf as an intellectual iconoclast who risked "naïve pacifism" in proposing "complicity between Germany and Britain" (99). Such uncomfortable equivalences were being drawn by many figures, including D.W. Winnicott who cast a skeptical eye at the claims of moral or cultural superiority advanced by the British: "if we are better than our enemies," he decried in "Discussion of War Aims," "we are only a little better" (*Home is Where We Start From: Essays by a Psychoanalyst* [New York: Norton, 1990], 211). Steve Ellis also claims that for "many writers of the time, the essential enemy is seen as lying within, in the corruption of our own institutions" (*British Writers,* 4).

and a somewhat unconscious reliance on that very mode's organization of writer to her "situation of enunciation"—Woolf in the context of a countryside replete with bombs and bombers, attempting to preserve a point of view that could allow for imaginative escape—marks a distinctive moment in pastoral's long history: the world war pastoral.

It's tempting to hypostatize terms like "country air" and "peace" as pastoral, and indeed pastoral is widely though vaguely identified as integral to British writing of this period. Critics and scholars tend to deploy the term as adjective or epithet.[9] While a canon of British writing from World War II has congealed around works written from and about London, the poems, books, and dispatches from those experiencing—or imagining—war as a country phenomenon has received scant notice. There is good reason to distinguish urban and rural archives here. In the context of total war spatial categories like "country" and "city" took on new significance even as radios, bombs, and other aerial phenomenon—photography, aeroplanes—seemed to dematerialize or make porous boundaries that had previously governed not only wartime experiences of combatant and victim, but fundamental orientations toward center and periphery, proximity and distance, inside and out. These dynamic crossings are central to pastoral, a mode that accrues special significance when we consider how English pastoral has long yoked complex cultural politics to rural landscapes. Such associations were mobilized by "People's

[9] Marina MacKay for instance describes Woolf's WWII novel *Between the Acts* as "pastoral patriotism" (*Modernism and World War II* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007], 26); Jed Esty claims that George Orwell began his career resisting "the pastoral blandishments of official Englishness," only like Auden and Graham Greene, to end by "manifesting a latent pastoral romanticism" in the wake of the Spanish Civil War and during WWII (*A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England* [Princeton: Princeton University Press], 220); reading an archive of novels slightly prior to WWII, Valentine Cunningham claims that Cambridge radicals Cecil Day Lewis and Michael Roberts hoped to escape "the modern machine world" by seeking refuge a "braver pastoral old world," punning on the "dystopian dejection" that flavored many domestic travel narratives of the interwar period from popular writers such as left-leaning J.B. Priestley and arch-conservative H.V. Morton (*British Writers of the Thirties* [New York: Oxford University Press,1988], 236).

War" propaganda campaigns that drew on pastoral tropes to craft narratives of national unity, frequently by reformulating the English countryside as synonymous with national character and traditions.

However, the world war pastorals under discussion here interrogate some of the assumptions that undergird pastoral as a national project. The writers in this chapter were highly conscious of international frameworks that resituated nations, and in particular the English nation, within new geopolitical realities. Their war pastorals query distance and scale; in the case of Rex Warner, they seek alternative perspectives from which to view national landscapes and types. Like Woolf, Sylvia Townsend Warner wrote poems, short stories, and letters with non-English audiences in mind and her accounts sculpt the mediated and proximate experiences of war in the age of radio; George Orwell composed in contexts that unsettle simple identifications between England's countryside and English character, nation and nostalgia. Yet these "outward turns" were curbed by inward musings, attempts to grapple with the very dynamics that might allow the imagining of alternatives in conditions of total war.

This chapter considers how pastoral generated unexpected moods and strategies of resistance for these writers. Finding a similar dynamic at work in William Empson's "Alice" essay in *Some Versions of Pastoral,* Ralph Piette has argued that in the buildup to WWII, "it becomes even more important to preserve this specific mode of the imagination (not an escapist but a transductive point of view) as that which the nation ought to be defending if it is to count as a free nation worth defending."[10] While escape was an impossibility in the specific context of aerial raids on the English countryside, the writers in this chapter nonetheless attempt something like this "transductive" point of view not by ignoring but thinking through some of pastoral's

[10] Piette, "Empson, Piaget, and Child Logic in Wartime," *Some Versions of Empson*, 53.

most damnable offenses—passivity, detachment, complicity. I find these writers interesting precisely for their willingness to wrestle with pastoral's bad options as those which might unfold and encode the spatial, imaginative, and experiential potentialities of peace during wartime.

George Orwell's Passivity

Woolf's inability to think in the wartime countryside gives a new twist to an old commonplace about pastoral: that the countryside, as a scene of pleasure or retreat, is perhaps the object of contemplation but never the motivation for thought. Peace is an experience that washes over a subject removed from the hub-bub of city life, but that experience somehow defies conceptualization. Spatial theorists have tended to recapitulate the dynamics of this pastoral imaginary by isolating the countryside as ancillary at best to understanding relations between social forms, discursive practices, and space. Peace is *not* thinking and so peace is identified with a pastoral tradition of leisure, retreat, and rural loafing. Indeed, reluctance to even think about the countryside marks many canonical works of spatial theory. Henri Lefebvre famously posited that space was "produced" rather than simply given; *The Production of Space* (1973) delineates the ways in which all space is social, a matter of material and representational practices that shore up and confirm space as a dialectical process between "the perceived, the conceived, and the lived."[11] But for Lefebvre, social and spatial practices were inherently urban and modernist: the densely populated, architectural city is his model for neo-capitalist "abstract space."[12]

Lefebvre considers the "village" only insofar as it remains a site of "spatial contradiction," subject to nostalgic anthropologies: "Consider the number of people, particularly

[11] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), 39.
[12] See Lefebvre on daily life of tenant in government-subsidized high-rise housing project in *The Production of Space,* 38, 124.

young people, who flee the modern world, the difficult life of the cities," he exhorts, "and seek refuge in the country, in folk tradition, in arts and crafts or in anachronistic small-scale farming."[13] Lefebvre's conflates subject and scholar: "people" who seek and anthropologists who study rural life both "avoid reality" and "sabotage the search for knowledge."[14] Echoing a common consensus on pastoral as "escape from society to the extent of idealizing a simplified life in the country," Lefebvre constructs the countryside as privileged refuge, both from society and thought—a negative peace indistinguishable from ignorance.[15] World War II both confirmed and challenged this seamless conceptual chain that underscores much pastoral criticism and spatial theory, a chain which links rural life to simplicity to nostalgic retreat. As lived experiences of the war translated into literary responses and representations, pastoral provided means for a cohort of English writers to contest rather than simply consolidate ideas of country peace and rural refuge as "outside" reality.

Take E.M. Forster. In his essay "The 1939 State" (re-titled "Post-Munich" when published in *Two Cheers for Democracy,* a book I return to in this chapter's coda) Forster sketched his itinerary in the days after Munich:

> I was in London that dark Wednesday night when the news of an agreement between them seeped through…. Peace flapped from the posters, and not upon the wings of angels. I trailed about reading the notices, some of which had already fallen into the gutter. On the Thursday I returned to the country, and found satisfaction there in a chicken run which I had helped build earlier in the week.[16]

Compared to the highly mediated, rather aimless experiences of politicized peace that Forster narrates as an episode of urban flâneurie, the countryside is a site of earthy activity and simple pleasures—chicken runs are immediate and rewarding, global accords distant and obscure. Yet

[13] Ibid., 122.
[14] Ibid., 123.
[15] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 43.
[16] E.M. Forster, "Post-Munich," *Two Cheers for Democracy* (London: Edward Arnold, 1951), 22.

Forster ended his essay with an argument against "simplification," either the simplicity of slogans or retreat. "The only satisfactory release is to be found in the direction of complexity," he claimed. "The world won't work out and the person who can realize this, and not just say it and lament it, has done as well as can be expected of him in the present year."[17] Forster's use of simplicity and complexity here, as well as those country "satisfactions," suggest William Empson's declaration, made in the decade prior, that pastoral is based on "putting the complex into the simple."[18] Pastoral for Empson was part of literature's "social process," a way to reconcile social conflicts between classes and between individuals and the economic nation state.[19] For Empson in the 1930s the "sense of isolation" individuals experienced under capitalism (an experience soon to be amplified by war), of being cut off from "most of the life of the country," was managed by pastoral conventions which induced a mood or feeling of humility: "I now abandon my specialized feelings," Empson ventriloquized, "because I am trying to find better ones, so I must balance myself for the moment by imagining the feelings of a simple person."[20] Rather than "avoid reality," pastoral mediated between scales of attachment and belonging by kindling distinctive feeling states or moods of "balance"—peace, we might say.

George Orwell also explored this tension between pastoral's spatial logics of refuge/retreat and its investment in social processes and critical moods, its ability or inability to find balance amongst empire's problematic parts and wholes, in his novel *Coming Up for Air.*

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[17] Ibid., 24-5.
[18] William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral*, 22.
[19] In fact, pastoral's function here is akin to Paul Saint-Amour's description of meso-analysis, which he takes from Daniel Little's idea of mesohistory: "'[L]ocal in its analysis of circumstance, and large-scale in its recognition of the common workings of certain general factors.'" See Saint-Amour, "The Medial Humanities: Toward a Manifesto for Meso-Analysis," *Modernism/modernity Print+*.
[20] Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral,* 18-9. Empson was also writing his pastoral book from Japan, himself isolated from his own country—England—in significant and productive ways.

Published in June 1939, around the time that Louie was out picking fruit in an air raid, Orwell's novel is likewise a species of pastoral where country air grounds a meditation on the problems of peace during war, especially the difficulty of achieving "balance" in a world without refuge. Its narrator, also named George (Bowling), is a fat, middle-aged insurance salesman with "typical" lower middle-class trappings: dreary wife, obnoxious kids, detached villa in the outer London 'burbs. The novel's plot is basically one of (failed) escape: anxious about the upcoming war, filled with dread at the rapid advance of consumer culture, and nostalgic for pre-World War I England, George heads back to his childhood village of Lower Binfield.

Orwell's novel joined an archive of interwar domestic travel narratives that were dusted off at the onset of World War II. In *I Saw Two Englands* (1942) H.V. Morton, oppressed by incessant rumor-mongering in 1939 London, set out in his motor-car to get "a last-glimpse of pre-war England—the second pre-war England of my generation."[21] Morton in fact discovered "two Englands: the bright, vulgar, crowded England of the main roads and the quiet, lovely England of the side roads and lanes."[22] Writing in 1938-9, Orwell sketched an unredeemed version of Morton's first England, one "buried" in Council housing estates, factories, and villas. "I had that feeling of a kind of enemy invasion having happened behind my back," George cries, hitting a familiar interwar note as he gazes out on former fields "swallowed up" by houses.[23] The

[21] H.V. Morton, *I Saw Two Englands* (London: Methuen, 1942), 2.
[22] Ibid., 34.
[23] George Orwell, *Coming Up for Air* (New York: Harcourt, 1950), 213, 235. The menaced British countryside was a well-established trope by 1939; in the interwar years, popular books by J.B. Priestley and Morton went "in search of England" (the title of Morton's 1927 tome) and ended up surveying a landscape threatened by, as Morton put it, "vulgarization": the increasing accessibility to rural places, thanks to improved roads, skyrocketing car ownership, and ever-expanding bus routes, dramatically altered England's famous country villages. Suburban sprawl was poorly regulated in the interwar period, spurring "rural preservationists" to action; however, popular and middlebrow writers also colluded in idealizing country life for mainly urban or increasingly suburban audiences. Raymond Williams locates a major crux in the history of pastoral here, in his chapter on Georgian writers in *The Country and the City*.

countryside, far from offering rural refuge, is itself already at war; rather than the scene of some timeless "pastoral" past, it's a frontline for a dreaded future.

Constant interpellation of its readers animates the form of *Coming Up for Air*, relocating the pastoral convention of represented dialogue to a more coercive experience of subject formation as George Bowling's "robust judgment" recruits us into a shared vision of England on the cusp of war and beset by "houses, houses, houses." Reviewers applauded Orwell's success in creating a "most infectious person" in George Bowling. "From the very beginning the reader is inside his…mind," Charles Marriott enthused about Orwell's creation in the *Manchester Guardian* "and sees through his critical eyes, and in the main will agree with his robust judgment of things as they are."[24] The slippage between character and person, narrator and novelist, is worth noting: Marriott ends his review declaring, "It is George speaking."[25] Well, which George? Orwell excavated another pastoral convention in making his speaker a surrogate self, a move that effectively and intentionally blurred lines between fact and fiction, document and artifice.

Contemporary reviewers accepted Orwell's novel as something more or less invented, positioning it in some liminal space between reportage and realist fiction necessary to times of "crisis." Recent critical appraisals that note the novel presaged Orwell's most famous essay of these years, "Inside the Whale," tend to read Bowling as a megaphone for Orwell's "Anglocentrism," which swung, in such accounts, from the "documentary fictions" of the 1930s to "latent pastoral romanticism" and "doomed nostalgia" of the war and post-war years.[26] Indeed,

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[24] Charles Marriott, "New Novels: A Tale of the Cheshire Fittons," *The Manchester Guardian* (June 13, 1939), 7.
[25] Ibid., 7.
[26] Jed Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England,* 220-21. For Etsy, *1984* is the apex of "Orwell's Anglocentrism [which] finally defines itself as doomed liberalism, in that it seems to give up on the possibility of group politics altogether" (221). E.P. Thompson on the other hand sees

Bowling articulates an early version of Orwell's position that in the face of "world processes" the only suitable response is passivity. But to conflate Orwell and Bowling strikes me as both unavoidable and overly tidy.[27] While I set the novel alongside Morton's account, Orwell's book isn't memoir. *Coming Up for Air* can read like ordinary sociology akin to Mass Observation, yet Orwell wasn't observing English society firsthand. Though his novel meticulously inventories English culture, its litanies were made from memory and its most "realistic" moments were set in an international and comparativist frame. Familiar tropes of English pastoral index new geopolitical realities which in turn complicate and nuance Orwell's controversial position "for" passivity.

Coming Up for Air is set in the moment of its composition (1938-9), leading one reviewer to call Orwell "something of a modern historian," a historian of the present.[28] But the location of that "present" deserves further examination. During the months he was writing *Coming Up for Air* Orwell was convalescing from a TB attack in Morocco; reading the novel through this colonial, not to say invalid, writing context suggests a less narrowly national focus. Frederic Jameson's insight that British modernism's formal innovation enacts repressed awareness of colonial experience doesn't arise in Orwell's novel as mismatch of surface and depth but as a

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little that recommends Orwell from at least 1940 on. Castigating Orwell for his championing of political apathy during a moment of crisis, Thompson declared in 1960 that "*Inside the Whale* must itself be read as an apology for quietism" effectively laying the "disenchantment" of an entire post-war generation at Orwell's feet. See Thompson "Outside the Whale." https://www.marxists.org/archive/thompson-ep/1978/outside-whale.htm.

[27] Ellis is particularly troubled by the relation between Orwell and Bowling, expressing frustration in parsing the license of fiction from essay's address: "It is uncertain... how far, in turning to George Bowling as 'common man,' Orwell actively applauds shortcomings that at least in his eyes are a safeguard from what we have come to call 'political correctness'" (*British Writers and the Approach of World War II,* 161). Robert J. Van Dellen uses Bowling and Orwell almost interchangeably in his essay "George Orwell's *Coming Up for Air:* The Politics of Powerlessness" (*Modern Fiction Studies;* Spring 1975. Vol 21, 1), pp. 57-68.

[28] Philip Page, "Meet George…I found him a loveable bounder," *The Daily Mail* (June 30, 1939).

series of spatial confusions that destabilize conventional representations of landscape, private life, and gender.[29] Orwell's novel explicitly acknowledges a kind of temporal bifocality. Returning to Lower Binfield at the novel's end George notes, "It was as if I was looking at two worlds at once, a kind of thin bubble of the thing that used to be, with the thing that actually existed shining through it."[30] But these "two worlds" of present and past England also index the spatial experience of English history—and its uncertain future—as a colonial power. Landscape is central to this history, particularly if we consider a critical tradition that reads landscape and pastoral as coextensive and ideologically constitutive; critics from Karl Marx to Raymond Williams understands the ways in which pastoral masks the true workings and meanings of power. To the extent that landscape is a medium whose "particular historical formation [is] associated with European imperialism," pastoral has often been read as the expression of "nostalgia for a Self that is now the colonized Other."[31] For Renato Rosaldo, such "imperialist nostalgia" names the longing for a culture one has been an active participant in transforming.[32] These questions of colonial power and colonized passivity reverberate through *Coming Up for Air*. I've noted that, beyond mystifying or naturalizing social reality, pastoral might express something of the desire for escape from social processes while formalizing attachments to them. Orwell's novel queries pastoral "balance," sketching scenes and scenarios in which peace shades into passivity, activity into impotence, self into other, and nation into international (dis)order.

[29] See Frederic Jameson, "Modernism and Imperialism" in *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature,* introduction by Seamus Deane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), pp. 43-66.
[30] Orwell, *Coming Up for Air,* 213.
[31] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Landscape and Power: Second Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 5, 28.
[32] See Renato Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia," *Representations,* No 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989), pp 107-22.

Orwell's novel satirized popular conceptions of the English countryside as home to a "naturalized" (and nationalized) domesticity. *Coming Up for Air* may have reproduced widespread sentiments that "vulgarization" of the countryside was an opening salvo for actual destruction, but it also gleefully fulfilled them: the book ends with a bomb, accidentally dropped on Lower Binfield by practicing squadrons. Arriving at the scene, George itemizes debris right down to a leg, "with the trouser still on it and black boot with a Wood-Milne rubber heel… I had a good look at it and took it in. The blood was beginning to get mixed up with the marmalade."[33] The novel is rife with visions of contaminated domesticity; it's a catalogue of various jellies already tainted with blood. Even Orwell's invented place name suggests an equivalence between English fields and bins (dumps). While George spends much of the book meditating on war's potential to raze rural and urban landscapes alike, he also indulges in fantasies of destruction. Wandering through Upper Binfield, the local country estate turned "loony bin," the grounds of which have been sold and developed into "Woodland City" (a satirical jab at Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement, one subject of my next chapter), he observes, "some of the houses made me wish I'd got a hand-grenade in my pocket."[34] Such passages link destruction and domesticity at a moment when private life was seen as constituting "the real and important life of the nation."[35] Given Orwell's biography, it's perhaps unsurprising that England's "private life" is haunted by colonial awareness, albeit intermittently. George recounts boyhood escapades in passages of great beauty and vigor that are full of cruelty, enmity between children and

[33] Orwell, *Coming Up for Air,* 264-5.
[34] Ibid., 255.
[35] Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism Between the Wars* (London: Routledge, 1991), 147. Light also shows how "the patriotism of private life" exemplified by Mrs. Miniver's columns would feed into People's War campaigns. In "My Country Right or Left," written shortly after *Coming Up for Air,* Orwell himself declared his patriotism following a dream "that the war had started" (Orwell, *My Country Right or Left: The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell Vol. 2 1940-1943,* edited by Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus [New York: Harcourt, 1968], 539).

grownups, memories of stomping on birds' eggs and blowing up toads with bicycle pumps. "Killing things," George says, "that's about as near to poetry as a boy gets."[36] But killing things *is* a kind of poetry, the novel suggests, and George's reminiscences seem to fit Rosaldo's "imperialist nostalgia" model, in which brute force and superiority over others—animals, women—perpetuate a colonialist mindset. "Thank God I'm a man," George insists at the end of his reverie, "because no woman ever has that feeling."[37]

But to a certain extent George's fat, vulnerable body (we meet him in the bath, staring at his gut as his new false teeth grin out from their tumbler) rebukes such bright gender lines and suggests an aging, vulnerable English body politic forced into survival mode; passivity may be feminine, but it's also a mode of endurance. George pays close attention to the material realities and social constraints of women's lives, seeming to uncover colonial alterity in the midst of England. Of his mother's sheltered domestic existence he remembers, "in reality she lived her life in a space that must have been as small and almost as private as the average zenana."[38] Recalling his wife Hilda's upbringing in a declassé Anglo-Indian family, he observes, "It's a sort of little world of their own that they've created, like a kind of cyst."[39] George's own longing for hidden ponds to fish from, secret alcoves and forgotten cabins to read in, prefigure the scholar Porteus's study, sagging with bookshelves and filled with pipe smoke. "It's all kind of peaceful, kind of mellow" George muses—and completely "stopped inside," a metonym for all those people unable to account for a world in which England is no longer "the whole world."[40] These visions of private national life oscillate between ignorance and violence on the one hand,

[36] Orwell, *Coming Up for Air,* 86.
[37] Ibid., 75.
[38] Ibid., 56.
[39] Ibid., 157.
[40] Ibid., 183, 188.

captivity and pathology on the other; insofar as such enclaves are isolated from the wider world, they suggest ambivalent undercurrents to George's "imperialist nostalgia."

Passivity is endorsed as the only possible outcome to George's unsuccessful search for oases in a hostile modern landscape; passivity replaces peace as the very idea of "refuge" becomes inextricably linked to systems of domination and resistance is recoded as endurance. "For the ordinary man is also passive," Orwell would note in "Inside the Whale." "Within a narrow circle (home life, and perhaps the trade union or local politics) he feels himself master of his fate, but against major events he is as helpless as against the elements. So far from endeavouring to influence the future, he simply *lies down and lets things happen to him*."[41] As I've already noted, critics who consider *Coming Up for Air* do so mainly in order to embed this position within Orwell's developing "Anglocentrism" and his despair at group politics as such. Missing from readings that emphasize the book's diagnoses of contracting English national culture and pessimistic portrayals of a defeated liberal order is any mention of the novel's more provisional, ambivalent moments in which passivity is minimally or potentially orientating to new conditions of an incipient post-colonial global order. Passivity is an attempt at achieving "balance" *before* it is lying down and letting the swindle wash over you. This rebalancing is pastoral insofar as it explores the resources not of refuge from but integration into a social process that includes, rather than brackets, the natural world. In a key passage, landscape and passivity are figured in terms strikingly similar to Orwell's contemporaneous descriptions of Morocco. During an unexpected pastoral interlude (he's stopped to pick primroses in a field), George decides to return to Lower Binfield. "I wanted peace and quiet. Peace!" he exclaims.

> We had it once, in Lower Binfield. I've told you something about our old life there, before the war. I'm not pretending it was perfect. I dare say it was dull, sluggish,

[41] Orwell, "Inside the Whale" *Inside the Whale and Other Essays* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1940), 58. Emphasis added.

> vegetable kind of life. You can say we were like turnips, if you like. But turnips don't live in terror of the boss, they don't lie awake at night thinking about the next slump and the next war. We had peace inside us […] The very thought of going back to Lower Binfield had done me good already. You know the feeling I had. Coming up for air! Like the big sea-turtles when they come paddling up to the surface, stick their noses out and fill their lungs with a great gulp before they sink down again among the seaweed and the octopuses.[42]

An inveterate diary keeper, Orwell's Morocco diary includes a very similar description of turtles "coming up for air."[43] In fact, Orwell's diary teems with close observations of the Moroccan scene: its landscape, insect life, and fauna; its obscure (to Orwell) systems of land ownership and agriculture; the challenges of raising livestock (Orwell kept chickens and loved goats) in unfamiliar terrain. Likewise, George's meditation on "the old life" is notable for its braiding of human, animal, and vegetal registers. Peace is experiential, a feeling "inside us" that may link humans problematically to the earth ("dull, sluggish, vegetable") or suggest that expanded frames of reference beyond the human are necessary, if not exactly liberating, particularly in times of crises. Either way, this peace is not associated with gazing *at* landscape but *becoming* it. We are far from the conventional coloratura of English pastoral here. In fact, we might be in Morocco, where Orwell once observed a line of old women hauling firewood past his house: "Though they had registered themselves on my eyeballs I cannot truly say that I had seen them," he admits. "Firewood was passing—that was how I saw it."[44]

These visions of the English and Moroccan landscape don't "stand in" for one another and their relationship is much less schematic than even George Bowling's "two worlds at once,"

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[42] Orwell, *Coming Up for Air,* 197, 198.
[43] See George Orwell, *Diaries,* edited by Peter Davison (New York: Liveright, 2009). Orwell describes watching tortoises in an irrigation tank: "These cannot swim fast enough to get away if you wade after them. Compared with land tortoises they are not very retractile, keep their heads & limbs out even when you are holding them, & have no power to withdraw the tail. They draw their head into a kind of cylinder of skin like a muffler. They do not seem able to stay under water long without coming up for air" (122).
[44] George Orwell, *An Age Like This: The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell 1920-1940*, 391.

though "a kind of thin bubble"—a sheen or translucence—might best capture the subtle overtones and complications of colonial vision I see bleeding through Orwell's ostensibly "Anglocentric" novel. In any case, Orwell's Moroccan writing suggests that he was fully conscious of how landscape itself encoded power relations. "In a tropical landscape one's eye takes in everything except the human beings." Orwell noted in an article first published in *New Lines* just months before *Coming Up for Air* was released. "It takes in the dried-up soil, the prickly pear, the palm-tree and the distant mountain, but it always misses the peasant hoeing at this patch. He is the same colour as the earth, and a great deal less interesting to look at."[45] Here, Orwell ironically "naturalizes" racism but he also indicts landscape conventions as such—pointing to how such conventions are premised on an already aestheticized, empty countryside. While it might be problematic to conflate the Georges, we should also be wary of too easy an equation of colonizer with colonized; however, Orwell's experiences at the "margins" of empire shouldn't be ignored when we consider his arguments for passivity.[46] And here we might do well to remember the critical tradition linking ignorance to pastoral: in Orwell's writings, the countryside is never "outside reality" but a site or scene of awareness, however compromised. The line of inquiry I've opened here leads us to consider the fact that *Coming Up for Air*, though written in the "real time" build-up to World War II, was not written in the "real space" of an isolated, insular England. The book's formal hybridity, its suspension between novel and reportage, then speaks to its suspension between spatial experiences inseparable from the

[45] Ibid., 390.
[46] Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000) makes the case that political modernity isn't a one-way process in which a European "center" exports Enlightenment ideals of sovereignty, self-determination, and bourgeois power relations to colonial contexts; rather a recursive transmission and translation occurs, in which plural and diverse "margins" returned the European project of political modernity to itself.

destabilizing contradictions and contractions of empire at the onset of World War II, contradictions and contractions George Orwell understood better than most.[47]

Rex Warner's Detachment

Coming Up for Air is chronologically nestled between the documentary approaches Orwell developed in *Road to Wiggan Pier* (1937) and *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) and the full-throated allegories of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1945) and *Animal Farm* (1949)*;* it's also formally suspended between these modes, utilizing first-person narration to inventory English cultural production in a sociological tone while reaching outward for a "you" who participates in cultural myths that generate meanings far beyond such products.[48] When George finally arrives in the vicinity of Lower Binfield he unexpectedly confronts the "good-sized manufacturing town" it has become: "Oh, yes, I know *you* knew what was coming. But *I* didn't. You can say I was a bloody fool not to expect it, and so I was."[49] The collapse of pastoral retreat under advanced schemes of industrialization is already available to readers as a new twist on an old myth; even deflated pastoral points toward how personal or local experiences index historical transformations. Pastoral's literary roots in allegory and romance allowed it to scale between levels of experience and knowledge in ways factual or sociological modes of writing couldn't

[47] Orwell's letters from Morocco are consumed with questions of empire and war. "How can we 'fight Fascism' except by bolstering up a far vaster injustice?" he asked one correspondent. "What we always forget is that the overwhelming bulk of the British proletariat does not live in Britain, but in Asia and Africa. It is not in Hitler's power, for instance, to make a penny an hour a normal industrial wage; it is perfectly normal in India, and we are at great pains to keep it so…This is the system which we all live on and which we denounce when there seems to be no danger of its being altered" (*An Age Like This: The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell 1920-1940,* 397).

[48] *Coming Up for Air* didn't appear in the U.S. until 1950, when it was published alongside two other Orwell "novels": *Down and Out in London and Paris* and *Burmese Days.* The latter is usually classed as nonfiction and the former understood to draw heavily on Orwell's own experiences in Burma. *Coming Up for Air* was widely viewed to partake and yet exist independently from either of these approaches.

[49] Orwell, *Coming Up for Air,* 211. Emphasis in original.

comprehend: indeed, Rex Warner, the writer on whom this section will focus, described in his essay "The Allegorical Method" how allegory mediated between pure fantasy or imaginative acts dangerously disconnected from reality and "the vulgarity of realism," a desiccated observational technique that, "undirected by imagination or moral impulse is almost meaningless."[50] Reading other late modernist works of this period, Thomas S. Davis tracks the renewal of interest in allegory's scalar impulses: allegory "oscillates" between geopolitical and everyday realities, arranging "concrete particulars so that they yield something tangible about world-systemic disorder."[51] In yoking allegory to a particular historical moment, Davis recalls Walter Benjamin, who likewise understood allegory to reflect "some historical failure of or crisis in human perception en masse."[52]

Benjamin's "crisis in human perception" was the crisis of mechanical reproduction, of film and photography, both technologies inextricable from modern warfare and "world-systemic disorder." Benjamin intimated the contours of this crisis in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" when he noted that "unmistakably, reproduction as offered by picture magazines and newsreels differs from the image seen by the unarmed eye."[53] The "unarmed eye" was doubly armed by photography since mass movements—notoriously fascism—didn't just circulate widely due to new technologies but were legible because of them. "A bird's-eye view best captures gatherings of hundreds of thousands," Benjamin observed.[54] The bird's-eye view

[50] Rex Warner, "The Allegorical Method" in *The Cult of Power* (London: John Lane The Bodley Head, 1946), 107.
[51] Thomas S. Davis, *The Extinct Scene: Late Modernism and Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 17.
[52] Jim Hansen, "Formalism and Its Malcontents: Benjamin and De Man on the Function of Allegory, *New Literary History,* No.4, Forms and/of Decadence (Autumn, 2004), 672.
[53] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations,* translated by Harry Zohn, edited by Hannah Arendt (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1968), 223.
[54] Ibid., n. 251.

and allegory turn us productively to issues of pastoral form since both aerial shot and allegory require an "erasure of the specific detail" that foregrounds "human consciousness struggling to dominate or to evade matter and nature."[55] Allegory systematizes the problems of attachment pastoral so often mediates; rather than Orwell's vegetal model of embodied passivity, aerial aesthetics highlight strategies of detachment and distance. Aeroplanes and the bombs they dropped literally exploded dreams of rural retreat in the early years of World War II, but aerial vistas also challenged notions that peace or equilibrium, however compromised, might be a feeling locatable "inside" pastoral subject positions. As a new kind of cultural text, the countryside in the age of the aeroplane was primed to be scanned and read by a detached observer—a position we'll find Lewis Mumford taking up in my next chapter.

Coming Up for Air tweaked domestic travel narratives of the interwar period that depended on embodied, and embedded, narrators who traveled the countryside in motor-cars, surveying altered vistas from various knolls. But the aerial view also dominated British literature of the 1930s. While W.H. Auden propagated the English cult of the pilot in works like *The Orators* (1932), which opens with an aerial image of England "spread out like a mother," such perspectives easily synched with European fascism's obsession with abstract masses of faceless subjects whose abstraction made them all the easier to aestheticize and to bomb.[56] As war approached, aerial exultation gave way to more minatory attitudes and the promises of perspective morphed into concern over the ethics of detachment, a concept doubly charged, again in the English context, as Auden and members of his circle renegotiated and even forsook their political commitments of the 1930s.

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[55] Hansen, "Formalism and Its Malcontents," *New Literary History,* 671.
[56] The work of Paul Virilio explores this conjunction thoroughly; see *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception* (New York: Verso, 1989) which explores the tight interrelation between technologies of war and technologies of representation and observation.

Associated with Auden and company since his Cambridge days, Rex Warner started his career writing novels that allegorized contemporary events—including the Nazi *Anschluss* in *The Professor* (1938)—before turning to historical fictions set in ancient Greece and Rome. One of his final novels in the allegorical mode, *The Aerodrome* (1941) thus marked the end of an era in which literary aerialists could take uncomplicated delight in organizing vision and language from "on high"; it also closed a chapter on Warner's more idealistic political views.[57] *The Aerodrome* follows its protagonist Roy from the rural community of his childhood to his ascent, literal and figurative, through the ranks of a fascist-like entity known only as the Air Force and back again. Throughout the novel Roy struggles with the emotional and spatial logics of new forms of distance: if George Bowling asked *where* peace might be located, Roy's question is *how*—to find or to experience peace at all.

Roy's struggle can be located in the context of a decade's worth of pilot cult literature, but it should also be understood through changing representational practices that accompanied the build-up to World War II, a historical failure insuperable from a crisis in perception brought about by new technologies. Aeroplanes remained an English obsession at the start of war but the accent had changed. In *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) an aeroplane transfixed not just Septimus Smith but a whole crowd; its vapory skywriting suggested both advertisement and omen, a portent that a post-war society couldn't yet bring itself to read (or could read only as advert), let alone heed. In *Between the Acts,* (1941) Woolf again used an aeroplane to model a reading practice that would extend frames of reference and signification beyond ordinary comprehension. It's not

[57] In his study of Warner, N.H. Reeve noted that by the time he wrote *The Aerodrome* there was "no longer any prospect of a revolution overthrowing fascism and its allies, and Warner's always brittle confidence that it would successfully do so seems to have left him. If the enemy is to be defeated it will have to be by the 'free world' as it is, and not as socialism would wish it to be"; Warner's disillusionment led him to understand power as "an attitude that stirs and attracts even those threatened by it" (*The Novels of Rex Warner: An Introduction* [London: Palgrave, 1989], 78).

what the aeroplane says but what it sees that is Woolf's object lesson. Addressing the location of a cesspool Mr. Oliver relates that it was "if he had heard aright, on the Roman road. From an aeroplane, he said, you could still see, plainly marked the scars made by the Britons; by the Romans; by the Elizabethan manor house; and by the plough, when they ploughed the hill to grow wheat in the Napoleonic wars."[58] If the squadron of aeroplanes that appears in the novel's final pages warns of things to come, this early view functions as historical reminder. Like Adorno's notion of a "cultural landscape," the aeroplane's view engraves a history of human use, and significantly degradation, onto an otherwise natural or "inviolable" panorama.[59]

Insofar as pastoral has long been perceived as a specific form of distance, often the distance it takes to turn working farmland into aestheticized landscape, aerial views like the one Woolf narrates here marked the emergence of a novel magnitude of distance. But imaginative, or to use Lefebvre's term "representational spaces" like Woolf's were also increasingly accompanied by "representations *of* space"—official documents, practices, and images that also work to produce space, alongside the social practices I tracked in the previous section as faltering journeys of rural retreat. Aerial photographs of various, usually enemy, countrysides began circulating widely in the British popular press around 1939. *Between the Acts* provides something of a primer on the new emotional and ethical valences that pastoral positions, premised on acts of viewing landscape, assumed in these years. In Woolf's novel, the view from Pointz Hall, authenticated by Figgis's Guide Book, genteelly persists into the novel's present: "1830 was true in 1939."[60] But as a link between generations, any view is cold comfort in the novel's now.

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[58] Virginia Woolf, *Between the Acts* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1941) 4.
[59] Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 64.
[60] Woolf, *Between the Acts,* 52.

While the aeroplane's view showcased humanity's ability to scar landscapes, an embodied view evinced any individual human's inability to register such changes. "It'll be there," Mrs. Swithin sighs looking out the fields, "when we're not."[61] Rather than a view Giles, who is aligned throughout the novel with a sense of impotent foreboding (he's a kind of less jolly George Bowling), seems to see a map in which "the whole of Europe—over there—was bristling like…He had no command of metaphor." The map quickly morphs, "Only the ineffective word 'hedgehog' illustrated his vision of Europe, bristling with guns, poised with planes."[62] This extraordinary moment gives us a sense of how aerial perspectives could illustrate both a cultural landscape of human action and cartoonish abstractions inadequate to the emotionality of the times. In fact, Giles's vision of Europe "bristling with guns, poised with planes" echoes the kinds of aerial photography beginning to appear in British newspapers like the *London Illustrated News.* In these photos, the countryside appears as two-dimensional, abstract, and blatantly an object of reconnaissance; in at least one headline the photos "lay bare Nazi secrets," emphasizing how the aerial perspective conjoined espionage with omniscience, especially after the development of magnesium bombs that allowed for nighttime photography.[63] Many of these aerial photos included overlays such as numbers and vectors signifying targets and lines of attack. Such deictic markers oriented readers and unfolded, or seemed to, the epistemology of war-making while displaying Europe as "bristling" with targets.

[61] Ibid., 53.
[62] Ibid., 53.
[63] See *London Illustrated News* Feb. 3, 1940

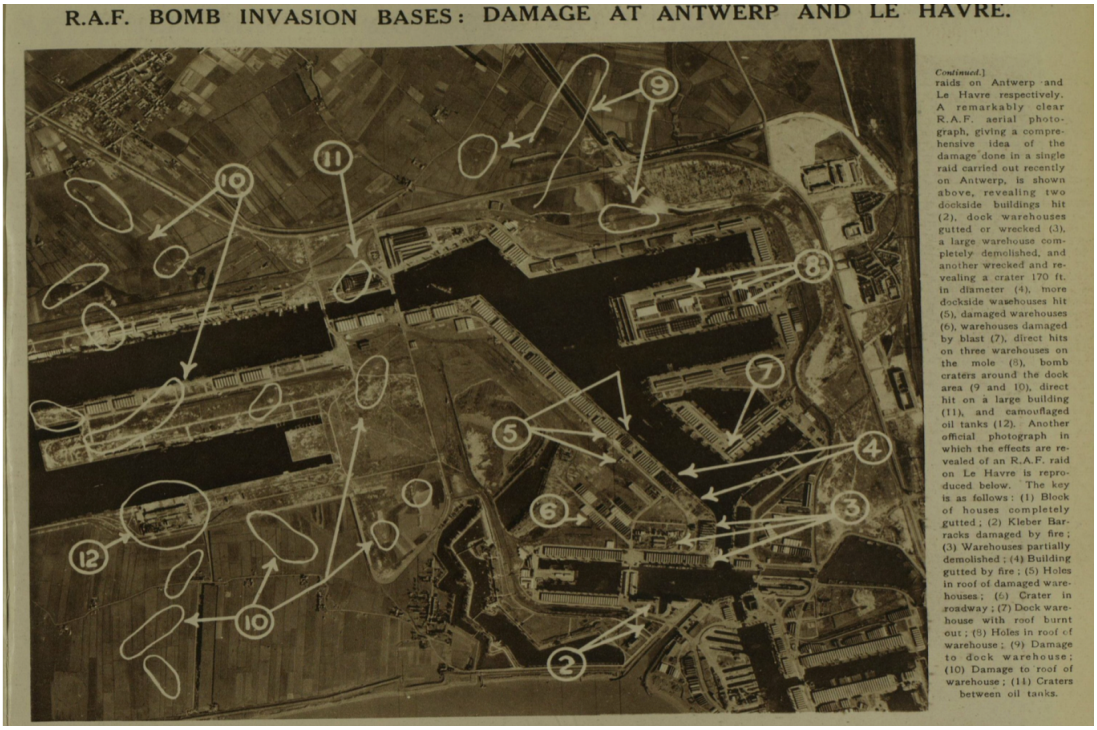

Figure 1, from *London Illustrated News,* October 19, 1940.

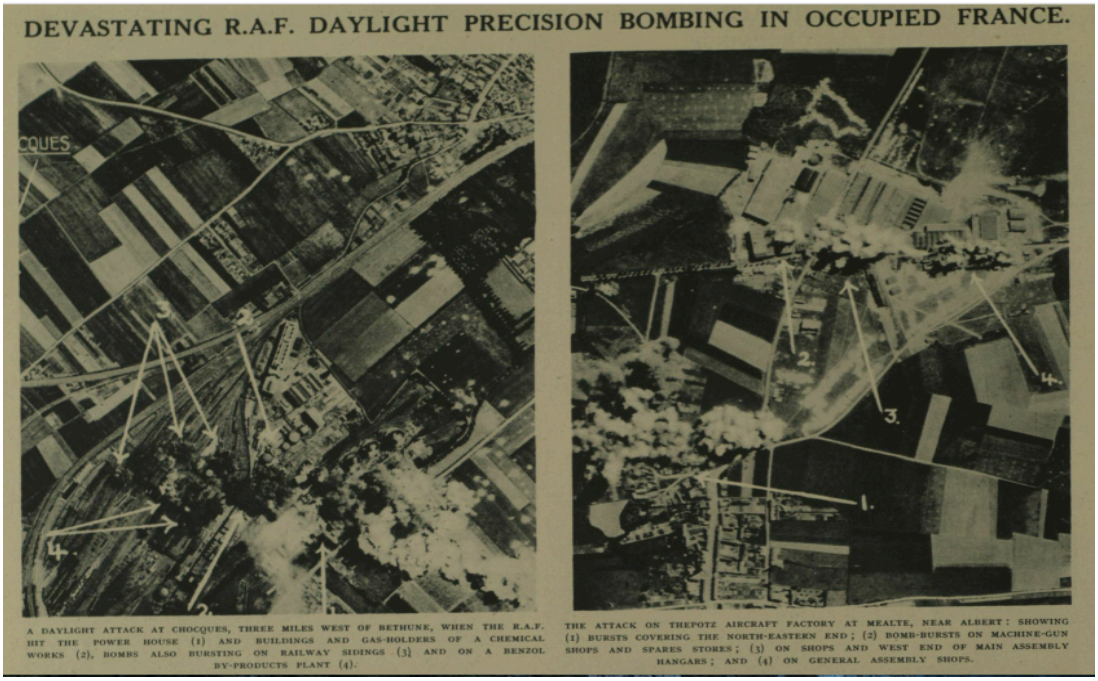

Figure 2, from *London Illustrated News,* July 19, 1941.

Giles's stumbling linguistic metaphor thus works vibrantly as a visual one too: photos spiked by, and spiky with, lines of attack and vectors of assault circulated widely in the British press. The various forms of knowledge Woolf encodes in "views" and viewing in these

passages—omniscient, subjective, geopolitical—sketch a quick history of landscape's long association with power. If landscape has worked in tandem with subject position to formalize a certain epistemological relationship, the aerial view might seem to simply codify and compound what Michel de Certeau described as the "fiction of knowledge" that all landscapes are premised on, a fiction that nonetheless grounds and supports political and social control.[64] But visions of the enemy countryside abstracted into bombing patterns concealed the English countryside, also threatened by bombs. There's something terribly fungible about aerial landscapes, in which enemy and home territory potentially stand in for one another. Rather than harmonizing human and nature, or organizing subject position, such views muddle pastoral's emotional and ideological palette. Aerial views departicularize and detach landscape from beholder. Material histories of technology and geopolitics challenge pastoral's traditional orientations and attachments, and it's this muddle that Rex Warner's novel stages through allegory.

In *The Aerodrome* vertical positions and exchanges stand in for pastoral's historically lateral movements. Rather than the complexities of the city, Warner opposes grubby country ways with technological efficiency and chilly aerial perspectives. Air and mud are the novel's governing mediums and provide occasions for many of its most striking images: we first meet Roy drunk, listening to the "gurgling and sucking noises… swelling from the plashy ground." He is "pierced with a sudden excitement, like a lancet, of joy" by "the fierce broken snarl of an owl."[65] Roy is especially sensitive to his environment, porous enough to be pierced by innocent sounds of the country, and to commune with nature itself in the form of a libocedrus which he "used to worship, visiting it regularly after morning service, thrusting my head and hands

[64] Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," from *The Practice of Everyday Life,* translated by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 92.
[65] Rex Warner, *The Aerodrome* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1941), 14.

through its dark foliage, fancying it to be some goddess or divine creature, not uninterested in myself."[66] But Roy has already fallen out of nature and into history by the book's start: he's drunk following revelations that his guardians—the Rector and his wife—are not his parents.

The novel relates Roy's search for his origins and disenchantment with village life, his romance with Bess and Bess's betrayal, and ultimately his drift into and away from the Air Force as a journey of maturation that is synchronous with Roy's quest for distance or detachment from life's entanglements, and his realization that abstracting himself from the pattern of human existence—or seeing human existence as abstract patterning—severs him from affection, opportunity, and change. On the one hand, the novel is a kind of political *bildungsroman* that tantalizingly allegorizes Warner's own disillusionment with radical Leftist politics, where Rex = Roy in the manner of the two Georges. Such a reading would position Warner's as "naïve allegory" or "a disguised form of discursive writing."[67] As I've suggested, Warner's novel elaborates a more complex version of allegory, one that should be understood as enfolded in the historical specificity—and specific failures—of its political, technological, and cultural moment even as it pushes toward mythic horizons.

In his essay on allegory, published in *The Cult of Power* (1946) just a few years after *The Aerodrome,* Warner proposed that allegory involved "placing what is familiar in an atmosphere which will reveal something unexpected and unknown in the most unlikely places" and *The Aerodrome* is full of familiar English set pieces like the chapel, pub, and country house.[68] But allegorists, continued Warner, make use of networks of symbols to create an atmosphere in which all elements of a work may be said to "mean more than what meets the eye."[69] The

[66] Ibid., 15.
[67] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism,* 90.
[68] Warner, "The Allegorical Method," *The Cult of Power,* 107.
[69] Ibid., 108.

position of the reader of Warner's allegory is thus strikingly similar to Warner's allegorical subject, Roy, whose struggle is how, and from where, to view or "read" life's landscapes. Warner dramatizes this conundrum in a key passage that innovates one of pastoral's foundational images, drawing on pastoral's literary history to stage the struggle over attachment and detachment inaugurated by Roy's point of view from an aeroplane high above the rural countryside of his youth. "I remembered how from the air the valleys, hills, and rivers gained a certain distinction," Roy narrates,

> but wholly lost that quality which is perceived by a countryman whose day's travel is bounded by the earth of three or four meadows, and whose view for most of his life may be constricted by some local rising of the ground. In the air there is no feeling or smell of earth, and I have often observed that the backyards of houses or the smoke curling up through cottage chimneys, although at times they seem to have a certain pathos, do as a rule, when one is several thousand feet above them, appear both defenceless and ridiculous, as though infinite trouble had been taken to secure a result that has little or no significance."[70]

This scene recycles one of pastoral's primary images. Virgil's first eclogue ends with Tityrus consoling Meliboeus, exiled from his farm, with a vision of pastoral harmony and cheer: "Nevertheless, tonight you might stay here… There's plenty of good pressed cheese you're welcome to. / Already there's smoke you can see from the neighbors' chimneys / and the shadows of the hills are lengthening as they fall."[71] Plenty, comfort, and natural beauty offset the pain of loss, one of pastoral's promises of "balance"; without the ballast of sense perceptions, far above the human scale of landscape—at too great a distance—this promise evaporates. As Roy reads landscape from on high, he shifts between multiple perspectives including the position, however bounded and constricted, of the pastoral "countryman" he began the book inhabiting. The aesthetic distance that allows him to see landscape as art—a thing over which infinite

[70] Warner, *The Aerodrome,* 224.
[71] Virgil, *The Eclogues,* translated by David Ferry (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999), 9.

trouble has been taken that nonetheless "does" little—is crossed with memories that backyards do have smells, meadows feelings. In this way, Warner's aerial pastoral suggests the mixed states of detachment that bind reading itself to both histories of imaginative literature and material realities of lived and embodied experience. This experience, which we might call *The Aerodrome's* approximation to pastoral "balance" or peace, is never wholly transcendent and universal but an oscillation between levels at once ordinary, world-systemic, and literary.

Aerial distance is a matter of plot in *The Aerodrome*, but it's also figured through Roy's narration, which is hyper-attuned to and almost comically invested in surfaces: we follow Roy's struggles as a reader, an activity the novel proposes as already aerial or at least uncomfortably imbued with aerial perspectives' emotional codes. At key moments faces, memories, and objects—a quilt, a carpet—take on power precisely for the way in which they evoke aerial perspectives. "I kept my eyes on the pattern of the carpet, a decoration of small intertwined snakes among ivy leaves," Roy notes at his first meeting with Eustacia, the woman who will become his lover and initiate a chain of events that resolve the mystery of his birth, lead him back to Bess, and topple the Air Force altogether! "And for some reason my mind went back to the time when I had been sitting on the bed with Bess's mother and had so closely examined the patchwork quilt."[72] In that earlier scene, Bess's mother attempts to dissuade Roy from marrying Bess by revealing that she is his sister (in the novel's turgid plotting, turns out she's not). Roy's distance above the quilt—he picks at it, noting the "squares were red and yellow and blue"—and above the carpet preview his remove from the world of "secrecies and dissembling," as well as his return to and acceptance of worldly complications. "I was both fond of her and sorry for her distress," Roy says of Bess's mother's confession, and again the echo of the aerial creeps in, "but

[72] Warner, *The Aerodrome,* 209.

I felt her gesture to be a trifle foolish."[73] Yet scanning, reading, and deciphering—laying bare of secrets—never yield definitive knowledge. Warner's allegorical method undermines assumptions that knowledge can be definitive, that what meets the eye will ever be fully comprehended or complete.

By the "Conclusion" Roy and Bess sit reunited in the meadow where we first found Roy. All should be well, but the final paragraphs are pocked with evocative shading (the light is fading, the scene itself is a memory of a memory), empty signifiers (words like *nothing, something, never* circulate), and conditional structures ("it might be said," "we might live"). Back on earth, if not in the mud, the book ends where it began. But equilibrium is not quite restored, peace not quite achieved, in part because of the consistency of Roy's struggle to read and describe a world structured by unmeasured, and immeasurable, distances. Countryside and "landscape" are thus key to the book not just because Warner was working with pastoral's mythic geographies but because the terms' associative tissue was drawn into historical crises, a point N.H. Reeve echoed when he noted that "the atmosphere of the writing also reflects the now-unavoidable fact of the imminent war, and its impact upon personal or collective ambitions."[74] But Warner's allegorical method and canny innovations on pastoral also depended on the crisis in perception brought about by new technologies of reproduction and war. In turning to pastoral allegory to explore this crisis, Warner could join history to myth.

Many writers shared the sense that World War II required modes of explanation far different from progressive historical analysis or the gathering of social scientific data. Elizabeth Bowen, reviewing Angus Calder's *The People's War,* the first of his books to "debunk" what he later called *The Myth of the Blitz,* made just this point: "sheltered from its contaminating

[73] Ibid., 156-8.
[74] N.H. Reeve, *The Novels of Rex Warner: An Introduction,* 77.

atmosphere—aimlessness, sluggishness, voicelessness and moroseness"—Calder could only reproduce facts, stats, and data.[75] He couldn't understand the myth even as, or because, he sought to debunk it. Calder was using "myth" in the way Roland Barthes had some ten years before him: as a special mode of communication that helped sustain bourgeois ideology. "Myth is a type of speech," Barthes alleged, meaning that reality was turned into myth through "metalanguage," a kind of secondary signification system that was already motivated and in service to the status quo.[76] In Calder's books, the "People's War" and later the "Blitz" became signs used to summon an entire constellation of English moral preeminence and national unity. Bowen had little time for this project. In fact, she used "myth" in a very different way. Myth for Bowen was a mood, an energy sensed by or cognizant to those collectively suffering through traumatic events.

While the moodiness or "nerves" of World War II have by now been well documented—it was, as Auden's book-length war poem claimed, *The Age of Anxiety* (1946)—critics have turned their attention to writers' use of genres like the gothic, ghost story, and spy narrative in order to explore the palpable sense of dread and hallucinogenic unreality that characterized the British experience of war, tending to understand the era's widespread anxiety within the matrices of trauma theory and psychoanalytic paradigms of repetition and remembering.[77] Such projects

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[75] Elizabeth Bowen, "*The People's War* by Angus Calder" in *The Mulberry Tree,* selected and introduced by Hermoine Lee (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1986), 182.

[76] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" in *Mythologies,* translated by Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 109.

[77] Thomas S. Davis has recently written about Elizabeth Bowen's Blitz stories in relation to gothic in *The Extinct Scene: Late Modernism and Everyday Life;* Patrick Deer likewise reads Bowen's ghost stories of the Blitz in *Culture in Camouflage: War, Empire, and Modern British Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Lyndsey Stonebridge argues that "The Second World War, perhaps more than any war before it raises the question of how war can be held in the mind when the mind itself is under siege; of what it means to experience a trauma so unrelentingly forceful… that it cannot be grasped consciously" in her entry "Theories of Trauma" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of World War II,* edited by Marina MacKay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Recently, scholarship that situates WWII as a moment of "late modernism" has investigated how Blitz literature and war writing continued and critiqued interwar modernist culture. See Davis, Mackay's *Modernism and World War II,* Leo Mellor in *Reading the Ruins: Modernism, Bombsites and British Culture* (Cambridge: University of

tend to focus on intense moods and heightened sensations. Pastoral would seem to have little to do with the stressful realities and extreme atmospheres of war writing and experience. And yet works from the period, including Auden's own poem which he subtitled "A Baroque Eclogue," invite us to consider the pastoral mode as unexpectedly commensurate to moods of war in part, as I'll explore in this chapter's final section, because pastoral best expressed the complexities, and complicities, of peace.

Sylvia Townsend Warner & Complicity

In December 1939 *The New Yorker* rejected one of Sylvia Townsend Warner's stories. The magazine's editor, William Maxwell, did so with great tenderness. He and Warner had already embarked upon a correspondence that would stretch over forty years and Warner herself would be published by the magazine a whopping 153 times over the next decades. In his rejection note Maxwell claimed that the story far from being bad was actually too good—too good at being a certain type of story readers had gained familiarity with, Maxwell went on, because of Sylvia Townsend Warner. "You are the founder of a school of fiction," he declared. "[N]ow there are a number of English writers who approach contemporary problems through the eyes of the tiny English village that you brought to life. It's become the established way of writing about England's problems… we've been flooded by stories like 'A Viking Strain,' the only difference being that they were not half so well done."[78] But there was a particular stock quality to Warner's story, even or especially in 1939: "the country point of view toward the war,

Cambridge Press, 2011), Paul Saint-Amour in *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), and Etsy's *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England.*

[78] *An Element of Lavishness: Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner and William Maxwell* (Washington DC: Counterpoint, 2001), 6.

and the country perpetrator" Maxwell sighed, "are familiar to us (we are so dreadfully informed, as you know, and can tell at least three days ahead of the actual moment of invasion when any European nation is going to be invaded) now."[79] Maxwell's letter highlights the extent to which English pastoral was paired with "information" during World War II: the mode was mixed up with the news in numerous ways, a trend that only increased as the Blitz began and People's War propaganda campaigns began in earnest.

Sylvia Townsend Warner was both attuned to pastoral's instrumental value as propaganda and long committed to the mode's expressive resources. Mary Jacobs has noted that Warner's interwar pastorals such as *Lolly Willowes* (1926) and *Opus 7* (1931) drew on "fantastic ruralism" to interrogate power relations around gender and class; Warner's early pastorals insisted on the radical power of outsider or liminal subject positions, in particular women. Rather than refashion as surrogates, in the manner of Orwell and Rex Warner, typical or "representative" male speakers, Warner positioned women as "the principal guardians and practitioners of an arcane knowledge about a rural past living on secretly under the present."[80] By World War II, Warner's countryside was less magical, her women far from witchy. The brutal economies of war meant that she depended on magazines like *The New Yorker* for necessary funds and rations, and her war pastorals revealed grimmer realities within pastoral conventions, negotiating the exigencies of official war culture.[81] Besides the complicities of economy, Warner's war writings—her short stories and poems but also her letters and diary—explore new moods based on an intermittent, shifting, and highly mediated relationship to war.

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[79] Ibid., 6.
[80] Mary Jacobs, "Sylvia Townsend Warner and the Politics of the English Pastoral 1925-1934" in *Critical Essays on Sylvia Townsend Warner, English Novelist 1893-1978*, 77.
[81] Michael Steinman notes in his introduction to *An Element of Lavishness: Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner and William Maxwell* (2001), the magazine sent numerous care packages containing food and provisions, helpful when Warner and Ackland were billeting evacuees (xvii).

Rather than the shattering force of events that trauma theory assumes, such moods or emotional states suggest, according to Marianne Torgovnick, forms of dispersed trauma in which experiences of shock are available to others and transmitted at the high speeds of media rather than immediate individual experience.[82] Pastoral was both the content of "war news" as propaganda and, in Warner's work, a mode sensitive to increasingly mediatized experiences of war, where violence as second-hand reportage could penetrate anyone's ostensible peace.

Marina MacKay describes how pastoral was a prime export of British writing during the war years: "The 'people's war' mythology of classless civilian solidarity proved indispensable" for a "rebranding" campaign designed to elicit sympathy and support from the United States.[83] This position is obvious in, for example, *Life* magazine's visit to Churchill, England in November 1940. "The world would like to know the secret of British courage under the German bombs," the article began. "The clue is actually to be found in any English village."[84] The magazine doubled-down on its village's representativeness by featuring the birthplace of Winston Churchill, then at maximum popularity. Meanwhile, H.V. Morton's coda to *I Saw Two Englands* managed to engineer the entire national pageant into his Blitz-tested village: "my parish has become England," Morton crowed. "This is a wonderful thing, and I never get tired of thinking about it."[85] These collapses weren't just geographic but temporal, as pastoral nostalgia worked to create a sense that war, as Morton put it, "has made England almost 'merrie' again." Indeed, narratives proliferated in which English feudal society sheltered democratic influences without significant disturbance and meritocracy was folded into older conceptions of an organic

[82] See Marianna Torgovnick, *The War Complex: World War II in Our Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), xvi.
[83] Marina MacKay, *Modernism and World War II*, 23.
[84] *Life Magazine,* Vol. 9 No. 21 (November 18, 1940), 87.
[85] Morton, *I Saw Two Englands,* 313-4.

social "whole": pastoral was prime for treatment by "Deep England" propaganda campaigns.[86] Sylvia Townsend Warner's relationship to pastoral, and war, was much stranger than all this. While her earlier pastorals proposed that queer or at least non-normative experiences lived "secretly" within country locales, by World War II Warner was highlighting the presence of social confusion and pain inside arcadia, often by thematizing the perplexing atmospheres of war through a pastoral lens attuned to climate, weather, and new media such as radio. War's impact is often indirect in Warner's writings, and her war experience is highly mediated. Indeed, Warner's "situation of enunciation" in World War II underscored the mediumistic qualities of pastoral itself as a "vast network of cultural codes."[87]

Warner's world war pastorals were intended for a middlebrow American readership and, "A Viking Strain" aside, regularly published by *The New Yorker.* But her work challenges accounts, like MacKay's, that pastoral shoves even "progressive aspirations" into "a traditional idiom."[88] In Warner's short story "The Cold," for example, "progressive aspirations" do not unite characters but seethe between them in an oppressive atmosphere; when social change occurs, the story ends—unharmonious closure marks many of the war pastorals I've looked at here. War's affects gallivant through the Ryder household undetected beneath the layer of actual illness that each family member and their maid, Stella, are visited with in turn. The Cold travels through the story much like The War—disruptively capitalized, upsetting "the old simple natural

[86] The term "Deep England" has been ascribed to Angus Calder, who devotes an entire chapter to it in his *The Myth of the Blitz* (London: Pimlico, 1991). Calder provides a map of the English countryside, explaining how "Deep England"—linked to the Georgian writers both Raymond William and George Orwell excoriated—functioned between the wars, when the countryside was seen as threatened by suburban sprawl while also offering an identity or special kind of inner richness for those very suburbanites imperiling it.
[87] W.J.T. Mitchell's definition of landscape, from *Landscape and Power,* 13.
[88] MacKay, *Modernism and World War II,* 26.

order of things."[89] War contagion eventually proves liberating, as Stella quits her post and the patronizing, semi-feudal system of domestic labor stands momentarily exposed even—or perhaps especially—to the middle-class Mrs. Ryder who depends on Stella not just for her domestic services but as a mechanism ensuring her continued superiority over neighbors and family alike. Mrs. Ryder, then, is a less elegant version of Mrs. Miniver, Britain's most popular heroine from the 1930s and '40s.[90] Mrs. Ryder takes over Stella's tasks—the "cooking, sweeping scrubbing, doing everything that for so long Stella had done"—not out of some new-found sense of social parity but because doing so restabilizes the social pecking order: if "a grave grieved silence" over Stella's departure was maintained, "nothing that was not true, strictly true," Mrs. Ryder thinks, "the Sewing Circle might draw its own conclusions."[91]

But "The Cold" is more than sharp social satire. The story's wafting point of view calls forth a world in which boundaries are porous, a world of atmospheres and contagions. In her diary from these years, Warner gave a strong account of radio's effect on wartime feeling. "But also, I think the giving of news by wireless, which is non-geographical," she wrote, "has tended to give the war-news something of the quality of news of a pestilence. It has made it, in a fashion, an atmospheric rather than a territorial phenomenon."[92] And in "The Cold," a tangential wireless demonstrates something of Warner's mediatized pastoral method. Mrs. Ryder's boys are praised for not growing up like "Neville's ghastly young brother who would sit for hours stroking the cat and turn off the wireless whenever it became worth listening to."[93] The passive

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[89] Sylvia Townsend Warner, "The Cold" in *The Museum of Cheats* (New York: The Viking Press, 1947), 36.
[90] See Alison Light's *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism Between the Wars* for an extended discussion on the "conservative modernity" of Mrs. Miniver.
[91] Ibid., 45.
[92] *The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner,* edited by Claire Harman (London: Chatto & Windus, 1994), 104.
[93] Warner, *Museum of Cheats,* 39.

pose of radio listening is interrupted by the far greater desire to remain *un*informed, to switch off the news at the moment it becomes upsetting. Actively ignoring the news links Neville's "ghastly young brother" to Mrs. Ryder, who ignores Stella's cold until Stella is forced to quit, for fear that, like her aunts, she'll end up "chesty." The story's floating close-third person narration, itself an "atmospheric phenomenon," likewise suggests an authorial presence that is neither inside nor outside characters' judgments of others and themselves. Warner's shifting points of view destabilize oppositions, drawing into question the possibility of moral or ethical high ground in thinking about the war. While narratology has more often found analogues in cinema to explain innovations in point of view, Warner's short stories from World War II showcase narrative techniques more akin to radio effects, in particular radio's ability to penetrate and reorganize mental states of listeners.

Radio theory of the 1930s and '40s emphasized listeners' subjectivity as uniquely porous, comprised of an interior mental space that could be accessed by the ear—"the way to the listener's head lies through the ear," quipped Rudolf Arnheim in his 1936 treatise *Radio: An Art of Sound*.[94] As war heated up, radio promulgated an expanded world-view that was primarily a new world-soundscape. In Charles Rolo's 1942 account of wartime radio's "fourth front," the stationary listener is a still point in a global atmosphere that arrives "in" his ears as a dizzying blur of languages, sounds, and news items. Describing the typical day of radio monitors, Rolo notes that they "leave their post with buzzing ears and jagged nerves," as a global aural (and political) culture is reconstituted inside a permeable subject.[95] The world becomes something at once "out there" and inside one's head. Warner's sense that war radio generated not particular

[94] Rudolf Arnheim, *Radio: An Art of Sound,* translated by Margaret Ludwig and Herbert Read (London: Faber & Faber, 1936), 35.
[95] Charles Rolo, *Radio Goes to War: The "Fourth Front"* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1942), 4.

aesthetic forms but a quality of formlessness, of atmosphere, can be seen in her short stories' innovations in narrative point of view which depend less on "the eye of the camera" techniques such as close up, panorama, and montage than on focalization effects that create blurred perspectives and generate moods or atmospheres, rather than images, of war.

One of Warner's more troubling stories from this period, "Poor Mary" meditates on issues of consumption and complicity through a floating "medium"-like point of view that blurs and blends perspectives. "Poor Mary" is attuned to the kinds of identifications the countryside has historically helped us with, but it's also keen to show how conditions of world war scramble the certainty by which we know country and city, man and woman, human and animal, and friend and foe. The story tracks Nicholas, a conscientious objector who has been working on a pig farm since the start of the war. Nicholas is about to collect Mary, his wife, from the train station. They haven't seen each other since the start of the war; Mary is a volunteer for the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service). "They had never agreed about war," Warner writes of their prolonged separation, "so neither was surprised by the other."[96] The visit does not go well. Even though they are presumably far from the action, war keeps intruding: "So why on earth should she know about hawks?" Nicholas muses. "The thought prompted an inquiry about the V-2, and they went up the lane talking of air raids and air-raid damage."[97] War has marked their very pheromones: "She smells of metal, he thought, as I smell of dung."[98] But it's also changed their way of talking, both to one another and in general: "Her voice had grown rather common and twanging, it sounded uncared for, and she jumped from one subject to another."[99] Rather than set up the city-bad/country-good dichotomy reminiscent of pastoral propaganda, Warner's narrative

[96] Warner, *The Museum of Cheats,* 10.
[97] Ibid., 11.
[98] Ibid., 11.
[99] Ibid., 11.

technique relativizes such values and questions the kind of thinking that clings to these categories.

Any easy, certain knowledge is complicated by Warner's narrative positioning, in which characters' opinions at once consolidate and confound readers' expectations. Warner draws out the ways in which consumption defines us: Mary's diet of processed food has made her into an institutional animal, a kind of "live-stock" that the Army exploits as commercial farming exploits animals. But Mary's machine smell, her alliance with war efficiency or mechanization, is at odds with her "dirty feeding," the "goaded appetite of the disciplined."[100] In this section of the story Nicholas over-animalizes Mary and in doing so begins to reveal his own thinking: "She put up her hand that was so plump and so demonstrably manicured and clung to his wrists. She's going to have a baby, he thought. The cat in the trap that had clawed him to the bone, clawed and clung, had been within a few days of giving birth."[101] Mary, figured as sow and threatened cat both, morphs into a caricature of animalized woman: "Moulting, he thought, still clinically remembering the cat."[102]

What we witness here is a double turning: of Mary to animal and the mind that would make her so. Nicholas's thinking begins to harden into cliché: "she was going to have a baby. The fortune of war. Some get killed, some get maimed, some are got with child. There ought to be a pension from the War Office. And in that dreadful uniform too, those pitiable skirts turned up… My poor Mary, I hope it wasn't a rape."[103] Nicholas's refrain "poor Mary" swells pitilessly; his thoughts become increasingly confined to the most rote or common form of human thinking—the platitude or cliché. Nicholas is revealed as neither particularly conscientious nor

[100] Ibid., 14.
[101] Ibid. 17.
[102] Ibid., 17.
[103] Ibid., 18.

conscious in his attitudes toward Mary as the narration uncovers how war has penetrated and shaped Nicholas's mental landscape, despite his alleged pacifism. Warner's point of view here is atmospheric; her focalization penetrates characters' conscious minds and suggests that their inner thoughts are shaped, organized, and perhaps voiced by "outside" forces.

I've suggested that Warner was in odd relation to other kinds of "Deep England" accounts like Morton's and dispatches from rural England such as *Life's.* While Warner's war audiences were primarily American and audiences directed Warner's war writing in particular ways, her fictions manifest a critical mood rather than celebrate provincial England's pluck and fortitude. Yet in Warner's letters and stories from the war, Wendy Mulford argues, she is "entertaining her American friends with tales of wartime England calculated to make them laugh in disbelief at the absurdities of this hypocritical and hidebound country rumbling into the twentieth century".[104] For Mulford, Warner's letters are a kind of testing ground for her stories, speckled with incidents and "descriptions [that] could form the bones of a story," even as tonal differences distinguish the two bodies of writing.[105] Warner's fiction from the war is "exact, flat, emotionless, almost dry," while her letters are marked by "buoyancy, humour, a sense of the ludicrous and a love of exposing humbug."[106] But there is also a way in which Warner's wartime letters, like her poems, achingly express the mixed experiences and confused atmospheres of rural England during war. These more personal documents, often unpublished during her lifetime, nonetheless alert us to the powerful ways in which pastoral helped organize oppositions and antimonies, even as these texts simultaneously demonstrate the particular ways in which

[104] Wendy Mulford, *This Narrow Place: Sylvia Townsend Warner and Valentine Ackland: Life, Letters and Politics 1930-1951* (London: Pandora, 1988), 148-9.
[105] Ibid., 148.
[106] Ibid., 146, 148.

such structures no longer quite hold, or are held in different kinds of proximity, in conditions of mediatized war.

A poem like "This evening I shall hear the news on the wireless" brings together the advent of mass communications and broadcast technology with the new norm of total war. Warner's country position receiving war news via the radio all but eradicates pastoral's nostalgia. Here is the entire poem:

> This evening I shall hear the news on the wireless.
> This man, that man—
> A thatcher in Essex may be, a downland shepherd—
> Dead at that stroke,
> Escaped to a civil death from the impending
>
> Death in the air.[107]

The "air" in the final lines points both to the "impending // Death" of bombing campaigns and the news of death Warner's wireless brings. The poem's future tense—"This evening I shall"—suggests the way dread and anticipation could be modified, even mollified, by geographical distance as well as by radio's mediation. It's worth noting that the men in Warner's poem are those engaged in traditionally pastoral labor—thatching, shepherding—but also that they're fungible. "This man, that man" are non-specific, anonymous. More propagandistic pastorals of the period regularly featured a litany of English "types": in one of his enormously popular Sunday evening "Postscript" broadcasts, J.B. Priestley joined a group of Local Defense Volunteers on a "high down, with a fine view over a dozen wide parishes." Priestley notes that the small band seems to hold one of every English type: parson, bailiff, farmer, woodmen, and even a shepherd.[108] The scene makes Priestley feel as though he had "wandered into one of those

[107] Sylvia Townsend Warner, *Collected Poems* edited by Claire Harman (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 2008), 282.
[108] J.B. Priestley, *All England Listened: The Wartime Broadcasts of J.B. Priestley,* with an introduction by Eric Sevareid (New York: Chilmark Press, 1967), 15.

rich chapters of Thomas Hardy's fiction in which his rustics meet in the gathering darkness on some Wessex hillside."[109] The "preliminary talk" of the men is reassuring; it gives the "whole horrible business of air raids" a decidedly "rustic, homely, almost comfortable atmosphere."[110] While her poem points to the darker implications of English "types" and representative posses—abstract entities are hard to mourn—on the whole Warner would rather explore the coexistence of war and peace, investigating complicity and contradiction rather than resolving them. Indeed she could write to Paul Nordoff of "firewatching" with her partner Valentine Ackland, "it is a most pastoral and contemplative pursuit."[111]

Though she lived far from the London Blitz, Warner was not in rural retreat. She worked for the Woman's Volunteer Service (WVS) throughout the war, dealing with the logistics of settling families and housing evacuees herself. In another letter to Cunard she wrote of the influxes of evacuees from London and city centers, "It is so shameful, so disgraceful, that one is expected to *choose* them, to pick as in a slave-market. I don't feel as if they could ever forgive me for having chosen. I expect it will be hell."[112] Her antipathy toward evacuation protocols was matched by her antipathy toward the war itself. It's clear from her letters and journals that Warner felt outside the war effort, even as she took part in billeting evacuees and soldiers, and lectured to soldiers and working women. Unlike the Spanish Civil War, in which she had felt necessary and important as a reporter on the front lines of conflict, World War II offered little space for intellectuals to engage: "This kind of war is an essentially middle-aged pursuit," she wrote to Steven Clark in 1940, "its aims, its ideals, its methods, are all middle-aged. It is like a

[109] Ibid., 15.
[110] Ibid., 15.
[111] Warner, *Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner,* 70. From a letter dated February 27, 1941 to American composer Paul Nordoff, one of Warner's most frequent correspondents during the war years.
[112] Ibid., 86.

great sprawling pater-familias with all the young running errands."[113] For Warner, the ultimate goals of the war as well as the manner in which it was being fought were suspect.[114] The suspicion that the war was as much a bid to perpetuate certain types of power—to keep the pater-familias in place—was a widespread belief of the time. British discourse around the war effort was especially complicated, as memories of the jingoism of World War I inflected attitudes toward the war effort.[115] But Warner's life in the countryside embedded her in a distanced, not unpleasurable "pastoral" matrix of war.

Warner's war poems in particular are adept at capturing what she described in a letter as the "papery-thin" aspect of war. In a letter to Paul Nordoff in 1940 she wrote:

> For all its violence, war is papery-thin compared to a garden with apple trees and cabbages in it. Even when it's forced down one's throat, one can't swallow it. Whereas one goes out and eats great mouthfuls of cabbage and apple tree and moonlight. In fact, I shouldn't be surprised if in the last analysis it turns out that the horror of war is tantamount to the horror of boredom; it is the repugnance one feels to being compelled to attend to things that don't interest one.[116]

Country satisfactions again offset war, but here rural variety and boredom exist as modes of attention and consumption, an enduring theme for Warner. The throat is subject to force—being fed what it doesn't want—and a site of pleasure, a dynamic that takes on specific resonance in the context of Warner's acoustics. The poem "It is April nineteen-forty-one" mobilizes sound

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[113] Warner, *Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner,* 59.

[114] In Warner's diaries she can frequently be found considering World War II rather ruefully in the context of her work in Spain: "Tidying and throwing away all afternoon. So much about Spain. Thinking how vainly I worked, I wish I had worked a hundred times harder. Strange how there was room for one in that war: and in this—none. This war has not issued a single call for the help of intellectuals. It is just—your money and/or your life." (*Diaries,* 106).

[115] See for example National Observation National Panel Member, "'Conscripts' attitudes to war politics" (April 1940); from *Speak for Yourself: A Mass Observation Anthology 1937-1949,* eds. A Calder and d. Sheridan (1984), excerpted in *Writing Englishness 1900-1950,* edited by Judy Giles and Tim Middleton (New York: Routledge, 1995). The mass-observer in this case a member of RAF reports: "Member of RAF: "The foremost characteristic of their [soldiers'] outlook is a cynicism about everything. They like democracy but they know damn well that all we are fighting for is British capital. Patriotism, the Flag and the Empire are a lot of tripe—only they don't say tripe." (128, 129)

[116] Warner, *Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner,* 68.

patterning to suggest the concentric violence of war, in which destruction necessitates more destruction.

> It is April nineteen-forty-one.
> Confidently the hedgerows and the trees put on
> Their green, and under the green boughs our faces look wan [117]

In the poem, war's acoustics are also mundane: "All this long day a heavy sound // Has jarred the smooth bird-singing air," Warner writes. The "heavy sound" isn't enemy bombs but crews cleaning up ruined houses with dynamite (286). Such concentric logic drifts through the poem. The children don't just carry gasmasks they "swing [them] round their heads," infected perhaps by the altered atmosphere, in which a fine day is "jarred" and rattled "like a cannonade." Warner's end-words exemplify the war's dull patina: one/on/wan are the first end rhymes, suggesting at first subtraction (one – e = on) and then sickness (one is wan). The next three stanzas end on near-perfect rhymes, but the last, like the first, returns us to oddness, even boredom: the final tercet rhymes "smite" with "dynamite," a pairing that merely recycles rather than renews the soundscape. And the final words of the poem are leaden and dull compounds: "bombing-raid yesternight."

Warner's war work can revel in ugly sonic effects; in her story "The Way Back," a returning soldier glimpses the countryside in war: "The crest of the last low hill was covered with hutments, hutments sprawled down its flank. They were painted over with a camouflage in tones of stale mustard…. It was as though the hill were covered with a plague of caterpillars, caterpillars which since he had last been here had pullulated a thousand-fold."[118] Ugly landscapes breed ugly words: the *p* sounds of *paint*, *plague*, *caterpillars*, and *pullulated* require one to spit as well as pronounce. Warner's repugnance in these works is not merely a matter of

[117] Warner, *Collected Poems of Sylvia Townsend Warner*, 286.
[118] Warner, *The Museum of Cheats*, 220.

contents—surely boredom and ugliness are stock in trade for many war writers—but also an acoustic phenomenon or effect that suggests a war soundscape distinguished from the now familiar Blitz of screaming planes overhead, bleating air-raid sirens, and the thud of impact. From the countryside, war literally sounded different. To Paul Nordoff in August 1940 she wrote:

> It has been a beautiful evening, oddly veined with death. We had the wireless out under the trees, and were listening to a good performance of *The Barber of Seville,* and then, bump, bump, in the middle of the second act, we heard bombs falling just so far off that in the still air they sounded like ripe apples falling off a tree. Presently, going fast and straight, a pair of swans went overhead, and another pair, and this gave us an idea where the bombs had fallen. Meanwhile, we went on listening to *The Barber.*"[119]

Though Warner and Ackland go on listening to opera, the bombs are near enough to "vein" the evening—to pump through it or course down it. The bombs make the evening live. Figuring the bombs in terms of "ripe apples" recalls Warner's comment that war remains "papery-thin," available only insofar as one can assimilate it through metaphor or trope. That Warner continues listening to opera, to hold the war reality in relation to the "good performance" of an aesthetic reality, implies something of how "country air" could mediate both war and peace in the age of radio. Rather than a primarily visual experience of watching buildings burn—one of the foundational images of Blitz literature—Warner's letters and poems produce an attunement to war as a soundscape. Her engagement with acoustics offers a kind of score that differentiate proximities or positions toward war. By paying attention to how sound works as thematic content as well as formal intervention in Warner's poems, we can better understand how mediatized conditions of war reoriented pastoral's typical concerns with harmony, peace, and accord.

[119] Warner, *Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner,* 71-2.

The image of Warner and Ackland listening to the wireless while bombs fall is particularly suggestive for the way it crosses acoustic technologies with pastoral repose. While aerial photographs and perspectives challenged conventional representations of country landscapes, radio and other media penetrated pastoral's airspace. Warner explored these crossings through innovative narrative techniques and sophisticated aural experiments. It is arguable whether she started the trend for approaching "contemporary problems through the eyes of the tiny English village," but her village stories and country writings explore the complexities of rural life at the dawn of total war's new media age. Pastoral for Warner dwells within the intersecting frames of media, war, and the countryside.

Indeed, Warner's turn to atmosphere suggests Raymond Williams's turn, in the final pages of *The Country and the City,* to the effects of mediation. Modern communications, Williams argues, are an attempt to substitute for the kinds of sustaining community relations we once were able to discover for ourselves, those modes of being in the world that rendered us active rather than passive agents and that are impossible to come by in a world of "apparent strangers who yet decisively have a common effect on us."[120] Cities have long provided one image of the complexities of scale when it comes to human interactions but Williams argues the effects now reach into rural regions as well. "It is a form of shared consciousness," he argues, "rather than merely a set of techniques," and while Marshall McLuhan named this the "global village," Williams claims that, "nothing could be less like the experience of any kind of village or settled active community."[121] This shared consciousness is created, transmitted, and sustained by media, with which we are forced into "one-way relationships" that nonetheless determine what is relevant and important to our lives. Williams describes the world this creates as one

[120] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, 295.
[121] Ibid., 295.

"with which we have no other perceptible connections but which we feel is at once central and marginal to our lives."[122] The "external, willed reality" that Williams sees us all forced to relate to in an age saturated with media is, to be sure, one more turn of capitalism's screw. The divide between country and city is after all for Williams the "critical culmination" of the many divisions inherent to capitalism, as well as Marxism.

Pastoral's durability, its persistence as one of the "central conventions of literature at every stage of its development" doesn't preclude the ways in which new media like radio, new technologies of war, and changing geopolitical realities inflect and alter, complicate and reconfigure it.[123] Warner's war pastorals intervene in Williams's depiction of the general conditions of pastoral in the media age by offering specific sites, and in particular *sounds*, of the English countryside whereby World War II was at once "central and marginal," a matter of "willed, external reality" or "one-way relationship," and a highly differentiated and affectively intense experience. Warner's work, itself so frequently found on the periphery of war writing or canonical treatments of English literature during this period, thus helps us to locate a distinct mode of accounting for or describing the experience of modern war, which is always highly mediated and often unevenly traumatic.

The Blitz archive examined here should if nothing else alert us to the complex travels and permutations of pastoral as a mode of response to, rather than an image of retreat from, a dramatically changing world. And in turn, the effects of new media in which country and city are blurred or conjoined through technologies that nonetheless fail to create "shared consciousness"

[122] Ibid., 295.
[123] Frye, "Varieties of Literary Utopias" in *The Stubborn Structure: Essays on Criticism and Society* (London: Methuen, 1970), 125

of community life foreshadows pastoral's prevalence in debates around urban and regional planning that beset both England and the United States in the decades after World War II.

Coda: Mood

The intersection of pastoral and radio in the work of Sylvia Townsend Warner and J.B. Priestley highlights how literary modes circulate and bear the impress of changing technologies. Far from simply reproducing generic images and stock conventions, new media reshape modes through expanding repertoires of literary techniques, helping to reorganize conditions of reception and sculpting new forms of "shared consciousness." Priestley's broadcast bore pastoral content but it also reinscribed pastoral's address—shepherd to flock—onto the sender/receiver framework that, as Neil Verma and John Durham Peters have shown, structured assumptions about radio's efficacy and saturated the affective and rhetorical formulae of the medium. Radio required "communicative prostheses—compensation for lost presences," and it closed the gap between sender and receiver by codifying forms of intimate address.[1] "The fostering of 'we-ness,' dialogical inclusion, and intimate address" Peters notes, remain hallmarks of radio style.[2]

Such styles were enlisted to generate not just particular moods but mood as such: radio relied on those atmospheric qualities of language—intonation, timbre, pace—to create feelings inside listeners. Sylvia Townsend Warner's world war pastorals explored this very dynamic, the penetration of mental space by outside forces. However, pastoral in the account of most critics writing on British cultural production in World War II was all too easily pressed into service of dominant narratives around national feeling and civic duty; rather than scope out emergent feeling-space it settled into rote grooves, coaxing anxiously irruptive emotions into patriotic brands of Britishness. The last chapter disentangled some of the ways in which pastoral operated beyond, alongside, or in contradistinction to such programs. Pastoral was part of the emotional

[1] John Durham Peters, *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 214.
[2] Ibid., 215

climate of British war culture, instrumental to propaganda efforts to be sure, but also useful to writers leery of totalizing national "we-ness." Pastoral could overturn or ironize, as in "Poor Mary," attachments and mentalities dictated by government efforts at national belonging. This coda extends that line of inquiry beyond World War II and into the post-war moment, when issues of the built environment came to feel urgent and pressing, in part because they were framed in terms familiar from the war.

On April 7, 1946 E.M. Forster took part in the BBC broadcast series "The Challenge of Our Time." A majority of the contributors' titles point to the ambiguous role of science in the immediate post-war moment. "Can science bring peace?" asked Michael Polanyi; C.H. Waddington wondered "can science be reconciled with the humanities?" While the awesome powers of technology unleashed by the recent war are clearly on the minds of many, Forster argues the momentous struggle boils down to—a water pipe. Forster tells this tale: a farmer whose family has worked the land near Forster's own country home for generations has submitted an application to construct a water pipe. It is "casually" turned down because "the whole area had been commandeered. Commandeered for what?" Forster continues:

> Had not the war ended? Appropriate officials of the ministry of Town and Country Planning now arrived from London and announced that a satellite town for 60,000 people is to be built. The people now living and working there are doomed; it is death in life for them and they move in a nightmare… Meteorite town would be a better name. It has fallen out of a blue sky.[3]

Like Virginia Woolf's diary entry about Louie picking apples during an air raid, Forster's anecdote represents an incipient or eminent state of affairs and functions akin to the

[3] E.M. Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," *Two Cheers for Democracy* (London: Edward Arnold, 1951), 58.

"representative anecdote" Paul Alpers identifies as foundational to the pastoral mode.[4] Forster intuits the coalescing and consolidation of state power as it will play out in euphemistic, proliferating bureaucracies unable to accommodate or bend to local requests. Unlike Woolf, who recorded Louie's encounter with bombs in flat, ironic staccato, Forster is driven almost to hyperbole. He is *worried.*

Anxiety about the future might seem at odds with pastoral's supposed caress of the past, its long-established links with nostalgia. Nostalgia dominates, Svetlana Boym has argued, when images of the past proliferate and globalism stretches or thins local attachments, investing them with new affective urgency. "Nostalgia inevitably reappears," Boym continues, "as a defense mechanism in a time of accelerated rhythms of life and historical upheavals."[5] Modernity's progressive teleology, its emphasis on innovation, newness, and expansion all but guarantees the coeval presence of at least two types of nostalgia: reparative and restorative. These are matters of accent. Restorative projects are those which long for "return"—to origins, golden ages. Reflective nostalgia dwells in longing itself, it "loves details, not symbols."[6] Both generate or result in moods of mourning—longing, melancholy, despair—that, as Boym puts it, seduce rather than convince.[7] Forster's broadcast is interesting for the ways in which it toggles between seduction and persuasion, outrage and anxiety; hand-wringing isn't quite captured by Boym's categories.

Worry would seem foreign to pastoral and utopia both—an earthly, ordinary feeling with no business in anyone's Happy Place. And yet the world war pastorals of last chapter were

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[4] Alpers takes this idea from Kenneth Burke to describe a selection of reality designated "typical." Anecdotes serve to generate "specific depictions or representations of reality," and what is represented in pastoral, argues Alpers, is herdsman talking about their lives. See *What Is Pastoral?* 13.
[5] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xiv.
[6] Ibid., xviii.
[7] Ibid., 13.

mainly made of it: worry about what would survive the war; worry about what might come after; worry about what was going on right now—the psychic or spiritual costs of events and encounters; the straining, attenuating, and reconfiguring of habitual relations; the violent penetrations and exchanges between rural calm and war's violence. Worry is neither utopian nor dystopian, exactly. The final scene of *The Aerodrome,* where Roy and Bess sit looking out over the darkening meadow, posits a future mixed up with the past in a present swamped or shadowed by both. The distinctive mood of world war pastorals no longer took peace or harmony as given or shared; as Woolf suggested peace had to be thought or worried into existence. How does the pastoral mode get drawn into, or produced from, moods of uncertainty or anxiety? What is the relationship between mood and mode? Alastair Fowler's account of generic flavoring is one way—modes carry some perfume of the genres which they extend.

More recently, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht has described mood as an "effect of presence" not easily isolated by the prevailing methods of literary criticism. Both deconstruction and cultural studies are ontologies of literature concerned with texts' relations to the world beyond it, deconstruction through denying language's capacity to refer to anything beyond itself, cultural studies by positioning literary text as one object of reality among many. Gumbrecht identifies a third position, *Stimmung.* A key term in eighteenth century aesthetic philosophy, the term as translated by Gumbrecht means climate, mood, atmosphere—but also voice. Hearing and attunement are activities proper to capturing *Stimmung* since atmospheres "present themselves to us as nuances that challenge our powers of discernment and description, as well as the potential of language to capture them."[8] A dimension of meaning irreducible to images or mental concepts like thoughts and interpretations inheres in cultural texts, asserts Gumbrecht. I argue here that

[8] Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Atmosphere, Mood, Stimmung: On a Hidden Potential of Literature,* translated by Erik Butler (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 4.

modes such as pastoral likewise exist as implied sense or atmosphere, rather than strictly defined contents.

Gumbrecht's emphasis on voice is relevant to Forster's broadcast, both because it was delivered over the air-waves and due to the "radio style" of his address. Forster includes a range of rhetorical gambits that foster "we-ness" on the grounds of shared concern about the present and future. He does this by hauling up the recent as well as the long-ago or mythic past. "I cannot free myself from the conviction that something irreplaceable has been destroyed," Forster wails, "and that a little piece of England has died as surely as if a bomb had hit it."[9] Impossible not to recall George Bowling here, gazing out over the fields of Lower Binfield "destroyed" by "houses, houses, houses." Bombs are now truly "papery thin": blueprints, plans, and maps for "new towns," launched by expanding ranks of planning professionals and government officials into geographically and culturally distant realms. This imagery, in 1946, would have evoked strong memories of the Blitz for its listeners. Though Forster speaks figuratively—"as if a bomb had hit"—recent acquaintance with actual bombs lent emphasis to the certain destruction represented by planning commissions. Violence but also experiences of power and powerlessness are evoked. Yet panic is accompanied by a peculiar admission: "I cannot free myself from the conviction…" A conviction here isn't freely chosen or unconsciously held but imprisoning; Forster's broadcast struggles with conviction about conviction. "We must have

[9] Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," *Two Cheers for Democracy,* 59. The "Meteorite town" descending on Forster's beloved Hertfordshire presages the "new town" movement that dramatically altered the social and physical geography of England, the United States, and much of the rest of the world in the decades after WWII; but Forster may also be recalling new towns' forebear, Ebenezer Howard, whose *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1898) holds a special place in histories of urban and regional planning, particularly in England and the United States.

planning and ration books and controls or millions of people will have nowhere to live and nothing to eat," he admits.[10] But there is always another hand.

One legacy of World War II, argues Rosemary Wakeman was an "extraordinary admiration for and acceptance of planning."[11] However, planning galvanized emotionally ambivalent responses such as Forster's and, earlier, Orwell's. War and rural development were co-extensive, reinforcing, never-ending, their languages exchangeable because the threat was similar—destruction came from "on high" in fiats, decrees, announcements. Down below, Forster speaks back to the language of utopian planning in rhetorical questions, digressive asides, little pep talks to listeners ("If anyone calls you a wretched little individual… don't you take it lying down. You are important…"). Nostalgia has its place here but it isn't the only mood going. If we consider, as this dissertation proposes, that pastoral is both a gesture to mutable contents and a "situation of enunciation" or manner of saying, we can read Forster's radio broadcast for the way it makes palpable atmospheres that questioned "admiration and acceptance" of an emergent state of affairs. The broadcast seeks to set off in listeners a mood distinct from either triumph or mourning.

Foster is and is not concerned with physical space, with land use, and with farmers in this broadcast. His argument constantly oscillates between art and social existence, between "real" and "imaginative" freedom. This oscillation creates its own undercurrent of anxiety. Forster begins claiming he has "no technical knowledge… How can I answer a challenge which I cannot interpret? It is like shouting defiance at a big black cloud."[12] Other experts on the program have more specialized insight, and their ideas about what challenges are being faced and what should

[10] Ibid., 57.
[11] Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia: An Intellectual History of the New Town Movement,* 11.
[12] Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," *Two Cheers for Democracy,* 55.

be done have been "more selective," putting off things Forster is worried about "in the form of cards to be filed for future use."[13] Against the technical certitudes of expert action, there is only spleen. But the broadcast is not just or not only shouting. Forster's mode of argumentation attempts to find the logic of feelings; it pursues how feelings lead one through associations and intimations, into defiance as well as discomfort. The broadcast is less vehicle for nostalgia than an engine of uncertainty.

In one sense "The Challenge of Our Time" presents Forster as Jed Esty depicts him, a participant in "the revival of Anglocentric pastoral idealism."[14] While Forster's novels had expressed yearning for the verities of past forms of life and social belonging, they had utilized symbolic geographies to capture "the tension between pastoral England and metropolitan modernity"; his writing in the 1930s and 40s by contrast "dissolves that tension into a wish-fulfilling (and non-narrative) evocation of insular tradition."[15] Forster re-enchanted English politics in order to "revive the time-honored function of the pastoral: the dissolution of class conflict, or as William Empson puts it, the implication of a 'beautiful relation between rich and poor.'"[16] Pastoral compensates for the kind of metropolitan vision Forster explored in his earlier novels, a vision that couldn't withstand geo-politics of the 1930s and after. Esty's dim view of pastoral is captured through characterizations such as "time-honored," "wish-fulfilling," and somewhat unexpectedly "non-narrative." Forster didn't just forsake modernist dictates to forge new worlds when he "revived" pastoral, he slid out of the aesthetic altogether.

But in another sense, Forster's broadcast gives us an instance of pastoral as dialogic, prismatic, provisional, a mode and mood of discourse rather than a revived genre. Forster's radio

[13] Ibid., 56.
[14] Esty, *A Shrinking Island,* 77.
[15] Ibid., 77
[16] Ibid., 81.

address assumes listeners rather than potential converts. It stages unresolved, even unresolvable, feelings. "I cannot equate the problem," Forster laments: "It is a collision of loyalties."[17] In working out a tangle of feelings around progressive measures that threatened certain rhythms of life—unpacking without tidying the "loyalties" that collide within and around a modern subject—Forster evinced the complex shadings of midcentury pastoral moods. His broadcast enjoined listeners to feel with him through anecdotes and about-faces, frantic elegies for "a little piece of England" but also clear-eyed appraisals of where and how "the fag-end of Victorian liberalism" went wrong. Rather than present an image of "pastoral England," Forster's broadcast pastoralizes the relationship between writer and audience: it creates a situation of address, a sharing and airing of vulnerability, that can't be neatly separated from the appeal of pastoral conventions, namely the structuring opposition of city and country and backward looks to lifeways threatened by progress. As radio, the broadcast literally "touched" listeners even as Forster's rhetorical effects conveyed apprehensiveness. Such moods of uncertainty, doubt, and loss were shared simultaneously with the expectation that the future would be different, that change was happening though the direction of such change and its consequences were unknown. Midcentury pastoral's moods are not merely indicative of desires to escape modernity's pressures but marked by equivocation about what new forms of modernization held and for whom.

Like "so many other liberal intellectuals coming to terms with patriotism in the late 1930s," Esty maintains, "Forster addressed himself to the problem of finding a nourishing but not choking, version of English nativism."[18] Pastoral, the thinking goes, offered such

[17] Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," *Two Cheers for Democracy,* 59.
[18] Esty, *A Shrinking Island,* 80. Stanley Cavell offers a slightly more sanguine appreciation of Forster's thinking in "Two Cheers for Romance." Forster's essay collection, Cavell demurred, evinced "concrete human efforts… to balance (that is, to live) in our everyday returns of cares and obligations, the claims of

nourishment but at the expense of withdrawing from literature's political potential—the possibility that it might generate new models of belonging and identification rather than simply "revive" the old forms. But revival is never simply repetition. And pastoral under conditions of new media, disciplinary flux, and the global reorganization of social and economic life might warrant and reward our attention precisely because it recast old moods in new ways. Pastoral registered contradictory feelings about continuity and change, tradition and progress. Forster's broadcast is a performance of these. In other words, rather than dismiss Forster's "non-narrative" radio speech as an example of abject pastoral, I think it's worth considering his broadcast as a pastoral performance, an atmospheric object—sent over the airwaves—but also an example of pastoral's objective reality as midcentury *Stimmung, "*an all-embracing atmosphere and a subjectively experienced mood. Calling *Stimmung* to mind," argues Gumbrecht, "can give us retrospective certainty that something neglected or overlooked—or even lost altogether—made a decisive impact on life at a given moment in history and formed part of each subsequent present from that time on."[19] In the following chapter I explore how pastoral abutted and shaped a range of midcentury disciplinary discourses from physical planning to psychotherapy, and how critics and intellectuals drew on the mode in order to reflect on their own relationship to readers and audiences.

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the best available manners and politics together with the various claims of the most valued personal relationships." See *Cavell on Film,* edited by William Rothman (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), 153.

[19] Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *After 1945: Latency as Origin of the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 31.

Cosmopolitan Pastorals

In 1967 the Smithsonian held its second symposium, "The Quality of Man's Environment." Scholars from Israel, India, and Pakistan gathered in Washington, where institutional pomp prevailed. The published proceedings included English historian Asa Briggs, UNESCO's Venice Charter representative Hiroshi Daifuku, and then-vice president Hubert Humphrey. The affair was not merely symbolic, however. Symposium papers addressed "environmental quality" as a matter of ecology, "social biology," urban and regional planning—all new and exciting entities in the disciplinary firmament. An ancient literary idea also flickered: though the proceedings were aimed urgently at the future, *pastoral* rather than *utopia* was the symposium's operative term. Literary critic Leo Marx gave a paper on "Pastoral Ideals and City Troubles." In his talk he alluded to the writer, activist, and intellectual guru to the New Left, Paul Goodman, also present. Goodman in turn cited Marx's seminal work of pastoral criticism, *The Machine in the Garden* (1964) in his own contribution, "Two Points of Philosophy and an Example."

This coincidence, I'll argue here, is not so coincidental. Both Goodman and Marx emphasized pastoral's utility to rethinking urban forms and regional designs—a project that consumed writers, cultural critics, planners, and architects in the post-World War II decades. We are used to identifying pastoral in this era, if we identify it at all, as synonymous with a countercultural ethos of retreat. Coupled with communes, linked to back to the land movements, seeming to fund various oppositional political rhetorics, "pastoral" has seemed appropriate enough to describe anti-government and anti-urban stances of hippies and the nascent environmental movement (the subjects of my next chapter). For both groups, exodus from the

city was the only way to reorient "people's relationship with the environment on a daily level."[1] This chapter unfolds a different story. I track pastoral through three midcentury institutional contexts: psychology, regional planning, and social criticism. Pastoral's relevance to an international community of scholars seems odd only because we have lost sight of how the mode was built into midcentury debates about social organization and belonging that unfolded across disciplinary boundaries and drew disparate intellectual practices together.

Pastoral has long suggested that urban and rural zones could be brought into meaningful and mutually beneficial contact as psychic and phenomenological experience—a soul's traversal of cultural and natural geographies and rhythms. Pastoral here is a kind of phenomenology, a structure of consciousness that coordinates the divisions and distances of the "real world" as well as literature. This was how Leo Marx pitched it to his Smithsonian audience of planners, architects, and scholars. "The literary landscape, properly understood," he maintained, "could help us in planning the future of the actual landscape."[2] Pastoral mediated social life already by articulating the "psychic economy" of human encounters with their environments: heeding the pleasures associated with pastoral could feed into community plans extra sensitive to those desires frequently produced, if not satisfied, by the literary mode.

As in the last chapter, where pastoral instigated a mood rather than outlined formal requirements of literary works, Marx generalized pastoral at the level of psychic experience rather than contents or subject matter. Pastoral could, or should be, useful to physical planners because it might legislate real and imaginal or emotional space; it offered to supplement dry accounts of regional space with affective information. Literature *was* planning, a guide or map to

[1] Steven Conn, *Americans Against the City: Anti-Urbanism in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 260. See also Leo Marx's afterword to *The Machine in the Garden* (2000).
[2] Leo Marx, "Pastoral Ideals and City Troubles" in *Smithsonian Annual II: The Fitness of Man's Environment* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 122.

human desires. And the regional or city planner of the 1960s was also like a pastoral figure, Marx maintained: "His problem is to find ways of creating, within the urban environment, that sense of belonging to an orderly pattern of life which has for so long been associated with the relatively unspoiled, natural landscape."[3] Shifting pastoral's situation from rural to urban, Marx also adjusted the prevailing view of pastoral as a matter of individual experience. Here, it is a social form premised on address from a shepherd-planner to others. Rather than solitary retreat to the woods, pastoral imagines being together in a shared "pattern of life."

Marx gestures toward what this chapter will call "cosmopolitan pastoral." His depiction of the pastoralist as one who speaks for, arranges, and represents the experience of others parallels a strain of criticism that sees pastoral as primarily social and ideological, a way for intellectuals to position themselves in relation to the needs and demands of a group. As Annabel Patterson and others have asserted, pastoral is one way in which intellectuals speak about themselves; it provides a "paradigm of the intellectual's dilemma."[4] Anne-Marie Mikkelson also understands pastoral as ideological positioning, a way for "representative figures" of artists and writers to think through new conditions of self and society as not predetermined but processural and contingent.[5] This emphasis on pastoral's self-reflexive staging of intellectual inquiry in turn echoes more recent theories of cosmopolitanism likewise concerned with intellectuals as representative figures, and with the possibilities of critical practice and style.[6] Cosmopolitanism

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[3] Ibid., 142.
[4] Annabel Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 7.
[5] See Ann Marie Mikkelsen, *Pastoral, Pragmatism, and twentieth Century Poetry* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011).
[6] Frederic Jameson has argued that the distance of the intellectual is from his or her own class but also from the class of "chosen affiliation," the group the intellectual theorizes about in their work; here, critical allegiance to the politics of identity engenders a mistake. Such critics believe they've outwitted the "unhappy consciousness" of typical intellectuals when they've merely drawn another circle around it. Amanda Anderson in contrast claims that the privileged distance of the intellectual from "cultural

has offered a way to push back at literary critical and cultural studies paradigms that increasingly prized the particular, the small-scale, or the "local," paradigms that relegated the "representativeness of criticism" to the dustbin of academic history. In focusing on the elaboration of difference, such methodologies, the thinking goes, ignored the ways in which the critical project itself relies on "generalization, abstraction, synthesis, and representation at a distance."[7] Cosmopolitanism has been proposed as one way to mediate between opposing trajectories of intellectual work, and cosmopolitan critics seek how literature broadly conceived might articulate universal claims, however provisionally, in the interests of investigating commonalities and shared experience—shared patterns of life—rather than highlighting difference.

"Cosmopolitan pastoral" might seem a paradoxical or counterintuitive pairing: one names an attitude of metropolitan worldliness, the other engenders nostalgia for fading rural lifeways. One stresses global citizenship and encounters with difference; the other suggests provincial tropes, national or regional identifications. Yet cosmopolitanism and pastoral both reemerge and are rearticulated in times of social stress and spatial change.[8] As with pastoral, cosmopolitanism

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affiliations" opens possibilities for new forms of ethical practice and modes of belonging to reinvigorated universal humanity. Privileged distance creates opportunities for new rhetorics of the universal which recognize a "universal humanity" not grounded in normative accounts of—or essentializing propositions about—human nature but in modes of writing that "characterize" or describe "a lived universality." (121) Rebecca Walkowitz also understands cosmopolitanism as a matter of technique, or writing itself: cosmopolitan style resides in descriptive practices. Ethnography provides an important disciplinary-stylistic matrix for Anderson and Walkowitz (and Robbins), since anthropology has reconceptualized local attachments as always overlaid or interlaced with various senses of belonging that occur at multiple scales. Cosmopolitanism in this view isn't purely detached from local affiliations or collective endeavors but attached in new ways. Jameson seems less sanguine about the possibilities of literary critical style. See: Jameson, "On 'Cultural Studies,'" *Social Text,* No. 32 (1993), pp. 17-52; Amanda Anderson, *The Way We Argue Now: A Study in the Cultures of Theory* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006), and Rebecca Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitanism Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia UP, 2006).

[7] Bruce Robbins, "Comparative Cosmopolitanism," *Social Text,* No. 31/32, Third World and Post-Colonial Issues (1992), 175, 176.

[8] See Amanda Anderson, "Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, and the Divided Legacies of Modernity" in *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation,* edited by Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins

focuses on the strategies and styles of a single figure—shepherd, intellectual, critic, and I'll argue here, planner—as they navigate complex and diverse attachments. There are other reasons to bring these two modes together. Pastoral's deep structuring around contrasts between country and city attune the geographies of cosmopolitanism to historical instantiations and variations in the meanings of social organization, meanings inextricable from the histories of physical planning and the built environment as well as social theory.[9]

Rather than recent accounts that tightly link literary cosmopolitanism with the literary-historical formation of modernism, or yoke it to the disciplinary context of anthropology, pastoral connects cosmopolitanism to the critical conundrums of literary studies as it engages social change in the twentieth century, and to a longer history of literary modes. Shifting pastoral into the purview of cosmopolitanism meanwhile accents how pastoral self-reflexively allegorizes the privileged distances of intellectual endeavor; doing so provides a window into pastoral as a critical style, as opposed to an object of study, in the midcentury milieu. Cosmopolitan pastoral above all highlights the revitalization in these decades of pastoral as a mode that privileged the interconnected spatial and psychological dimensions of real and literary experience. As it found expression in fields as diverse as planning and psycho-therapy, cosmopolitan pastoral emphasized interconnectivity, contextual or situational relations between individuals and larger

(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998): "Cosmopolitanism has repeatedly emerged at times when the world has suddenly seemed to expand in unassimilable ways; it is at these moments that universalism needs the rhetoric of worldliness that cosmopolitanism provides" (272).

[9] John L. Shrover has pointed out that classic social theory is premised on rural to urban migration: modern social science from Karl Marx to Georg Simmel rests on attempts to understand and conceptualize these shifts. Shrover, *First Majority-Last Majority: The Transforming of Rural Life in America* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), 14. For an opposing view see Edward Soja, who argues that modernist aesthetic movements more accurately sensed how human geographies were being remade to accommodate capitalism; "within the consolidating and codifying realms of social science and scientific socialism," Soja claims, "a persistent historicism tended to obscure this insidious spatialization, leaving it almost entirely outside the purview of critical interrogation for the next fifty years" (*Postmodern Geographies* [New York: Verso, 1989], 34).

social and environmental frames. But it was mode with limits—and Goodman was a representative figure with limits also—and the final section of this chapter elegizes cosmopolitan pastoral's fate as it confronted shifting socio-cultural and disciplinary norms in the 1970s and beyond.

In 1967, back at the Smithsonian, pastoral seemed able to coordinate feelings otherwise thought to be irreconcilable. Leo Marx argued that pastoral's contrasting spatial images provided a vocabulary to help sort out and relieve contradictory responses toward "the urban-industrial environment."[10] Pastoral was a healing agent, and pastoral designs were those that organized spatial experience accordingly; pastoral was both a form of psychic health and a program for it. The therapeutic power and promise of pastoral was circulating broadly at this moment. It was codified in schemes for Garden Cities and yoked, by Lewis Mumford and other "anti-urbanists," to the reparative powers of nature. Often such city plans destroyed existing neighborhoods in a mania for what Jane Jacobs mockingly called "grass, grass, grass."[11] By 1967, machines weren't intruding on gardens so much as gardens were thought to be ruining cities, and the sharp critique of misguided pastoral ideals influencing urban planning is obviously on Leo Marx's mind. Rather than direct application of the mode, in which gardens were forced on cities (or cities—"New Towns"—planted in the middle of working countrysides), he urged pastoralist-planners to attend to its subjective, sensual, psychological nuances. This is a version of what Marx elsewhere called "pastoral design," or the "ordering of meaning and value around the contrast between two styles of life."[12] Such designs were aesthetic—ways of ordering and arranging meanings—but

[10] Marx, "Pastoral Ideals and City Troubles" in *Smithsonian Annual II: The Fitness of Man's Environment*, 135-6.
[11] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961), 22. The misguided outcome of city planning, argued Jacobs, was "that Christopher Robin might go hoppety-hoppety on the grass" (22).
[12] Marx, *The Machine in the Garden,* 94.

they also provided analogues for psychic experience and physical movement. To remain integrated beings, Marx said, we needed to follow the pastoral movement of temporary exile and retreat from the city into natural landscapes and back again, armed with political and psychic reforms that created the "symbolic middle landscape created by mediation between art and nature."[13]

If, as Leo Marx argued, "the constant element in pastoral is psychological rather than formal," psychology itself is never immutable: specific psychological concepts gain purchase at particular moments through cultural processes.[14] Nancy Schnog has argued that culture produces languages and beliefs about the "interior life"; whatever is deemed "psychological" refers, in part, to processes by which public meanings become associated with private experiences.[15] I argue below that cosmopolitan pastorals drew private or inner experience into the realm of social and spatial practice. The reorganization of social space and the built environment was keenly *felt* as a psychological phenomenon and moral-philosophical problem in the post-World War II period, though it was more often treated as a series of technical dilemmas. Pastoral named something that otherwise escaped the planners and their critics: a promise that health and well-being might be coordinated amongst existing spaces, rather than planned for in advance or built from scratch.

In the following pages I assemble the period's cosmopolitan pastorals as a set of "practices" to be unfolded rather than "objects" in need of interpretation.[16] Critics staking claims

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[13] Ibid., 71
[14] Ibid., 91
[15] See Schnog's introduction to *Inventing the Psychological: Toward a Cultural History of Emotional Life in America*, edited by Joel Pfister and Nancy Schnog (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
[16] For Pierre Bourdieu, practices are those activities which involve observers in their own observations and collapse or renegotiate the distance between the "language of consciousness" and the "language of the mechanical model." Practice, Bourdieu argues, is "being in the game" with all its urgency, rather than

for pastoral's relevance as primarily *social* rather than *spatial* tend to minimize how it allows writers to articulate the spatial and social as mutually informing. I find pairing pastoral and cosmopolitanism productive because the modes share under-explored but overlapping commitments to modeling or narrating intellectual inquiry as a matter of social address (whom does the critic/planner/pastoralist write for or talk about?) and spatial situation (where do they write from, what spaces do they occupy and consider?). This chapter seeks to highlight cosmopolitan pastoral's ability to figure connections between social, psychological, and spatial experience in a particular midcentury milieu. In the decades this chapter treats pastoral, psychology, and planning coalesced into a tripartite formation that was utilized by multiple stakeholders confronting emergent metropolitan issues, spatial schemas, and psycho-therapeutic designs.

Gestalt Images, Garden Cities

Leo Marx developed his psychologized pastoral in roughly the same decades that Paul Goodman contributed important theoretical insights to gestalt therapy. Reading gestalt therapy alongside pastoral in turn accents the brewing literary-therapeutic dimensions to midcentury socio-spatial paradigms. Gestalt therapy reworked Freudian models of subjectivity within Gestalt psychology's framework of "organized perception, figure-ground, and the persistence of the memory of incomplete tasks."[17] Just as we organize visual information based on precepts of background and foreground, gestalt therapists understood any situation—visual, physical,

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just watching it. See Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice,* trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 81-2.

[17] Paul Shane, "Gestalt Therapy: The Once and Future King" in *Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology: A Historical and Biographical Sourcebook,* edited by Donald Moss (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 53.

emotional—as comprised of three phenomena: "a thing, its context or environment, and the relationship between them. We perceive something that constitutes a part of the reality of our world in terms of the context in which it occurs."[18] Gestalt therapy aimed to increase awareness of the relationship between "figure" and "background" involved in a given situation; to "complete" an experience meant resolving the field of information and complex of needs into a "figure" that would then recede into the background so that another figure might emerge. Goodman's contribution to gestalt therapy knit together movements and exchanges between environment and self in the concept of the "contact-boundary," the interface or "skin surface" between an organism and its environment. This was not just a boundary "between" but the zone where experience was activated: "the contact-boundary… does not *separate* the organism and its environment," Goodman wrote in *Gestalt Therapy* (1951), "rather it limits the organism, contains and protects it, and *at the same time* it touches the environment."[19] The contact-boundary situated individuals in social and environmental "fields" of awareness. It required a shift in focus: the trick was to neither consider background conditions exclusively, nor pursue individual needs myopically, but to hold background and figure together at the edges.

Though Goodman coined "contact-boundary" in the early 1950s, he had been working with the term's meanings for some time. In these early works, we can see Goodman developing ideas important to gestalt therapy not in the language of psychology but literature: the contact-boundary *is* pastoral. One of his earliest prose compositions, "2 Pastoral Movements" (1937) underscores how deeply Goodman drew on pastoral as a mode of thinking as well as a style of writing. Penned when Goodman was just twenty-six and a graduate student at the University of

[18] *Gestalt Therapy, Practice and Theory Second Edition,* eds Margaret P. Korb, Jeffrey Gorrlel, Vernon Van De Riet (Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1989), 1.
[19] Frederick Perls, Ralph E. Hefferline, Paul Goodman, *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality* (New York: Delta, 1951), emphasis in original, 229.

Chicago, "2 Pastoral Movements" progresses through woods, along a path, beside various bodies of water—typical pastoral sites and scenes. A person lounges, falls asleep, dreams—classic events of pastoral leisure. There is little sense of a stable self or critical I/eye organizing the landscape or distinguishing events, however. Instead, the prose tracks an over-sensitized body literally in "tune" with its surroundings:

> Nevertheless, nevertheless the relaxing summertime moist and lukewarm, tepid as satisfied desire but unwilted, looses. It looses and energizes and there is no cause, in the easy adaptation of the weather and the body's heat, but that the organism and its environment should open to each other. In the hot day, every way, in the play of sensations there is evidence of intrinsic design. Such design, presented as the beauty of colors of proportion of tones and calls, or the choreography of the clouds and grasses, is homoeopathic: the apprehensive heart is relaxed and, as is well observed, "soon the breath is formal with song."[20]

Proto-gestalt terminology abounds: organism, environment, adaptation, design. The narrative seems at once inside its subject, tracking physiological responses and states of consciousness, and outside or around it, notating the organization of scene. The effect of these exchanges, occurring sentence to sentence and phrase to phrase, is woozy, dreamlike. And indeed sleep provides one "opening" of organism to environment. A suspension between states, "this detaching of the exterior sensations" achieves a kind of homeostasis.[21] This process finds analogues in punctuation. Parenthesis also begin to suspend the composition between description and memory, complicating the scene of composition by drawing the past into the orbit of the present. "For when I say 'River'—boastful New Yorker!—it's the Hudson I'm thinking of," runs one such parenthetical. The brief descriptive phrases that follow—"Green water lapping. Seated on heated sand. Willow boughs. Odor of fishes. Fatigue relieved. So bright billion-glittering plain! Haze of clouds over Yonkers"—are at once "tiny perceptions" and muted "expressions" to

[20] Paul Goodman, "2 Pastoral Movements" in *A Ceremonial, Stories: 1936-1940* (Santa Barbara, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1978), 133-34.
[21] Ibid., 135.

the napping subject who feels himself part of an overall "design."[22] The language of "2 Pastoral Movements" is sexual, scientific, poetic, psychological: Goodman models the "contact-boundary" of organism and environment through formal techniques and the collaging of disparate vocabularies. Background and figure shift in and out of focus mainly as effects of literary and discursive style.

Attention to formal patterning and linguistic style speaks to another sense of pastoral as cosmopolitan—that is worldly, even avant-garde. Goodman wrote "2 Pastoral Movements" during his "cubist phase," a period of experimentation in the late 1930s. "Literary Cubism," Goodman remarked, was a way of foregrounding the "signifying means" rather than subordinating these to content or plot in the manner of realism. "Miss Stein or E.E. Cummings [sic]" may have experimented with the formal properties of language to develop non-semantic systems of meaning; Goodman worked at level of rhetorical figure and literary mode.[23] Just as gestalt therapy drew on visual experience, Goodman's cubism offered another trick of perception by drawing attention to those elements of composition that inform a particular piece of writing but are typically assimilated as convention. Pastoral's codes, highlighted as literary style or spatial practices (loafing, sleeping, dreaming), allowed Goodman to model subjective experience as social, spatial, and psychological at once. Awareness and experience occurred at the edges of these frames rather than within one category or another.

The contact-boundary was psychic and spatial, but also social and scholarly. Importantly, pastoral provided a way of bringing multiple modes of writing and experience together. Near the end of the second movement there appears a "motionless puddle":

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[22] Ibid., 135.

[23] For discussions of literary cubism, see Stoehr's introduction to *A Ceremonial, Stories: 1936-1940* and Goodman's essay "Literary Method and Author-Attitude" in *Art and Social Nature* (New York: Vinco Publishing, 1946), pp. 86-98.

> A frog jumps from the puddle out upon the bank […] If we scholars were not now bogged, no longer hurrying into new studies, there would not be continually generated amongst us the live and sensible souls, anxious and new-born souls, crying and seeing. Impure and stationary, breeding illicit desires, this pause in our dear souls' flow from day to day has let somewhat, I think, jump forth: an animate frog, not in every way ugly.[24]

Scholarship is amphibian, crossing habitats and boundaries; it lives and thrives at threshold zones. The "animate frog" of the scholarly soul emerges from states that seem "bogged" and stagnant but are characterized by breeding activity. Thought is "circumscribed in the vegetable cycle of breath, nourishment, and circulation," Goodman wrote, it is generated from recesses, backwaters, slack states, limits—the very metaphysics of pastoral.[25] But this is also an image of the contact-boundary at work. The puddle is the interface between organism and environment, scholar and his social world, that at once limits and activates experience. "2 Pastoral Movements" finds modes of writing commensurate to modeling sleep and scholarship—leisure and labor—as figures emerging from backgrounds, gestalts arising and dissipating. Goodman never again so explicitly theorized pastoral as a mode of writing and intellectual inquiry, but pastoral as he sketched it here continued to influence his thinking about psychology and space.

Gestalt therapy is particularly interesting to consider in light of Paul Goodman's nearly simultaneous contributions to psychology and planning discourse. Intense anxiety and discussion over the built environment characterized the mid-twentieth century spatial imaginary as both urban and rural forms of life and patterns of settlement shifted and came under scrutiny in post-war America. However, the affective or emotional dimensions of these massive changes received muted treatment from cultural critics and planners alike. As Goodman noted in his review of Lewis Mumford's *The City in History* (1961), the block-busters of urban studies were "shy of

[24] Goodman, "2 Pastoral Movements," *A Ceremonial, Stories: 1936-1940,* 137.
[25] Ibid., 137.

psychology and psychologists."[26] Gestalt therapy, with its holistic view of the self as part of complex and shifting terrains, can be read as one response to the psychological dislocations of rapidly changing built environments. In "A Cross-Country Runner at Sixty-Five" (1936) one of Goodman's most frequently republished short stories written the year before "2 Pastoral Movements," the recursive and fluid exchanges of self and environment that characterize gestalt's spatial coordinates are again present, this time within a temporal and historical matrix that previews Goodman's turn, in his book of "physical planning" *Communitas* (1947), to issues of the built environment.

The story is a pastoral fable of sorts. Perry Westover, Goodman's aging athlete-protagonist, is a local legend, the only person to have run in every single one of the forty-five Winchester Borough X-Country races. Perry's long acquaintance with the same stretch of countryside is presented as a philosophical practice, a method by which to apply and test out judgments—presented as calcified or habitual language use—against the realities of a changing world, "so that each time you change your mind, you also see the countryside afresh."[27] The countryside, like a "poem" or proposition, is something that needs to be continually returned to and checked against on-going experiences of both reader and text, pronouncer and pronouncement, runner and scene. History is a pedestrian matter, comprehensible as environmental change to a self who traverses patterns of thought and physical landscapes on foot. "But when I break my way through the woods and emerge suddenly on the concrete speedway, a viaduct arching over my head," Perry explains to his son, "I am cast bodily into a different time. That is, I am compelled to look."[28] Negotiating some of the twentieth century's

[26] Paul Goodman, "The Pragmatism of His Boyhood: *The City in History* by Lewis Mumford," *The Hudson Review,* Vol. 14, No. 3 (Autumn, 1961), 447.
[27] Goodman, "A Cross-Country Runner at Sixty-Five," *A Ceremonial, Stories: 1936-1940*, 22.
[28] Ibid., 24.

most notorious new infrastructures in turn renders Perry a new sort of psychological subject, one keenly aware of its own history as a mind and body in space:

> At the same time, the realization that he had become an old man made him very thoughtful. He kept withdrawing from the surrounding countryside to the thoughts and memories inside himself, and then moving back to the environment as if awaking, shuttling back and forth until the two regions became inextricably mixed. Running year after year over the same course and carefully noting, as he did, the slow transformation of every part of the countryside during two generations, the houses demolished, built, moved from place to place, again demolished, brick replacing wood—it had still not really occurred to him that he also was being slowly transformed. Now, as by a flash of light, he looked at himself with the eyes of all the children of Winchester; he realized that he was not just a runner, but an old institution, extremely ancient, almost fabulous.[29]

Physical but also social space conspire to draw a version of gestalt. As in "2 Pastoral Movements," the "organism and its environment… open to each other" in patterns or designs, a "shuttling back and forth" between states of awareness analogous to sleep and waking but also to the contact-boundary Goodman would elaborate in *Gestalt Therapy.* Even as the short story engages in more straightforward "realist" description than "2 Pastoral Movements," it nonetheless pairs pastoral tropes with gestalt therapy's particular frames of reference: at one moment Perry sees himself, then he sees the countryside, then he sees himself *as* the countryside. As figure and ground shift and exchange emphasis, a vibrant "whole" is achieved. This is Gestalt's moment of "interest" which Goodman highlights in *Gestalt Therapy*. "Brightness, clarity, unity, fascination, grace, vigor, release" are psychological dimensions of experience in which an organism is in full and meaningful contact with environment—the "almost fabulous" sense Perry experiences above.[30] Such contact is never static but dynamic: a matter of relations between self and situation where the self might loom one moment as problematically aging, only to recede the next as a new building is noticed and the implications of historical change

[29] Goodman, "A Cross-Country Runner at Sixty-Five," *A Ceremonial Stories: 1936-1940,* 26-7.
[30] Goodman et al., *Gestalt Therapy*, 231.

considered. Goodman argued that such gestalt figures are "specifically psychological"—they happen in the mind. But pastoral in these early works allowed Goodman to theorize psychology as spatial and social, and to draw out how mental happenings were constituted by space and interpersonal situations rather than just merely happening against their backdrop.

"A Cross-Country Runner at Sixty-Five" ends before the big race, with Perry on a daily practice run: down State Road, 4W he goes and into the forest where "four urchins, playing hookey from school" and engaged in the telling of dirty stories and a game of cat's-cradle vie for a glimpse of the local legend:

> Perry sped out of a scarlet thicket nearby; his white form appeared and vanished among the tree-trunks.
> "Look! There is Perry Westover, practicing for the race!" cried one of the kids in an awestruck voice.
> "Where? Where? I don't see him," cried the others; they were unable to point because of the game of cords between their hands. "Where is he?"
> Perry kept appearing and vanishing in the wood.
> "*There* he is!"
> "There he is!" they cried one after another.[31]

On the one hand, the boys are simply spotting Perry intermittently, as he runs through thicker or thinner cover. But Goodman eschews descriptive language that would help readers imagine the scene in its fullness. That paucity mirrors the boys' inability to point out—or *at*—what they see. Instead of isolating a figure against a backdrop, their "theres" can only indicate the "organism-as-a-whole," the Perry-as-woods.

[31] Goodman, "A Cross-Country Runner at Sixty-Five," *A Ceremonial Stories: 1936-1940,* 32.

This moment of deixis is the story's final gestalt, offering a verbal-narrative equivalent of classic gestalt imagery where one image (wood) is replaced by another (Perry) only to flip again. Gestalt images helped Goodman and Frederick Perls and Ralph Hefferline, his collaborators on *Gestalt Therapy,* to illustrate the role of insight or "sudden reorganization of behavior" in their method. Insight was analogous to the tendency of human minds to spontaneously make "wholes" of visual information on the basis of figure and ground. For Gestalt therapists, the moment of "insight" when figure and ground replaced one another needed to be experienced, not simply agreed to: "If you see a young woman where we say there is an old woman, you might, if a compliant type, decide to submit and say what we say… Please note, however, that in such case your acceptable behavior will have been imposed upon you and you will not be living it *on your own.*"[32] Gestalt images thus offset or countermanded socially determined behaviors such as agreeing, complying, conforming.


FIGURE 2

Figure 3, from *Gestalt Therapy,* p. 27.

In the mid-twentieth century, such behaviors were linked to space and forms of social organization, perhaps most notoriously to the endless suburbs housing "organization men" and their conformity-loving families.[33] It's no accident that Goodman's boys are cutting school, arguing gestalts in the woods. Schools transmitted coercive social codes; fraternizing, playing hooky, enjoying games are activities of mutual dependency, of freely chosen groups acting in

[32] Goodman, et al, *Gestalt Therapy,* 28. Emphasis in original.
[33] Aaron Passell notes that such critiques, in the 1950s and '60s, were made by cultural elites and as such "defined half of a strictly bifurcated response. While the elite looked down upon suburbia and suburban life, the broad middle of American society leapt at the chance to own their own homes." For discussion See *Building the New Urbanism: Places, Profession, and Profits in the American Metropolitan Landscape* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 22.

concert, examples of "living *on your own*" terms.[34] Cosmopolitan pastoral situated psychological motivations alongside forms of social organization. If you lived "on your own terms," you also, simultaneously, existed within the demands of social worlds and physical environments.

For Goodman, then, spatial experience of the built environment was not strictly the province of planners but opened onto and included psychology and literature. In the following section, I read his works of planning theory alongside other cultural critics turned planners (or vice versa) such as Lewis Mumford and Jane Jacobs, paying attention to how they add an underexplored dimension of spatial psychology to familiar debates. In *Communitas,* the book of "physical planning" he co-wrote with his brother, the architect Percival Goodman, physical space is elaborated as psychological and social, and it is construed as a series of relations that unsettle conventional and historical critical vantages that produced overly-totalizing views of social "progress."[35]

Gestalt Images, Garden Cities II

From his earliest prose works Goodman conceived of "pastoral movements" in psychological terms, as a matter of gestalt configurations of dynamic backgrounds and figures: of organism and environment opening to, shuttling between, retreating from, and coming into

[34] In this story, pastoral is not past memory but present activity: the boys in the woods offer an image of healthful autonomy and community anarchism, of "free action" which for Goodman was "to live in present society as though it were a natural society" ("Reflections on Drawing the Line," *Paul Goodman Reader,* edited by Taylor Stoehr [Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2011], 34). Within conditions of the here and now, alternative behaviors and satisfactions are possible, an orientation Goodman declared "millenarian" rather than "utopian," a matter of individual actions rather than planned design.

[35] For discussion of the collaboration between the brothers see "Interview with Percival Goodman" by Dennis L. Dollens in *Artist of the Actual: Essays on Paul Goodman,* edited by Peter Parisi (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1986). "Paul would rough out a chapter and I would make some sketches for illustration and we would talk about those. And then ultimately Paul rewrote everything. All the writing in that book was done by Paul. Ideas were fifty-fifty. Illustrations from me" (147).

contact with one another. Gestalt's psychological model was also social since "symptoms, character-formation, growth all take place at the boundary between self and other," the contact-boundary through which all experience is negotiated.[36] Here, the contact-boundary doesn't simply govern the experience of individual selves. It also shapes how human groups experience the physical world and negotiate its built environment. "Of the man-made things," *Communitas* begins, "the works of engineering and architecture and town plan are the heaviest and biggest part of what we experience. They lie underneath, they loom around, as the prepared place of our activity…

> A child accepts the man-made background itself as the inevitable nature of things; he does not realize that somebody once drew some lines on a piece of paper who might have drawn otherwise. But now, as engineer and architect once drew, people have to walk and live.[37]

Rather than simply metaphorical, gestalt's imagery, its background-figure dynamism and contact-boundaries, are actual—seen and experienced in the physical world as matters of infrastructure, economy, community, and region.

References to drawing, sketches, and blueprints in turn link *Communitas* to other works of the twentieth century urban planning canon likewise obsessed with the consequences of *imaging*—and so imagining—social life. A new discipline was emerging, one that required a class of experts or technicians that literalized both pastoral singers' and cosmopolitan intellectuals' historically rhetorical position—of speaking for and about communities—through a

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[36] The contact-boundary is characterized by Michael Miller Vincent in explicitly pastoral contrasts of domesticity and "wilderness": "All the activities of contacting the environment (or being contacted by it) occur across an experiential and by no means necessarily physical demarcation between what the organism takes to be itself, what it has already domesticated, so to speak, to its purposes, and the wilderness, as yet unknown, that is the inexhaustible otherness of the world." Michael Miller Vincent, introduction to 1994 reissue of *Gestalt Therapy*. http://www.gestalt.org/phgintro.html

[37] Paul Goodman and Percival Goodman, *Communitas: Ways of Livelihood and Means of Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 3.

new professoriate, that of urban and regional planners. Plans and planning were representational practices indexing attitudes toward social space that had real life consequences. Contributors to another early work of urban planning and cultural criticism, *The Exploding Metropolis* (1958), wondered time and again if any of the architects or planners "intrigued by the bird's-eye view of towers and malls" or "seized with dreams of order… fascinated with scale models and bird's-eye views" had thought about whether they would like to live in their creations.[38] As if to combat the ballooning corpus of officially sanctioned diagrams, blueprints, and planning documents, *The Exploding Metropolis,* whose contributors included Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte, turned to artists to render actual city streets in water color and line drawings.

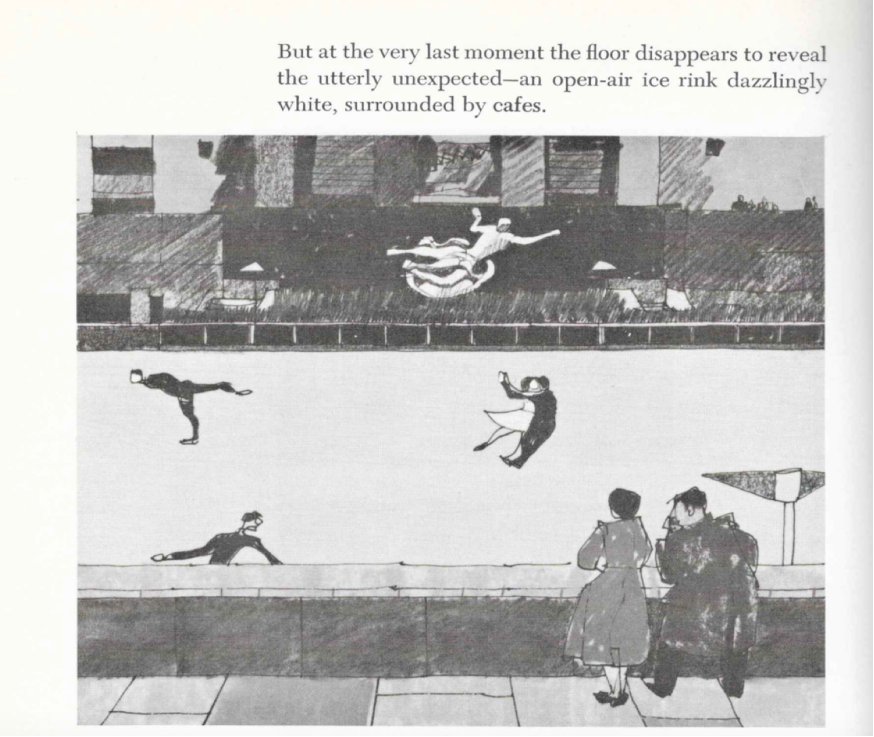

Figure 4, from *The Exploding Metropolis,* p. 157.

[38] William H. Whyte, "Are Cities Un-American" and Jane Jacobs "Downton Is for People" both in *The Exploding Metropolis* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), 52, 158.

These positions were ethical, ways of being in the world, and practical, ways of organizing the world to be in. If bird's-eye views rendered reality abstract and inhumane, representations of lived experience and local moments offered particularity, and ascribed agency to those who actually had to live whatever master plan. In the major works of urban theory, the aesthetic provided familiar scenarios through which to communicate shared values and meanings: Jane Jacobs claimed art allegorized urban life. The city, as she famously described it, could be likened "to the dance—not to a simple-minded precision dance with everyone kicking up at the same time, twirling in unison and bowing off en masse, but to an intricate ballet in which the individual dancers and ensembles all have distinctive parts which miraculously reinforce each other and compose an orderly whole."[39] City life depended on many parts arranging themselves spontaneously into an aesthetic whole, rather than a whole plotted out or planned for in advance.

For Paul Goodman, however, "the problem of community planning is not like arranging people for a play or a ballet, for there are no outside spectators, there are only actors."[40] The whole couldn't be *witnessed*, only *experienced*. Urban life was not an aesthetic form one watched but a kind of gestalt image in which one participated. Through such imagery, Goodman linked representational practices, psychological meanings, historical processes, and social behaviors. For example, *Communitas* includes the following "bibliography for three ways of life today," with disparate languages—proper names, historical events, ideas, bromides, buildings—arranged into ideograms:

[39] Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 50.
[40] Goodman, *Communitas,* 20.

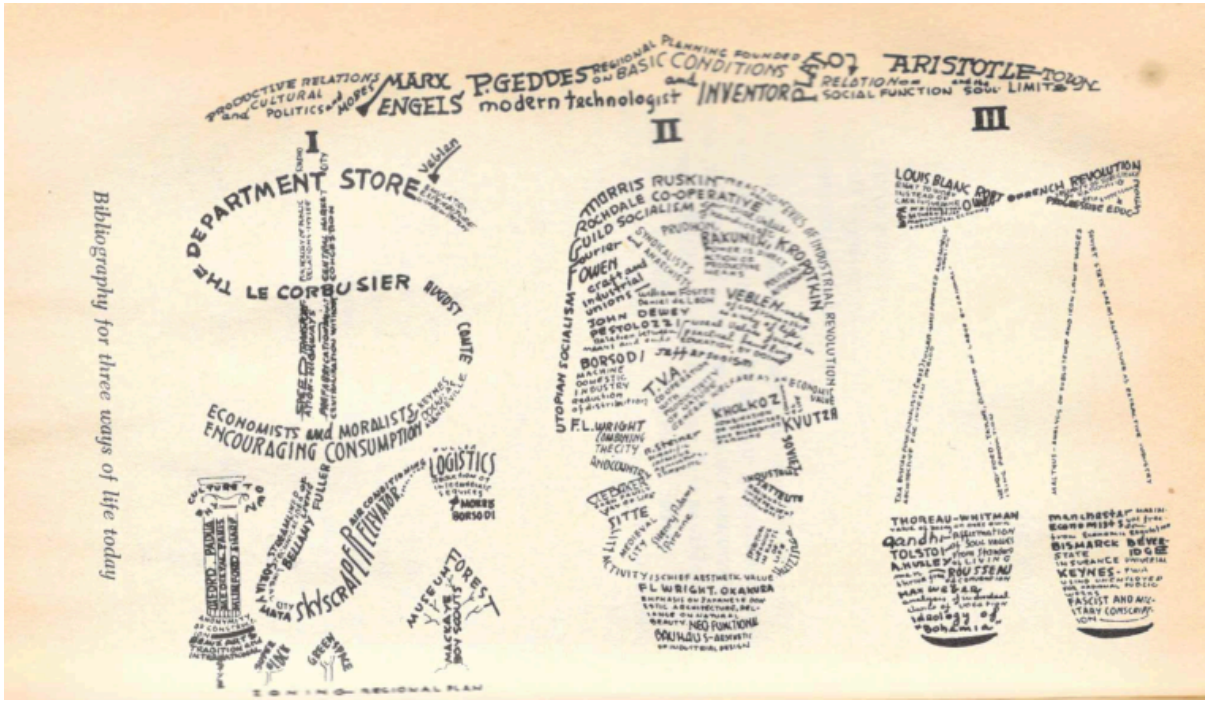

Figure 5, from *Communitas,* p. 120.

While the visualizations I and III are obviously "symbols" related to the values the Goodmans' see each planning scheme manifesting, visualization II is less obviously mimetic. What values are meant to represented by this odd image? What *is* this odd image?

Image II is the Goodmans' preferred model of social organization, a scheme of "psychological efficiency" in which ends and means are equally valued, production is merged into consumption, and work is "satisfying in itself and satisfying in its useful end."[41] In this middle way "the producing and the product are of a piece and every part of life has value in itself as both means and end."[42] It is also a gestalt: a new visual and behavioral organization of venerable terms of critique. The names we recognize—Morris, Ruskin, Dewey, Owen, FL Wright (who appears twice), Kropotkin, Bakunin, Borsodi—are joined by social schemes such as

[41] Goodman, *Communitas,* 154.
[42] Ibid., 220.

guild socialism, craft and industrial unions, and "Jeffersonism" that the Goodmans, "being artists" are "naturally partial to."[43] In fact, the Goodmans enumerated a roster of ideas strongly associated with what Casey Nelson Blake has called the "communitarian project in culture and politics" advanced by cultural critics from the 1920s and '30s such as Waldo Frank and Lewis Mumford, and extending much further back to nineteenth century social reformers William Morris and John Ruskin.[44] Blake argues critics like Mumford who attempted to realize an "organic community" that would answer capitalism's most egregious sins with democratically-inflected cultural politics failed in part because of the "antipolitical implications" of the positions they assumed. For Mumford, physical planning, social engineering, and technological progress offered vantages "beyond culture" from which to ascertain and judge social and cultural arrangements. Mumford associated these activities in turn with a particular lineage of city and regional planning, namely the legacy of Ebenezer Howard, builder of *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1898), a book whose very title suggests deep historical connections between pastoral and planning.

In 1965, Mumford wrote the introduction to the reissue of Howard's late-nineteenth century tome. The thick temporality of *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* highlights the extended afterlife of what Rosemary Wakeman has called the "Arcadian reverie" of utopian New Town planning movements"[45] They were, as Wakeman proposes, pastoral relics. If Garden Cities, with

[43] Goodman, *Communitas,* 220.
[44] Casey Nelson Blake, *Beloved Community: The Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank & Lewis Mumford* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 266.
[45] Rosemary Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia: An Intellectual History of the New Town Movement*, 20. Wakeman's history tracks utopianism in new town planning from the mid-twentieth century. "The solution to urban problems lay in starting anew. New towns were the anodyne for all urban ills—a swift single shot at solving everything wrong about the past" (4). But, Wakeman suggests, post-war plans for new towns and cities of the future were already riven by pastoral feelings of loss, longing, retrospect that characterized Howard-esque plans for Garden Cities and greenbelts.

Mumford as their midcentury advocate were in some sense "pastoral," we might do well to revisit Paul and Percival Goodman's critique of them. Mumford's championing of Garden Cities stands in contrast to the Goodmans' middle way of physical planning, which is an example of the midcentury pastoral mode as this dissertation understands it. Reviewing *Communitas* in 1947, Mumford cried, "Most of what the Goodmans say on the subject of the garden city is, to speak in the most kindly terms, loose and imprecise, and to speak with critical rigor, downright erroneous and misleading."[46] Below I elaborate what difference this difference of opinion makes to this chapter's attempts to recover cosmopolitan pastoral's promise in the post-war period. While Paul Goodman used pastoral as a mode, Mumford engaged Howard's work in order to fix or stabilize an image of community.

Garden Cities by the 1960s more than anything "represented a longing for the past."[47] To the extent that planners longed for the past, they longed for an *image*—a certain kind of representational form or particular kind of picture. We've seen how the aesthetic, for Jacobs, was a mode of depicting the particular, the lived, as that which planning could not account for. For Mumford, the aesthetic indexed the polar opposite. The best seats for city-life weren't front row but high above. In his introduction to Howard's treatise, Mumford invoked "two great inventions" of the early twentieth century: "the aeroplane and the Garden City, both harbingers of a new age."[48] An airplane passenger, delightedly watching the patterning of garden and city below, could best observe what Mumford elsewhere called the "green matrix" in which the city

[46] Lewis Mumford, review of *Communitas, Virginia Quarterly Review*, summer 1947. UChicago Press archives.
[47] Wakeman, *Practicing Utopia,* 20.
[48] Lewis Mumford, introduction of Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow.* Reprint edited with preface by F.J. Osborn, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965), 29.

appears as in a "mixed environment, interwoven in texture with the country."[49] An aerial view, unlike the Goodmans' ambiguous flickering gestalt, fixed the countryside as tapestry, with buildings and communities "embossed in the landscape and deliberately absorbed by it."[50] Mumford articulated an abstract and aestheticized vision of the countryside premised on actual and "illusory heights." Indeed, Mumford's views insinuated a world where "anonymous antlike individuals appear overwhelmed by impersonal structures that dominate the landscape. The view is instructive insofar as it reveals our institutional and environmental surroundings," Blake declares, "but it distorts the lived experience of those who view their reality from the ground up by exaggerating the uniformity and predictability of their existence."[51]

Both Jacobs and Mumford understood cities as primarily visual—objects to be seen, events to be witnessed. The Goodmans, in contrast, rearticulated well-known figures, processes, and histories as a gestalt image in *Communitas*, implying an absent social psychology to pastoral's cultural politics by highlighting the dynamism of physical environments and individual-cum-social experience. Their cosmopolitan pastoral was a practice or style, an attitude or approach, rather than an object or event. This extended to *Communitas* itself, an exemplary cosmopolitan pastoral document. Without any one element dominating the landscape, *Communitas* draws out moments of exchange between background and foreground and the ongoing construction of new "wholes" as underlying individual and social experience of the built environment. Rather than static and abstract propositions about planning or social organization, or mimetic representations of an "urban ballet" qua Jacobs, *Communitas* stages its insights as

[49] Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), 496.
[50] Mumford, *The City in History,* 497.
[51] Blake, *Beloved Community,* 267.

ongoing play between image and text, drawing readers into behaviors beyond simple mental comprehension or agreement.

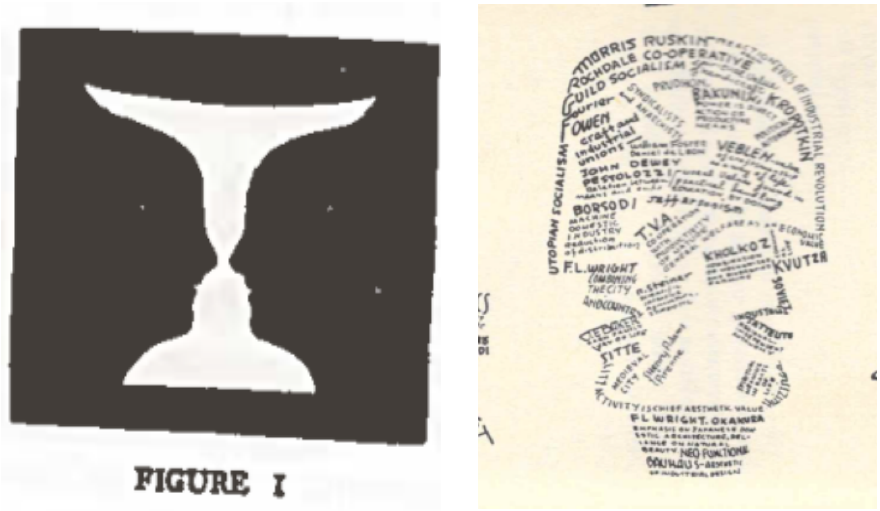

Figure 6, from *Gestalt Therapy,* p. 26 and from *Communitas,* p. 120.

I struggled to arrive at any conclusions—which remain tentative—about the image of scheme II, for example, which echoes one of gestalt's most famous configurations, but weirdly: the background is foregrounded (or vice versa), the candlestick filled in, the profiles reversed. What's what here? How do background and foreground oscillate, at which contact-boundary do they exchange? Such questions make sense as part and parcel to *my* processing of the image—to my behavior or experience of it, rather than my simple agreement to its terms—if I think about the image not as an "image" in the normal sense, i.e. an aestheticized representation of the countryside as Mumford would have me see from on high, but as a conceptual object comprised of layers bearing representational content of various qualities, valences, and heft. The difficulty in isolating this object's boundaries contrasts with the ease of ascertaining what the symbols of schemes I and III "stand for"; all of which suggests to me that the social space of scheme II is *perceived* as much as it is *conceived*, lived (by others but also by me) and abstract (it remains a representation, a highly generalized account of one possibility of social organization). This

insight about the relationship between the imagined and the real carries special weight in the context of the unit at which both the Goodmans and Mumford preferred to conduct their analysis: the region. If Leo Marx proposed pastoral as the movement between psychic and spatial "zones," then an analytic category that could hold both city and country, urban and rural, together at once would be required. The history of "regional planning" was excavated and renovated in these decades.

In the post-war context I'm tracking here, Mumford's regionalism, a vision of landscapes dotted with small cities, was labeled "anti-urban" or "decentrist" by, among others, Jane Jacobs, who linked it back to Howard's idealizations of country life: "Howard set spinning powerful and city-destroying ideas" she claimed in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities.*[52] Jacobs termed Howard's acolytes, which included Mumford, the "Decentrists"—their goal was to decentralize cities, "thin them out, and disperse their enterprises and populations into smaller, separated cities or, better yet, towns."[53] Howard wrote his influential book in the late nineteenth century as a response to over-crowding, poor sanitation, and the general awfulness visited on human and nature alike by English industrial cities. His main insight was that population density and the "size of geographical community units" were factors in social organization, thus his plan was to disperse populations into "a compact, rigorously confined urban grouping" and assiduously separate these groups by green belts. Capped at 30,000 residents, Garden Cities eventually would form "constellations," connected to one another via transportation systems.[54]

Unlike city planners who focused narrowly on urban environments, Howard foresaw the necessity of an "administrative unit" capable of treating both urban and rural aspects of an

[52] Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 19.
[53] Ibid., 20.
[54] F.J. Osborn, preface to Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow,* 10.

enlarged spatial zone—a region. Beyond administrative, such regions were aesthetic, cultural, spiritual, metaphysical: mélanges of town and country, Garden Cities married "rustic health and sanity and activity and urban knowledge, urban technical facility, urban political co-operation" as Howard "attacked the whole problem of the city's development, not merely its physical growth but the inter-relationship of urban functions within the community and the integration of urban and rural patterns."[55] Ebenezer Howard's sense of region owed much to Victorian aesthetic philosophy and theological imperatives, to considering regional forms as organic entities at once beautiful, harmonious, and complete. The marriage of rural and urban was to be carefully plotted and arranged:

> the town should be planned as a whole, and not left to grow up in a chaotic manner as has been the case with all English towns, and more or less so with the towns of all countries. A town, like a flower, or a tree, or an animal, should, at each stage of its growth, possess unity, symmetry, completeness, and the effect of growth should never be to destroy that unity, but to give it greater purposes, nor to mar that symmetry, but to make it more symmetrical; while the completeness of the early structure should be merged in the yet greater completeness of the later development.[56]

Invested in "unity, symmetry, completeness," in re-creating preconceived and predetermined organic shapeliness and overall forms as seen from above, the planner is both gardener and God; we can see how Howard began to clear a space "beyond culture" for Mumford to occupy. In this Howardian-Mumfordian matrix, the region named a style of political economy premised on specific relations between planner and plan; such plans would revitalize the "rustic" and "urban" in symbiotic relationship.

This project is at once related to and distinct from literary regionalism, which overlapped with pastoral, particularly in the American modernist vein. Works by Zora Neale

[55] Mumford, introduction to *Garden Cities of Tomorrow,* 34, 35.
[56] Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow,* 76-7.

Hurston, Willa Cather, Sarah Ornette Jewel, Sherwood Anderson and others frequently combined modernist literary techniques—formal self-consciousness, experimentation with new modes of temporality, (dis)organization of space, preoccupation with sensation and the unconscious—with pastoral typologies and scenes. To various degrees of sophistication, literary regionalism tended toward "local color," expressions of the specific cultural values and qualities of, say, *Winesburg, Ohio*. Like Mumford, these writers sought "the imaginative recovery of place."[57] And like Jacobs, they did so through reference to the particular, the distinctive, and the local. However, "regionalism" in the years 1950-1970 shifted from identifying literary writers depicting specific locations to naming a spatial paradigm associated with planners, policy-makers, geographers, and social scientists. This shift did not leave pastoral behind, nor did it exactly accommodate it. In the next section I turn to considering cosmopolitan pastoral as a style or practice of intellectual inquiry, a way of refiguring relations between experts—pastoralist, planner, and literary critic—and the communities and spaces they sought to represent.

Cosmopolitan Pastoral & Critical Style

Regionalism in the "golden age of regional planning" gave an "interpretative specificity" to the integration of social, political, economic life at a moment of major societal restructuring; by the mid-twentieth century, regionalism named both "the old city-country relationship" as it played out across a national stage and within the far vaster scale of "a global structure of capitalist core and periphery."[58] Rather than Howard's well-ordered garden or Mumford's cultural tapestry, regions became fodder for rapidly proliferating expert classes—regions were

[57] Mark Luccarelli, *Lewis Mumford and the Ecological Region: The Politics of Planning* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1995), 25.
[58] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (New York: Verso, 1989) 162-3, 165.

science.[59] Such professional activities reaffirmed a distanced even authoritarian relationship between planner and planned-for; by the 1960s, the ideology of urban and regional planners was recognized as participating in a "repressive social structure which is biased against the people their plans are supposed to serve."[60] The contradictions and compromises of planning initiatives as they wound through local and national politics rigged to enrich and empower certain citizens at the expense of others rankled another Goodman—Robert, whose *After the Planners* (1971) fingered socially-conscious experts complicit in "organizing the oppressed into a system incapable of providing them with a humane existence, pacifying them with the meager welfare offerings that help maintain the status quo."[61] By the end of his life Paul Goodman too had given up on planning. "He'd say," according to his brother and *Communitas* collaborator Percival, "'this planning is a bunch of damn nonsense. Every time anyone plans anything, it turns out to be much worse than expected…The idea of master planning anything except the smallest thing always leads to disaster.'"[62] For Goodman, such disasters were products not of plans themselves so much as the conceptual and discursive frameworks underwriting them.

These frameworks rested on fallacies of scale. In an era dominated by myopic focus on urban problems, Goodman was one of the few intellectuals to consistently highlight the

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[59] See Walter Isard, *An Introduction to Regional Science* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1975): Isard's regional science is an extension, combination, and development of existing social scientific methods: "the regional scientist's region or system of regions represents to him living organisms containing numerous and diverse behaving units—political, economic, social, and cultural—whose interdependent behavior is conditioned by psychological, institutional, and other factors" (2-3). For Isard, regional science provided an explanatory or analytic framework that geography proper, concerned with "arrangements of things on the face of the earth, and with the associations of things that give character to particular places" lacked; regional science was concerned with "behaviors" of various entities in a finite spatial field. Isard offers thirteen definitions of regional science.

[60] Robert Goodman, *After the Planners* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1971), 12.

[61] Ibid., 13.

[62] Dennis L. Dollens, Interview with Percival Goodman in *Artist of the Actual: Essays on Paul Goodman,* edited by Peter Parisi (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1986), 150.

importance of "rural reconstruction."[63] His regionalism yoked rural and urban together as interrelated forms of life that were embedded in natural and cultural geographies. In his own contribution to the Smithsonian symposium, Goodman invoked Marx's pastoral "design"—the movement from urban to rural and back again—in order to emphasize pastoral's temporality as pause or temporary retreat from the complexities of urban life. Pastoral's spatio-temporal specificity was a way to "help solve urban problems that are not easily or cheaply soluble in urban conditions."[64] Spatialization, setting social relations in lateral (and literal) space, in turn potentially mitigated the abstracting effects of vertical "scaling up" that Goodman began his Smithsonian lecture lamenting: proliferating technology leads to increasing complexity and "there is a change of the scale on which things happen," Goodman reasoned. "Then, if we continue to use the concepts that apply to a smaller scale, we begin to think in deceptive abstractions."[65] City planning was Goodman's "global example" of the distortive tendencies of rhetorics of scale. "It is a question whether urban areas are governable as cities, or whether just this way of thinking does not worsen anomie,"[66] Goodman asked somewhat rhetorically since by 1967 it was a question he'd been exploring for over thirty years. At stake was not just achieving

[63] Some of Goodman's ideas for rural reconstruction: send city kids to live on farms for a year; redirect "urban welfare money" to those wanting to relocate to rural neighborhoods; promote vacationing on working farms; board the mentally ill with rural families. Goodman was fond of such "tinkering" at social problems: society was a network, not a "monolith with a head" that could be chopped off. Piecemeal reform was less likely to produce "ruinous consequences" and more likely to create citizens who participate in political habits rather than simply, magically, become "politicized." See "Two Points of Philosophy and an Example" in *The Fitness of Man's Environment* (1968) and *New Reformation* (1970).
[64] Goodman, "Two Points of Philosophy and an Example," in *Smithsonian Annual II: The Fitness of Man's Environment* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 36. JM Coetzee also understood pastoral as potentially political because of rather than despite its dynamic of retreat from the urban: "At the center of the mode, it seems to me, lies the idea of the local solution. The pastoral defines and isolates a space in which whatever cannot be achieve in the wider world (particularly the city) can be achieved" (J.M. Coetzee, *Doubling the Point: Essays and Interviews,* edited by David Attwell [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992]), 61-2.
[65] Ibid., 27.
[66] Ibid., 29.

"the right style in planning," but how to conceive of and articulate social goods at all. "Style" here indexes a literary-discursive mode as well as moral philosophical traditions and technical solutions. Goodman's cosmopolitan pastorals attempted to imagine the proper level or scale of social organization but also the correct mode or situation of enunciation by which to figure and communicate them.

In *New Reformation's* "Notes of a Neolithic Conservative," his last book of social theory, Goodman again turned to planning and "urbanism" as shorthand for the distortions of scale:

> We ought to cut down commutation, transport, administration, overhead, communications, and hanging around waiting. On the other hand, there are very similar functions that we ought to encourage, like travel and trade, brokering, amenity, conversation, and loitering, the things that make up the busy and idle city, celebrated by Jane Jacobs. The difference seems to be that in logistics, systems, and communications, the soul is on ice till the intermediary activity is over with; in traffic, brokering, and conversation, people are thrown with others and something might turn up. It is the difference between urbanism that imperially imposes its pattern on city and country both and the city planning for city squares and shops and contrasting rural life.[67]

It's a version of the "psychological efficiency" argument he had made in *Communitas* some thirty years before: value the means as well as the ends, get rid of the "intermediary, that which is neither use, nor making for use." But there's also an implication that distinctions between useful and useless activities can only be made by invoking unscientific languages of the soul. Goodman's characterization of such metaphysics is casual, vernacular, even glib: "the soul is on ice." Such moments of off-handed insouciance are especially characteristic of Goodman's late style. Set against the overly-formalizing patterns, plans, and languages of an "imperially imposing" approach to social life, the stylistic quirk suggests another dimension to Goodman's

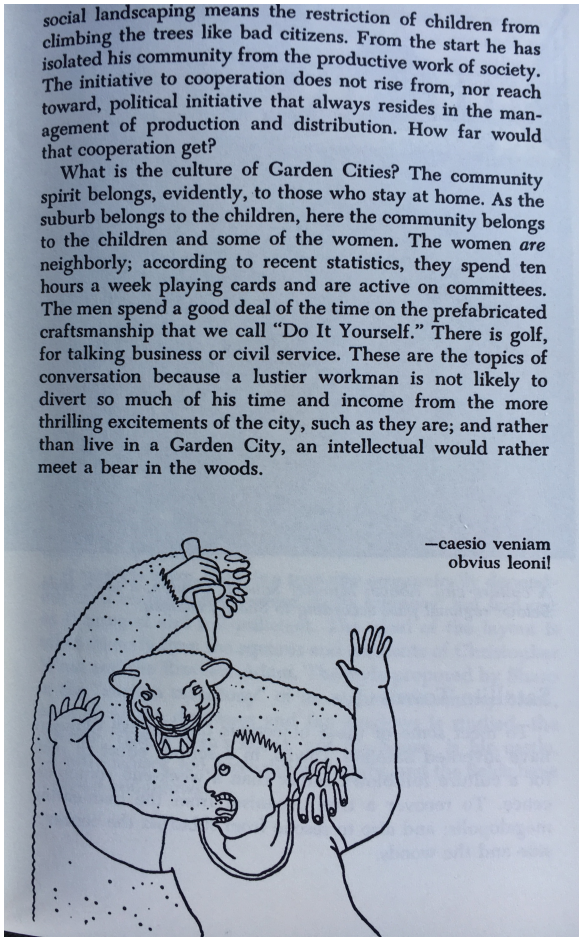
[67] Paul Goodman, *New Reformation: Notes of a Neolithic Conservative* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2010), 187.

theory of the contact-boundary as a matter of critical style where the interface between writer and reader becomes active, even touchy.

I began this chapter arguing that pastoral and cosmopolitanism intersect and combine in midcentury intellectual endeavors like psychology and planning. I see juxtaposition of these terms as fruitful because of the ways in which they imply spatial alongside intellectual or psychological experience, and orientate interlocutors toward local and universal conditions by grounding them in specific contexts and debates. In this section I argue more closely that cosmopolitan pastoral is a style of saying—a mode—inscribed not simply by spatial contrasts between city and country but also premised on matters of address. In Goodman's work in particular, there's an emphasis on the discursive and intersubjective nature of these contexts, an awareness in which such experiences imply ways of saying and writing *to* or *for* as well as feeling *about*. The contact-boundary is a matter of critical style connecting writer and reader, intellectual and audience, pastoralist and community. One final image-text from *Communitas* will underline how Goodman's cosmopolitan pastoral style could manifest as a febrile contact-boundary between author and audiences, intellectuals and the communities they sought to represent.

Though he claimed to be favor of "contrasting" rural and urban patterns of life, Goodman's was never Mumford's regionalism, which at once generated and depended on visions of Garden Cities woven seamlessly into landscapes, as if "planning with an esthetic purpose" might miraculously beget harmonious social relations. Indeed, "rather than live in a Garden City," Goodman proclaims, "an intellectual would rather meet a bear in the woods."[68] The quip from *Communitas* is accompanied by a line drawing with a quote from Catullus 45:

[68]Goodman, *Communitas,* 33.



social landscaping means the restriction of children from climbing the trees like bad citizens. From the start he has isolated his community from the productive work of society. The initiative to cooperation does not rise from, nor reach toward, political initiative that always resides in the management of production and distribution. How far would that cooperation get?

What is the culture of Garden Cities? The community spirit belongs, evidently, to those who stay at home. As the suburb belongs to the children, here the community belongs to the children and some of the women. The women *are* neighborly; according to recent statistics, they spend ten hours a week playing cards and are active on committees. The men spend a good deal of the time on the prefabricated craftsmanship that we call "Do It Yourself." There is golf, for talking business or civil service. These are the topics of conversation because a lustier workman is not likely to divert so much of his time and income from the more thrilling excitements of the city, such as they are; and rather than live in a Garden City, an intellectual would rather meet a bear in the woods.

—caesio veniam obvius leoni!

Figure 7, from *Communitas,* p. 35.

"caesio veniam obvius leoni!" ("may I meet a grey-eyed lion") The line is plucked from Catullus's lightly ironic love poem, in which the intimate speech of Greek Acme is opposed to the geopolitical rhetoric of Roman Septimus. Here it captions a cartoonish scene of an indeterminate animal (bear or grey-eyed lion?) wielding a knife against a frightened victim. Look closer, and the disguise is revealed—human hands creep out from the claws. The caption and cartoon collapse and invert the poem's figures. In Catullus's poem, Septimus "embraces" Acme and utters a declaration of love that suddenly bloats to include the far reaches of empire: if he fails to love Acme continually and perfectly may he be exiled to Libya and "torrid India" and there meet a grey-eyed lion! One reading of the cartoon, then, is that Septimus is both lion and victim, intellectual and bear: like champions of Garden Cities, he's fallen prey to his own rhetoric.

The moment is exemplary of the allusive and associational logic of *Communitas*, and its sharp visual wit. Elsewhere in the text are novelistic passages, brief and imagined scenes from the various paradigms that imbue this work of "physical planning" with self-consciously literary manners and style. These are not incidental flourishes. Here, the takedown of Garden Cities seems purposefully set within the humanistic tradition of Western culture, in a version of pastoral contentment, satiety, and love ironized through the language of ambition and

geopolitics. Catullus's poem presents two ways of speaking, intimate and worldly, that finally call each other into question: which declaration of love is more "true"? Aren't Acme and Septimus both engaging in highly conventional speech acts? In the accompanying text, "topics of conversation" in the typical Garden City are likewise neutered by social forms and verbal behaviors like agreeing, complying, conforming. Lust—always important for Goodman—lives elsewhere.

The off-hand gesture to lust, loving, and desire is more important than it might at first appear. Goodman's cosmopolitan pastorals highlight in ways others do not the pleasures of being a body who can, among other activities, argue and have sex. In the Catullus page from *Communitas* above, the accompanying text shrinks Garden Cities to mere suburbs, communities "isolated" from the "productive work of society" and lacking political initiative; rather than cooperation, such communities produce behaviors of agreement, compliance, and conformity. These are the kinds of behaviors related to assenting to, rather than experiencing *for oneself*, gestalts. Reviewing Mumford's *The City in History,* Paul Goodman remarked that Howard and Mumford were both, to his mind, "unpolitical; they are too ready to let the control of modern technology fall to central planning experts and administrators… I put more faith in independence, conflict, and emerging novelty."[69] These virtues carried spatial dimensions; as we've seen with Goodman's forays into planning, ways of being in the world and with others were also ways of organizing and being organized by one's environment. DIY projects in the suburbs wouldn't do. Goodman's imagination favored "the pastoral ideal of dark places and nooks"—fecund ponds, rowdy campfires in the woods, but also spaces of escape within the

[69] Goodman, *The Hudson Review,* 446.

urban environment, Goodman told his audience at the Smithsonian, "holes and basements to creep into for games and sex."[70]

In that august institutional setting, Goodman meant gay sex. Goodman's cosmopolitan pastoral was founded on his progressive and problematic version of queer life, desire, and sociality. As always, specific spaces and spatial forms were key components. Urban planning with its insistence on "impenetrable glass fronts" and tidy promenades of improved river fronts did away with those nooks and crannies that dot Goodman's oeuvre and ground his conception of a "tolerable society" within pastoral limits—the retreat is temporary, circumscribed by space and time—that are unabashedly sexual and queer: "it has been an advantage to learn that the ends of docks," he wrote in "Being Queer," "the backs of trucks, back alleys, behind the stairs, abandoned bunkers on the beach, and the washrooms of trains are all adequate samples of all the space there is… in my case the hardship and starvation of my inept queer life have usefully simplified my notions of what a good society is."[71] Here pastoral retreat becomes "all the space there is," a world of limits as well as pleasures that is at once specific to queer experience and generalizable beyond it. "I have learned to have very modest goals for society and myself," he notes, "things like clean air, green grass, children with bright eyes, not being pushed around, useful work that suits one's abilities, plain tasty food, and occasional satisfying nookie."[72] Versions of these goals circulate throughout Goodman's later works and their appearance almost always signals Goodman's reproach to utopianism; rather than a good society he wanted those "tolerable background conditions."[73] Gestalt's background-figure dynamics again animate a

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[70] Goodman, "Two Points of Philosophy and an Example," in *Smithsonian Annual II: The Fitness of Man's Environment*, 32.
[71] Goodman, "Being Queer," *Crazy Hope and Finite Experience: The Final Essays of Paul Goodman,* edited by Taylor Stoehr (New York, Gestalt Press, 1997), 112-13.
[72] Ibid., 113.
[73] Goodman, *New Reformation,* 181.

version of cosmopolitan pastoral, an image of alternative worlds flickering or flowing "within" what appear as stagnant, "bogged," or fixed conditions and forms of life. And rather than proscribe the coordinates of (future) social goods from on high, Goodman's cosmopolitan pastorals found ways to figure historically marginalized experiences of queerness as universal desires for pastoral's freedoms and pleasures, as ways of negotiating the contact-boundary and forming new gestalts. "The excluded or repressed are always right in their rebellion," Goodman wrote in *New Reformation,* "for they stand for our future wholeness. And their demands must always seem wrong-headed, their style uncalled for…"[74]

Style was Goodman's most important category: "What we want is style," he wrote in *Communitas.* "Style, power and grace. These come only, burning, from need and flowing feeling."[75] Style connected bodies—author to audience, individual to community, lover to lover. Style burned, flowed; it was unapologetically therapeutic—"it helps me to say it just as it is, however it is," he once wrote. Style was Goodman's contact-boundary. However, Goodman's late style challenges the lineaments of cosmopolitan pastoral I've sketched here, as more or less careful and nuanced claim-making. Goodman's style can demolish boundaries, or it can retreat from them. This differs from the cosmopolitan critic who performs or seeks "a delicate intersubjective competence," a kind of tact and sensibility that avoids stridently normative pronouncement making even while avowing "shared commonalities" as the basis for its refinement.[76]

Being careful about or attentive to the claims of others might then destabilize the privileged position of the cosmopolitan. It is hard to square this with Goodman's assertion, for

[74] Ibid., 183.
[75] Goodman, *Communitas,* 20.
[76] Amanda Anderson, "Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, and the Divided Legacies of Modernity" in *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*, 275.

example, that "my homosexual acts have made me a nigger" in *New Reformation.* Or his exclusion of women from his analysis of the alienated young in *Growing Up Absurd* because a "girl… is not expected to 'make something' of herself. Her career does not have to be self-justifying, for she will have children, which is absolutely self-justifying, like any other natural or creative act."[77] In the first case, Goodman generalizes too far, in the second not nearly far enough. Both moves indicate the extent to which Goodman's stylistic prerogatives and imagined audiences rested on typified experiences of white men, or rather one white man: Paul Goodman. Perhaps this is the reason that, by Goodman's death in 1972, "many who once thrilled to his plain-spoken moralism [had] stopped listening."[78] The limits of his literary style suggest that the contact-boundary, always in flux, might also be disregarded or ignored. Rather than mark the edges where author and audience are activated in the potential of belonging to a shared "pattern of life," in Goodman's final works the contact-boundary collapses, congeals, dies. Such elegiac registers pose questions about what happens to the possibilities of cosmopolitan pastoral when the shepherd (and intellectual) is no longer listened to, is abandoned and ignored.

Cosmopolitan Pastoral: An Elegy

As this chapter has progressed, I've identified Paul Goodman as a key cosmopolitan pastoralist. Among writers, critics, and commentators of the 1950s and '60s, he was unique in insisting on the interrelatedness of psychic, spatial, and literary experience and for developing styles commensurate to figuring those relations. For this reason, he's exemplary of the possibilities of the mode at midcentury. And yet Goodman's later years underscore the limits of

[77] Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd,* introduction by Casey Nelson Blake (New York: NYRB Classics, 2012), 21.
[78] Casey Nelson Blake, introduction to Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd*, xxii.

representative address and cosmopolitan pastoral. When Goodman became famous, after the publication and success of *Growing Up Absurd* (1960), he wrote explicitly for young people, publishing a regular column in *The Campus,* an undergraduate newspaper from Middlebury, and he spoke *to* them in an unending series of campus visits.[79] By the end of the 1960s, Goodman's confidence in the youth movement faltered. The young didn't face interlocking political and social problems, Goodman realized, but a profoundly religious crisis as traditional institutions and structures of meaning appeared corrupted and sapped of significance:

> The irony was that I myself had said this ten years before, in *Growing up Absurd*, that young people were growing up without a world for them, and therefore they were 'alienated,' estranged from nature and unable to find their own natures, since we find ourselves by activity in the world… But now the alienating circumstances had proved to be too strong, after all; here were absurd graduate students, most of them political activists—the activists seek me out to bug me.[80]

Like many of Paul Goodman's books, *New Reformation* (1970) is peppered with examples of young people behaving "badly"—but this time they're trolling Paul Goodman. He's interrupted by hecklers at conferences; students in his seminar on "professionalism" revolt, arguing that "professionalism was a concept of repressive societies and of 'linear thinking.'"[81] Goodman had been shorn of his admiring flock. Cosmopolitanism, like pastoral, assumes that its singers and shepherds and intellectuals mediate self and collective through more or less felicitous speech acts, and that the communities such figures represent, in being spoken for, do not harass one

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[79] For extensive biographical treatment of Goodman see Taylor Stoehr's many introductions to Goodman's works; Michael C. Fisher's introduction to *New Reformation*; George Dennison's "Memoir and Appreciation" at the start of *Collected Poems;* and *Artist of the Actual: Essays on Paul Goodman,* edited by Peter Parisi. Goodman taught at many colleges but was often, as he had been from the University of Chicago, asked to leave after making advances on young men, particularly students. Writing of being dismissed from Black Mountain College, Goodman sighed, "Frankly my experience of radical community is that it does not tolerate my freedom" ("Being Queer," 106).

[80] Goodman, *New Reformation,* 70.

[81] Ibid.*,* 70.

back. But how does one represent antagonists? What language could appeal to groups firmly committed to positions of entrenched difference?

New Reformation is full of anecdotes in which Paul Goodman is called out, shot down, "met with sullen silence" by his former acolytes.[82] He was, he said in the book's preface, "rather sour on the American young."[83] Sour's not a tone we'd associate with cosmopolitanism as I've characterized it so far, that is as an intellectual endeavor invested in the potential of style to generate new forms of identification and common humanity. Goodman in writing about the young was no longer writing to or for them—he was mourning them. *New Reformation* is, in part, an elegy: the book is an address to Goodman's son Matty, who died in a hiking accident in 1967 at age nineteen, and a lament for lost opportunities, including Goodman's own fading relevance to a community he'd once identified strongly with. "The death of my son estranged me from the young world altogether," he noted in "Being Queer."[84]

"Estrangement" is a terrible world for a gestalt therapist. In *Gestalt Therapy,* Goodman made the point that "organismic-self-regulation" was never given but always a matter of possibility, allowance, risk. Subjective and objective circumstances conspired to keep contact-boundaries fixed, to keep people stuck. However, "even when the 'objective' situation cannot be changed," he wrote, "as when a loved one dies, there are regulation reactions of the organism itself, such as crying and mourning, that help restore equilibrium if only we allow them to."[85] "Estrangement" suggests that subjective and objective could not be reconciled for Goodman, that figure and background were stuck or isolated from one another, no matter the mourning process. We can witness the struggle to engage audiences, to engage his own interest in his audience, in

[82] Ibid., 103.
[83] Ibid., 33.
[84] Paul Goodman, "Being Queer," *Crazy Hope and Finite Experience,* 107.
[85] Goodman et al., *Gestalt Therapy,* 275-6.

New Reformation and his long poem "North Percy," both works operating in profoundly elegiac registers. Elegy offers a final context in which to read cosmopolitan pastorals as efforts at continuity and community, at creating or failing to create forms of belonging. Goodman's cosmopolitan pastorals had worked on the assumption that there was a way of reorganizing one's present rather than planning for the future. A "lost" human nature might be recovered through psycho-therapeutic and spatial practices. By the end of his life, the promise inherent in such practices had thinned. What Goodman's final writings offer to this discussion is a limit case for the potential of the contact-boundary as a matter of style to reorganize and reorient shared social and inter-generational space.

Elegiac address creates new horizons for those questions of representation considered so far: rather than speaking for a living community, elegy speaks to an absence. But that absence is never a void. Instead elegists are often engaged, as Jahan Ramazani and Diana Fuss have shown, in acts of citation and allusion that scaffold literary, social, and personal histories. Such echoes inscribe elegies in public as well as private networks of meaning.[86] However, the tendency of modern elegies is to react against the genre's traditional lineaments and abjure its consolations. If convention and citation are ways elegy situates its singers amongst diverse communities of the living and dead, elegiac speech also threatens, as in Goodman's *New Reformation,* to alienate others either through harshness of tone or lack of regard. Grief is not always easy listening, a

[86] Jahan Ramazani, *Poetry and Mourning: The Modern Elegy from Hardy to Heaney* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) and Diana Fuss, *Dying Modern: A Meditation on Elegy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013). If anything, allusion and citation is amplified by pastoral elegy. "The inaugural poem of Western pastoral," notes Paul Alpers, "brings herdsmen together for the pleasure of hearing a lament for Daphnis" (*What Is Pastoral?* 96). The complexity of address in Theocritus's first idyll, where Thyrsis laments Daphnis but also ventriloquizes Daphnis's lament, serves to at once thin and thicken the source of the song—Thrysis elegizes Daphnis's elegy for himself. These compoundings or, in Alpers's word "convenings," model the "reciprocal tendencies" scholars such as Amanda Anderson see in cosmopolitanism.

point that scholars of modern elegy like Ramazani tend to make by utilizing Freudian psychoanalytic paradigms of mourning and melancholy, where the "obsessional self-reproaches" that characterized both mourning and melancholy for Freud structure "stunning poetic acts of confrontation" between poets like Lowell, Berryman, and Plath and their (dead) parents.[87] Reacting against the painful social history represented by their ancestors, these elegists highlighted the repressive contours of their moment's cultural denial of death and gendering of strong emotion, in many ways reinscribing the generational foment of the post-war period by crafting poems that likewise vented wounded rage at the inherited adult world.

Goodman by the end of his life firmly identified with that adult world. His was the despair of the father, not the son. Goodman believed in the reparative powers of literary method and style, of aesthetic sense-making as capable of forming new wholes from shattering experiences. Unlike other postwar elegists, he was quite comfortable with the legacy and consolatory powers of western literary tradition. These powers were therapeutic to the extent that they made a space for Paul Goodman to go on:

> I learned from the most grievous event in my life, Matty's death five years ago, that it is useful to persist in doing what *is* one's own thing, exhausting one's natural powers very quickly when, in such a case, one has little grip on his own life. I wrote repetitive little poems about the one subject. And I was upbraided by an uncharitable lady for making literature out of the death of my only son. (My eyes are suddenly full of tears, but I will write down this *too.*) So I venture to give advice to other people in mourning: be sure that what you are doing is yours and persist in doing it; in everything else, willing break down, suddenly bawl, run away if you feel like it…[88]

Goodman, writing crying, eschews decorum and counsels a kind of indulgence. But the poems for Matty in being "one's own thing" exist uneasily within the cultural imperative to mourn privately and the poetic fashion to rage publicly against tradition. A literary mode like pastoral

[87] Ramazani, *Modern Elegy,* 222.
[88] Goodman, *Crazy Hope and Finite Experience,* 82-3.

elegy, written self-consciously as therapy, transformed the social meanings of pastoral shepherd, and cosmopolitan intellectual into private ones and it highlighted the elision of private suffering that public and representative habits of speech are premised on.

"North Percy" toggles between these two perspectives, now exploring elegy's compensatory gestures as in "Noah's Song": "It is one year—I wish that August 8th / were blotted from the diary / and my sadness is joining with / the other sadness of humanity." Now "relaxing" to pain and mourning as per gestalt therapy: "I am crying because / the woods are lovely / in this world that was / not made for me."[89] One the one hand, political contents and religious references gesture toward the capacities of universalizing narratives, the "old stories" that are "compelling formulae"; Goodman's elegies transmit his hopes for Western humanism.[90] On the other hand, these "repetitive little poems" unblock only Paul Goodman's grief.[91] If most post-war elegists rejected elegy's consolatory functions lest the poem become ideological pap—a repository of "sentimental palliatives" or kind of greeting-card verse—would poetry conceived in these terms look very different from self-indulgence?[92] Or was wallowing the point? Goodman's accent on the individuality even idiosyncrasy of his grief meanwhile highlights how gestalt therapy, with its pastoral coordination of figure and environment, even in the hands of Paul Goodman, might problematically grow a recidivist universalism in egocentric soil. Though

[89] Paul Goodman, "North Percy" in *Collected Poems,* edited by Taylor Stoehr (New York: Vintage, 1977), 132-151.
[90] Paul Goodman, "Western Tradition and World Concern," in *The Paul Goodman Reader,* 230.
[91] Goodman's poetics, grounded in gestalt therapy, were essentially therapeutic: to "find the words" the poet attends the "organic need": "The poet is concentrating on some unfinished subvocal speech and its subsequent thoughts; by freely playing with his present words he at last finished an unfinished verbal scene, he in fact utters the complaint, the denunciation, the declaration of love, the self-reproach, that he should have uttered; now at last he freely draws on the underlying organic need and he finds the words" (*Gestalt Therapy,* 323).
[92] Ramazani, *Modern Elegy,* 226.

Goodman broke with Frederick Perls in the 1950s, his above quote recalls the opening of Perls's "Gestalt prayer": "I do my thing, and you do your thing."[93]

What kinds of engagements with others, shared patterns of life, are fostered by persisting in doing one's thing? For Diana Fuss, elegies *are* ethics because of their "consolatory fictions," or attempts to "recognize the dead but also to bring them back to life" through the powers of figurative language.[94] Elegy revives the dead however incompletely or momentarily in the "space" of poetry—a conceptual realm that, if cold, at least provides some modicum of comfort. "North Percy" explores the possibilities of pastoral elegy's vertical axes through its addresses to God, Creator Spirit, and the poem's final image of Goodman scaling up his grief into "the other sadness of humanity." Here is the last section, which takes place "in the meadows of the Bear,

> for this abstract of stars
> in the cold latitudes
> affirming what is not
> I gave my life—see how she shines
> in the clamorous night
> around my famous head
> as staggering I walk
> sightless with tears away
> from me and my little boy.
> I never made this crazy contract
> willingly, God. (33, 2-11)

The "abstract" "cold" and "clamorous" speech of Goodman the public intellectual or "famous head" is the "contract" underwriting Goodman the father, who remains with his dead son, if only in verse. We should remember Goodman's own caution about the distorting tendencies of scale; equally present in "North Percy" are moments in which the compensatory histories of pastoral elegy sit alongside more lateral and literal gestures as in the opening stanzas:

> Playing too happily
> on the slippery mountainside

[93] Shane, "Gestalt Therapy: The Once and Future King," 50.
[94] Fuss, *Dying Modern,* 7.

my only son fell down and died.
I taught him to talk honestly
and without stalling come across
but I could not teach him the cowardice
and ambiguity
to live a longer life unhappily.

You see, girl, you ought not to
center your affections so,
little short of idolatry.
A young man is untrustworthy.
In the morning satisfied
he gets up from your bed
and in the evening he is dead. (1, 1-15)

There are small and painful revelations here. Unlike many of the sections, this first is addressed laterally, to "girl" not God. Ambivalence about his own authority—he was after all unable to teach his son to stay alive—destabilizes positions of giver and receiver of advice. It seems germane to note here that Goodman himself wrote many poems about cruising and the vicissitudes of young men. The "girl" is superfluous, offset by commas and extraneous to the sense and the line itself, which could be Goodman's address to himself about Matty or, more (or less?) horrifying, any of his own untrustworthy male lovers. "I waited the seven hours till he would come (he said), / tricking myself with phony chores to blank out the time," he wrote in one of his many poems about being stood up.[95] The specter of Matty's prowess, rising "satisfied" from bed, is linked to his father's sexual losses, not just a severed or stopped-short genealogy but Goodman's own history of disappointment.

If the contact-boundary also operated as inheritance or tradition, Goodman faced audiences of young people increasingly skeptical that such forms of connection and communing held any promise. History and tradition were problems to be left behind, not backgrounds to find

[95] Goodman, *Collected Poems,* 6.

oneself inscribed within. Exchange was increasingly tenuous if not impossible. Thus against the hectoring, unnamed and largely uncharacterized student "masses" Goodman sketches in *New Reformation,* Matty appears as distinct and individual—an elegiac image or epitaph to a youth movement already changing beyond recognition. The figure-background relation is not flexible but stuck in a "sour" register or tone mourning the loss of a son and a lost horizon of potential action. The incorporation of Goodman's essay-obituary about his dead son, "A Young Pacifist," into *New Reformation's* section on "Legitimacy" follows a plea for the pacifism abandoned by the late 1960s New Left.[96] The obituary rebukes the "politicizing" tactics of Goodman's former fans. Matty was "essentially an unpolitical person and certainly had no ambition to be a leader, but was rather retiring" Goodman writes, nonetheless "he was politically active only by duty, on principle."[97] The necessity of engagement to preserve one's autonomy, rather than politics of power, motivated father and son. "Every pacifist career is individual, a unique balance of forces, including the shared hope that other human beings will become equally autonomous," Goodman wrote at the end of his essay. "Most people want peace and freedom, but there are no pacifist or anarchist masses."[98]

Cosmopolitan pastorals as I've described them offered a promise that individual and social experiences of psychology and space might engage and even reconcile one another. And yet, somewhat akin to Paul Goodman, to whom posterity has not been kind, that promise to guide or predict shared patterns of life has dwindled; like anarchism and pacifism—or therapy—it has seemed to turn on a matter of individual, rather than collective, movement, preference,

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[96] Goodman wrote "A Young Pacifist" just weeks after Matty's death in 1967. See *War No More: Three Centuries of American Antiwar and Peace Writing,* edited by Lawrence Rosenwald (Washington DC: Library of America, 2016) and *Drawing the Line: The Political Essays of Paul Goodman,* edited by Taylor Stoehr (New York: Free Life Editions, 1977).
[97] Goodman, *New Reformation,* 168.
[98] Ibid., 169.

choice. There could be no pastoral masses. However, by reading Goodman's works as variations on and experiments with the possibilities of the pastoral mode we gain an enhanced sense of its capaciousness at midcentury: how it flowed through disciplinary discourses as well as stuck to certain versions, and visions, of how social life might be reorganized and arranged in the present.

Leo Marx's version of pastoralist-planner meanwhile would have to wait thirty years to see planners take an interest in it, in the 1990s resurgence of "new urbanism." Ironically, new urbanists turned to Lewis Mumford and Jane Jacobs rather than Paul Goodman for ideas of how cultural, human, and natural geographies might correspond.[99] In doing so, new urbanists have ignored Goodman's calls for "rural reconstruction" on the "classical pattern of regionalism"—a sense of contrast between urban and rural focused around the politics of bodies engaging in practices of everyday life.[100] They have also largely ignored the potentials of a more socially-minded psychological model in favor of addressing and satisfying individual needs of consumer-citizens. Largely focused on reforming existing suburban and urban spaces, or developing such spaces from scratch, new urbanists have turned to practices that include community members in the planning and execution of new neighborhood forms. Such approaches heed the need for "local, vernacular knowledge of how places do and do not work [as] a strategic approach to pre-empt resistance."[101]

Marx's cosmopolitan pastoralist-planner lurks here, newly sensitized to the needs and wishes of a community in order to de-emphasize the role of expert or professional planners and architects. However, such initiatives all too often locate the site of social goods in individual

[99] See *Back to the Future: New Urbanism and the Rise of Neotraditionalism in Urban Planning,* edited by Viviana Andreescu and Karl Besel (Lanham: University Press of America, 2013).
[100] Paul Goodman, "Two Points of Philosophy and an Example" in *Smithsonian Annual II: The Fitness of Man's Environment*, 27-38.
[101] Passell, *Building the New Urbanism,* 51.

experience by emphasizing home ownership and concepts like "walkability" that curb rather than expand the possibilities for new forms and moods of social existence—or styles of communication. The force of new urbanism is centripetal rather than centrifugal, fostering enclaves at the expense of exploring how Goodman's variously scaled contact-boundaries might activate experience and exchange on the one hand, or making use of the pastoral psychology Marx outlined to planners in the late 1960s on the other. As I'll explore in the next chapter, pastoral as a mode of imagining social life dropped out of institutional discourses almost at the moment it entered them. Increasingly identified with countercultural practices while it was also being codified in works of scholarship, the potential of what I've described here as cosmopolitan pastoral remains indistinct and in the background of the 1960s and today.

Coda: Method

In the last chapter I argued that we might understand pastoral as a mode crossing midcentury disciplinary contexts like planning, psycho-therapy, and criticism because of equivalences between the position of pastoral singer and cosmopolitan intellectual (as well as planner). Goodman's own style was a "contact-boundary" amongst overlapping disciplinary commitments and discourses through which he sought to activate readers' experiences of work(s) and life simultaneously. *The Structure of Literature* (1954), based on his PhD work at the University of Chicago, elaborated these insights by arguing that genres at once structured literary works and provided formal means for readers to intuit and engage their own (non-literary) experiences. In his author questionnaire for the University of Chicago Press, Goodman wrote:

> I attempt to bring out the structure of the actual experience, what is presented, in literary works of various kinds… The analyses are grouped as Tragic, Comic, Novelistic, and Lyric—but I show how in each of the broad genres it is necessary to find the structure inductively in the particular work: there is no analysis of 'tragedy as such,' etc. I try thruout [sic] to show that the structures of experience won from the works are relevant and important in the general, not especially literary, experience of life. To get the foreground structure—the literary experience—it is always necessary to work in the historical, psychological, and sociological contexts as well; and conversely, unless the structure of the presented work has become clear, historical, social, or other analyses of the work are bound to be thin and somewhat irrelevant… to understand the work, it is necessary to grasp its peculiar and eccentric structure as well as its exemplary and regular structure.[1]

"2 Pastoral Movements" seems written with this thesis in mind; pastoral is not there "as such" but entangled in the stylistics of the piece—its collaged and shifting registers, idiosyncratic punctuation, its allusions and echoes "win" readers an experience of pastoral that is also an invitation to reflect on the production of knowledge, conditions of thinking, and attitudes or practices of the scholar. Pastoral, I noted in the last chapter, is understood as one mode through

[1] University of Chicago Press Records 1892-1965, Box 199, Folder 1. University of Chicago Special Collections.

which intellectuals speak about themselves and their endeavors. In this coda I examine more closely how a mode shapes the conditions of its articulation, how pastoral as an object of midcentury literary criticism also inflected the methods of its critics.

Two of last century's most celebrated scholars turned their attention to pastoral to argue for the mode's relevance to literary criticism despite its diminished returns in post-industrial conditions of urban modernity to actual literature. In one sense, the critic himself became a pastoralist singing of a mode long gone. Both Raymond Williams and Leo Marx sketched pastoral as intimately connected to waning national mythologies and types. For Williams, pastoral indexed the historical transformation of English national life not by representing but rather by obscuring the workings of capitalism as a mode of production governing social relations. *The Country and the City* (1973) exposed pastoral's complicity in constructing ideological attachments to idealized notions of rural life. For Marx in *The Machine in the Garden* (1964), pastoral expressed conflicting forces shaping American national culture of the nineteenth century: the ideal of the hyper-abundant American "garden" and the encroaching reality of rapacious technological progress. "Simple" pastorals for Marx were artifacts of popular culture that staged technological progress (the "machine") as utopian, sentimental, and capable of healing rifts between nature and culture. "Complex" pastorals evinced a more skeptical, and literary, relationship to modernity; in Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, and Twain, the "interrupted idyll" or appearance of "machine in the garden" signified an ultimately irresolvable contradiction between the pastoral ideal and American reality.

While the books focused on pastoral as specific national traditions, both projects generated innovative methodological approaches and signatures: "pastoral" drew cultural and literary archives together in powerful ways. As Leo Marx argued, pastoral's tendency to

supersede its status as literature, to "spill over into thinking about real life," presented situations in which literature connected to ideological commitments and ideologies themselves.[2] The critic's role here was to sort and expose—simple pastoral from complex in Marx's book, rural fantasy from rural reality in Williams's. To simply focus on pastoral as an interpretative object for these critics ignores how their monographs also staged quandaries that preoccupy theorists of cosmopolitanism, namely the possibility that style might achieve "reflective distance from one's cultural affiliations, a broad understanding of other cultures and customs, and a belief in universal humanity."[3] Both Williams and Marx embed their critical projects in personal narratives; their scholarship is contained within situational meanings and direct life experience, and provides an informing context even if the work itself seems to deny or occlude personal resonances. These critical works are reflections on their authors' "cultural affiliations" and situations of enunciation. They are laments for lost patterns of life, but also calls for new styles of scholarship.

Throughout *The Country and the City,* Williams traced the relationship between pastoral and the politics of intellectual work, focusing in particular on intellectuals as members of "intermediate groups" who formalize reactions or "speak for" those classes (his examples include farmers and small landowners) experiencing disturbance and social change. Such groups voiced deeply felt complaints against emergent social orders that also masked the realities of the present. Pastoral obscured the real social relations organizing and creating the "new order" that made an idealized "old order" possible. As a social critic, the pastoral-intellectual ensconced himself in "retrospective radicalism" in order "to carry humane feelings and yet ordinarily to

[2] Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 130.
[3] Amanda Anderson, "Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, and the Divided Legacies of Modernity" in *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*, 267.

attach them to a pre-capitalist and therefore irrevocable world."[4] In this way, intellectual work was also patterned on pastoral's temporal mystifications. Nostalgic professional activity committed to the transmission of "humane feelings" was finally incommensurable with capitalism's main modes of interaction and engagement—use and consumption. Critical activity mirrored pastoral evocations of childhood sites and scenes: "It is not so much the old village or the old backstreet that is significant," Williams claimed in the final pages of *The Country and the City*. "It is the perception and affirmation of a world in which one is not necessarily a stranger and an agent, but can be a member, a discoverer, in a shared source of life."[5] Both the child and the critic interested in "humane feelings" or positive attachments and identifications in a world of immediate experience eventually must grow up to recognize that, under capitalism, literature is adjunct to economic realities.

How then does a critic write criticism? How does an intellectual accept what Frederick Jameson has called his unhappy consciousness? *The Country and the City* is partly about what it feels like to be Raymond Williams, a country boy turned Cambridge scholar, a critic plagued by feelings: "I read related things still, in academic books and in books by men who left private schools to go farming, and by others who grew up in villages and are now country writers," he notes in the opening chapter, "a whole set of books, periodicals, notes in the newspapers: country life. And I find I keep asking the same question, because of the history: where do I stand in relation to these writers: in another country or in this valuing city?"[6] The question's spatial metaphor constructs a conceptual arrangement between critic and the textual-historical object called "country life." But in *The Country and the City* country life is at once and no longer a text

[4] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, 36.
[5] Ibid., 298.
[6] Ibid., 6.

to be read or a series of images to be decoded—pastoral isn't the object of criticism but Williams's method or approach to writing it.

In a nod to novelistic framing techniques, the first chapter ends with Williams at his desk, finishing up or about to begin writing the book we will soon read. "A dog is barking—that chained bark—behind the asbestos barn," he records. "It is now and then: here and many places. When there are questions to put, I have to push back my chair, look down at my papers, and feel the change."[7] The present tense creates an artificial world of *now,* as if narrative technique might keep the critic squarely in the present, rather than drifting toward the past with its dangerous idealisms. The scene is particularized rather than abstractly rural. The critic's duty is not to "carry humane feelings" from an irrevocably past world, but to "feel the change" of the present by existing within the particulars of a country life he is also tasked with explaining. The critic, like the pastoralist, must realize positions of participant and observer at once. Williams's pastoral negotiates these positions through oscillations in language, between critical appraisals and interpretative acts and participatory gestures, here made at the level of stylistic detail (asbestos barn; chained bark), as well as mood or tone of voice.[8]

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[7] Ibid., 8.

[8] See David Simpson on Williams's "vocalic" writing which rests on "ordinary language" to construct the audience as "equal-standing community" while also exhibiting "a pull toward current consciousness: a framing of ideas within certain polite but definite limits" (13). The vocalic underwrites Williams's famed "structure of feeling," argues Simpson, which relies on "lived and felt" experience as bulwark against the dangers of abstraction. The pull between particular and general in Williams's work rests on his own privileging of voice as that which has been lost in history and to which criticism should attend—and the appeal of voice, Simpson argues, is that it goes against "modernity," or "*writing*; that is, the conditions of dispersal and complexity, temporal and spatial, within which we live so much of our lives" (24-5). Without using either "cosmopolitanism" or "pastoral," Simpson's reading nonetheless locates tensions between individual-author and audience-community, and the particular and general claims of scholarship within Williams's distinctive *style* rather than his choice of archives or objects. See David Simpson, "Raymond Williams: Feeling for Structures, Voicing 'History'" *Social Text,* No. 30 (1992), pp. 9-26.

The pastoralist/critic narrates histories—personal, literary, and general—that he himself is bound up with, even as he sorts, sifts, and reveals general truths from local instances: in *The Country and the City,* it's not the specific village or backstreet nostalgically remembered from childhood that matters but their larger significance within economic-historical structures. Leo Marx's capsule autobiography in the afterword to the reissue of *The Machine and the Garden* (2000) frames the book as a sort of intellectual bildungsroman, a critical work that didn't just read the nineteenth-century American past but responded to massive changes in technology and the state that occurred over the course of its genesis (1949-1964) as well as to changes in the discipline of English studies itself. The volume's intellectual style, Marx asserted, reflected new forms of alliance between leftist political thought and academic endeavor, in particular the opening of literary critical methods to the historical archive: reading non or para-literary works as instances of "pastoral" meant constructing an "iconographic" approach, in which "free-floating literary symbols and myths" were enlisted to explain historical change.

More to the point, overly-universalizing assumptions about historical experience—generalizing "typical" Americans as white, male, and educated—failed to predict the "ideological swerve of the 1970s," that is the study of "*difference.*"[9] *The Machine in the Garden,* at least retrospectively, is its own form of "simple" pastoral, an example of an outdated form of reading and literary critical interpretation which failed, unlike its "complex" cousin to acknowledge "the reality of history."[10] Regardless, working with pastoral as an instance of

[9] Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden*, 381, 382, emphasis in the original.
[10] Ibid., 363. See also Lawrence Buell's reappraisal of the "myth and symbol" school of literary criticism which Marx's book was identified with in his commentary to Henry Nash Smith in *Locating American Studies,* edited Lucy Maddox (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999): "Since 1970, the myth-symbol approach has been taken to task both for methodological naiveté and for its consensualist ideology…[the] 'hermeneutics of suspicion'… have made it impossible for most scholars to conceive of American myth except in terms of its ideological character—so impossible, indeed, that one is tempted to suspect that myth scholarship will make a comeback someday" (14).

culture dramatized the divide between art and politics that would preoccupy English professors under the sign of cultural studies for decades to come. Marx ended *The Machine in the Garden* by arguing that pastoral, such as it was, no longer provided symbols adequate to contemporary life; "the machine's sudden entrance into the garden presents a problem that ultimately belongs not to art but to politics."[11]

For both writers, pastoral indexed wider culture and more general history even as it softened or hedged their own critical distance from the cultural objects and archives they interrogated, and the communities they spoke to and about. Pastoral as a national project can in turn be understood as bound up with midcentury disciplinary communities such as American studies or scholarly collectives like the Birmingham group; pastoral trickled down through critical literature even as it shaped the methods of its most ardent critics. It was an object requiring certain operations, a point driven home by the number of contemporary critics who cited some version of Leo Marx's title in their reviews of Richard Brautigan, the subject of my next chapter. There I track, in part, how Marx's account of pastoral served as handy heuristic for critics encountering a specific work wearing its pastoral nationality on its sleeve—Brautigan's *Trout Fishing in America.* But I also attempt to delaminate Brautigan's pastorals by recovering the social worlds in which they circulated and made particular kinds of sense to various reading communities. Modes guide the reception of literary works but they also shape works' horizons and pragmatic particulars as objects of interpretation and use.

[11] Marx, *The Machine in the Garden,* 365.

Trash Pastorals

Richard Brautigan reached that apogee of midcentury celebrity, a profile in *Life* magazine in August 1970, when he was introduced to mainstream America as the "Gentle Poet of the Young." It had been three years since the publication of his best-selling *Trout Fishing in America*, and Brautigan's face "would be instantly recognized on almost any college campus from Berkeley to Old Town to Cambridge," *Life*'s John Stickney noted, "and at a good many high schools too."[1] Yet the article begins with a story from before Brautigan "was very well known even as an underground writer," back when he was broke and living in San Francisco, trying to see a movie with some friends. They didn't have enough money for tickets. "What to do?" Stickney asked. "'We gathered up some of my old poetry books which were lying around moldering away,' Brautigan recalled, 'and we hawked them on the streets of San Francisco. Poetry for sale!'"[2] A few lines later, we catch another glimpse of Brautigan from these lean years "handing out poetry broadsides gratis to Haight-Ashbury passersby and publishing little folios, free for the taking in community shops."[3]

A certain set of bona fides are suggested here. Brautigan's was not overnight success, the mass audience he ended up with not quite the Bay Area readership whose approval he initially sought. These disparate contexts and communities remained vague for *Life*'s readers. Instead, the focus quickly shifted to Brautigan's new-found fame. His "quiet philosophy is in tune with everybody's concern about man and his environment," Stickney alleged, "he believes it is possible for the two to get along amicably."[4] Indeed, Brautigan's Aquarian ecology pounded a

[1] John Stickney, "Gentle Poet of the Young," *Life,* August 14, 1970, 49.
[2] Ibid., 49.
[3] Ibid., 49.
[4] Ibid., 50.

familiar pastoral chord: his books evinced "an intense identification with nature and all living things. Thoughtful hedonism, it might be called."[5] While Stickney's profile began with Brautigan putting back into circulation his remaindered books, thematic and intellectual recycling were also widely understood to characterize the youth culture of which Brautigan was the "gentle poet" and representative figure. In these same years, critics and scholars drew hard lines from works like Charles Reich's hugely popular *The Greening of America* (1970) to Transcendentalists such as Thoreau and to nineteenth century American intellectual and literary movements more generally; *Life* even followed Brautigan to Walden Pond.[6] As early as 1969, something broadly construed as "hippie romanticism" could be criticized for being "not the avant-garde of a new, but only the most recent manifestation of an old romantic tradition."[7] "A revolution of sensibility" in Lawrence Buell's estimation was underway, but it was a "revolution" in the sense of rotation, return, a literal re-cycling of attitudes and ideas—the nostalgic gyrations of pastoral rather than the future-oriented trajectories of utopia.[8]

Whether politically radical or socially conservative, pastoral is often discovered within a thoroughly modern subject as either rebellious posturing against or "thoughtful hedonism" about

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[5] Ibid., 50. Stickney's comment uncannily echoes Renato Poggioli's description of pastoral as a performance of "enlightened hedonism"; speaking of pastoral economics, he notes that shepherds as well as fishermen, as in the Christian tradition, practice and praise poverty since poverty in the pastoral world is precisely that quest after innocence and longing Poggioli defines as foundational to the mode. Poverty is an ideal state only because in pastoral it is accompanied by a sense of completeness linked to dreams of self-sufficiency. Poverty isn't want but a state of not wanting. See Poggioli, *The Oaten Flute,* 8.

[6] See Lawrence Buell, *Literary Transcendentalism: Style and Vision in the American Renaissance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1973), 8.

[7] Herbert London, "American Romantics; Old and New," *The Colorado Quarterly,* Summer 1969, 5.

[8] See Buell, *Literary Transcendentalism,* 8. Nostalgia has been closely identified with pastoral since at least Friedrich Schiller. Pastoral poets, Schiller claimed in 1796, "place *behind* us the goal *toward* which they are supposed to *lead* us. Thus they can inspire in us only the sad feeling of loss, not the joyous feeling of hope."[8] Compare this to Herbert London in 1969: "The romantic, dissatisfied with the present, usually glories in the past and awaits the future as a golden age. That golden age never seems to come but the romantic still hopes" (20). Friedrich Schiller, "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry," translated by Daniel O. Dahlstrom in *Essays,* edited by Walter Hinderer and Daniel O. Dahlstrom, (New York: Continuum, 1993), 229. Emphasis in original.

the very forms, systems, and objects that have created her. Thus "Romantic or pastoralist" desires to "shape industrial development to accord with the ideals of the republican political tradition" or otherwise develop "social and technological alternatives to the dominant patterns of industrialism," are frequently narrated as individual *responses* to modernity, rather than a series of practices or set of objects and documents that circulate in unforeseeable ways.[9] The tendency of Brautigan's contemporaries to understand "hippie romanticism" as continuous with nineteenth-century predecessors likewise ignored that the era's most popular pastorals did not simply appear as durable examples of mighty intellectual continuity. Instead, if you attend to them closely, such works evince a humbler, marginal, and impoverished relation to pastoral tropes and precedents that is indicative of how the mode circulated—rather than materialized ready-made—in the 1960s.

I argue that "trash pastorals" are best understood as the conjunction of antique literary modes and physical artifacts, the recycling of threadbare concepts *and* the recirculation of moldering books. *Trout Fishing in America,* for instance, while published in 1967 and quickly adopted as the talisman of youth culture, was written almost a decade earlier and had, like Brautigan, a series of subterranean years on the streets of San Francisco. The book intersected with numerous writing communities, reading publics, compositional practices and scenarios: it was edited by the Bay Area's most notorious poet, Jack Spicer, in a North Beach bar; performed in shabby community centers; excerpted in little magazines. By 1970, the specificity of this

[9] Langdon Winner, *The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of Higher Technology* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1986), 44,63. Winner's account of the New Left's collapse into the "Appropriate Technology" movement and eventually the New Age is particularly interesting as an example of historiography's uncritical approach to pastoral as at once located "in" specific historical moments and freely floating as a kind of meta-discourse; Winner invokes pastoral as one name for a vital if discontinuous tradition of republicanism and techno-critique as well as the counterculture's withdraw from political organizing to peruse Whole Earth catalogue on their homesteads.

world, its characters and petty dramas as well as its poetics, had largely been erased. By returning to the sites and scenes of its initial circulation, I argue that we can better understand how pastoral worked *for* writers and readers as they grappled with human and material excess—abundance gone bad, goods turned into garbage or waste.

In this chapter, trash also always abuts literature's material life. For example, Brautigan's poem "All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace," was published in four different formats over a series of months: broadside, pamphlet, free newspaper, book, 1967-68. The poem at first seems nothing more or less than an "amicable portrait" of man and his environment, a pastoral vision of computers and deer, as though Norbert Weiner had rewritten Marvell's "Garden." But focusing on the seamless extension or recycling of pastoral tropes ignores the work's scruffier and more sociable origins, the meanings generated through its adjacency to other texts in disparate publication formats and its reception by readers as hit poem "in tune" with their times, something to be shared or saved, but also, as "free literature," potentially thrown away or used to some other end—to wrap a gift, stuff a box, kill a bug. A "trash pastoral" is another instance of the dual sense of mode I've tracked throughout this dissertation, as the uneven transmission of generic elements, ideas, moods *and* those contingencies of enunciation—the social routines, physical forms, printed matter—necessary to create any situation of address.

Pastoral's material dimensions tend to be obscured by its "messages" but in the 1960s pastoral traveled as both theme and thing. Pastoral might be a poem echoing with ancient conventions and literary forebears, as well as the free weekly that printed it, tumbling down the street. Venerable products of "hippie romanticism" or countercultural pastoral were responsive to specific sites, scenes, communities before or alongside their mass market appeal. In this chapter I

attend to what Peter Middleton calls the "long biography" of literary works.[10] Poems and novels that have seemed merely representative of passé pastoralism with roots in romantic appeals to the authenticity of nature turn out to have slightly weirder back-stories, and they open onto more incongruous temporalities and distances than simply the "most recent manifestation" of this or that tradition. A trash pastoral has an irreducible material life, and I read Brautigan's works as they traverse the distance from free lit to bestseller to critical cast-off. "Such distances," Middleton remarks, "are not extrinsic to the meaning and significance of poems. The text is altered by the wear and tear, repairs and remodeling it undergoes as it is read over time by many different readers… This history of responses, uses, memories, expectations, and other actions (much more heterogeneous than literary criticism usually acknowledges)" comprises a work's "unity."[11]

Reading these layers of reception and remodeling, treating a poem as both theme and thing, requires bracketing habitual critical procedures in order to avow the "force of questions that have been too readily foreclosed by more familiar fetishizations."[12] Excavating the long biographies of works denigrated as "hippie romanticism" is doubly rewarding then: attending to the wear and tear that consigned Brautigan and his ilk to the critical dust-heap also highlights the historical fetishization of the pastoral mode as apolitical, nostalgic, useless—a literary category past its expiration date. Modes have a shelf-life; indeed, they become obsolete "when the values

[10] See Peter Middleton, "The Long Biography of the Poem" in *Distant Reading* (Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 2005). Drawing on work by anthropologists such as Arjun Appadurai, who argue for the importance of analyzing commodities as their status changes over time, Middleton argues that, "Poetry makes more visible than any other form of text the implications of the simultaneous existence of many copies within the culture, so the many different histories of reading are twined together in complexities and simultaneities largely beyond our ability to record them" (4).
[11] Middleton, *Distant Reading,* 3.
[12] Bill Brown, "Thing Theory," *Critical Inquiry,* Vol. 28, No. 1 (Autumn, 2001), 7. Jane Bennett also uses this quote in *Vibrant Matter,* 19.

they enshrine, or the emotions they evoke, grow alien."[13] In this sense, an "enshrinement" moment might also highlight, paradoxically, what's strangest about modes and their attendant moods. As pastoral slid away from the complex of ideas and affects it had once been identified with—in particular the "concept of nature as one of the preeminently formative influences" on American experience that emerged in the 1950s and '60s—certain aspects dimmed, receded, or disappeared.[14] Increasingly (mis)aligned with eco-genres and environmental writing, pastoral's ideologically motivated depictions of nature became its only "nature." Critics moved from considering its mythic resonances, speculative capacities, unpredictable vectors of desire or critique to castigating its careless or underdeveloped depictions of the natural world. Brautigan's pastorals, written at the dawn of environmentalism and on the eve of what the dissertation has called "midcentury pastoral," provide a window into this process of modal change.

Recognizing or denigrating a work as pastoral typically relies on just those fictions of unity pointed out by Middleton—that modes flow uninterrupted through literary space and arrive once and for all time in stable, static forms we call books. By contrast, the following sections will observe Brautigan's most representative pastorals from different angles: as texts that have accrued and shed interpretative baggage and as objects that demonstrate something unique about trash, junk, garbage at the moment when these became fixtures in actual marketplaces and particularly pungent entrants into the marketplace of ideas.[15] Tackling both dimensions—trash

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[13] Fowler, *Kinds of Literature,* 111.
[14] Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture*, 34.
[15] See Susan Strasser, *Waste and Want: A Social History of Trash* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999). In the 1950s an obsession with abundance tied to capitalism as superior to communism—waste/abundance became coded as democratic, Strasser argues, as "the idea that the act of disposing signified liberation became, in the language of the Cold War, a distinction between the freedom of capitalism and the bondage of communism… Buying became a surrogate for liberty, and freedom of choice a matter of purchasing" (269-70). After the success of Vance Packard's, *The Waste Makers* (1960), trash took on new meanings, particularly for the counterculture.

pastoral might be at once literal trash *and* about trash—I argue that a materialist approach to pastoral can recast controversies around the mode's force of critique. Each angle should demonstrate how trash and pastoral overlapped and intersected in and around Brautigan's most famous works and those intersections in turn will shed light onto pastoral's obsolescence as in the 1970s and after.

Free Lit

Beyond Brautigan's biography or commonplaces about countercultural themes, the *Life* profile intimated an aesthetic economy in the 1960s San Francisco scene, where trash and art conjoined in cast-off volumes of poetry, "little folios," and broadsides given away but also likely *thrown* away, as free stuff often is. The "underground" group most associated with this economy, and with Richard Brautigan, was the Diggers.[16] Reading the material strata of the Diggers destabilizes assumptions about pastoral's legacy in the 1960s counterculture; that is, Digger paraphernalia underscores pastoral's social substance, the way it framed habits of mind as well as patterns of behavior. Rather than recycling nineteenth-century Transcendentalism, the Diggers' ethos was a throwback to much older episodes of pastoral politics: the group took inspiration from the seventeenth-century proto-socialist association of English farmers who demanded free rights to commons then undergoing the process of enclosure. The Diggers of the 1960s set up a variety of services and situations: free stores that eschewed prices, free clinics and

[16] Before he was anointed as representative of all hippie youth, Richard Brautigan was a key player in Digger activities on the ground. In 1968, Lew Welch called him "one of the oldest members of the Hippie Thing—the Haight Ashbury side of it all. He is a Digger. One of the people who fed the mob on that now sad street. Many of his poems were free poems, poems printed by the Communications Co. and given away, free. On the street." Lew Welch, "Brautigan's Moth Balanced on an Apple," *San Francisco Chronicle,* 15 Dec. 1968, *This World,* pp. 53, 59. http://www.brautigan.net/trout.html Accessed 10/20/2018.

restaurants that forewent profit motive. Just as their English predecessors had been "hip to property," the 1960s Diggers understood that self-interest, profit motive, and the penetration of capitalist values into everyday life deformed and deranged personal relationships and human capacities. "Diggers assume free stores to liberate human nature," began the *Digger Papers* of 1968. "Let theories of economics follow social facts," the manifesto continued. "Once a free store is assumed, human wanting and giving, needing and taking become wide open to improvisations."[17]

Brautigan's poem "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" was both anthem and exemplar of the Digger creed. It first appeared as a free broadside in 1967 from the Communication Company (ComCo), the Diggers' publishing collective. In addition to the broadside, ComCo published a pamphlet of Brautigan's poems titled *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace,* also in 1967. This pamphlet included a copyleft statement (which retains copyright but allows works to be reprinted and distributed).[18] In 1968, the poem appeared in the pages of the *Digger Papers,* a free newspaper of "anonymously" authored content ranging

[17] *The Digger Papers* (San Francisco: Free City, 1968), 3. "Improvisations" highlight the Diggers' origins in the San Francisco Mime Troupe, an alternative theater group founded by Ronald Guy Davis in 1959 and known for staging "free" shows, frequently addressing political topics and themes, in public spaces like local parks; the Diggers, the Mime Troupe's "most memorable heir… expanded the concept of performance by taking theater beyond the parks and directly into the streets of the Haight." Both the SF Mime Troupe and the Diggers broadened the kinds of activities deemed lawful in public spaces, as well as secured freedom of speech rights that were instrumental to New Left political activities. See Susan Vaneta Mason, *The San Francisco Mime Troupe Reader* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), *eBook Academic Collection (EBSCOhost),* EBSCOhost (accessed September 10, 2018). See also Claudia Orenstein, "Revolution Should Be Fun" in *Restaging the Sixties: Radical Theaters and Their Legacies,* edited by James M. Harding and Cindy Rosenthal (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), p. 175-195. Orenstein contends that the Troupe's most infamous performance of 16th century commedia dell'arte play *Il Candelaio,* which resulted in arrests, "brought home the fact that outdoor, public venues were vital sites for political discourse, and that using them in this way was in itself a subversive act" (176).

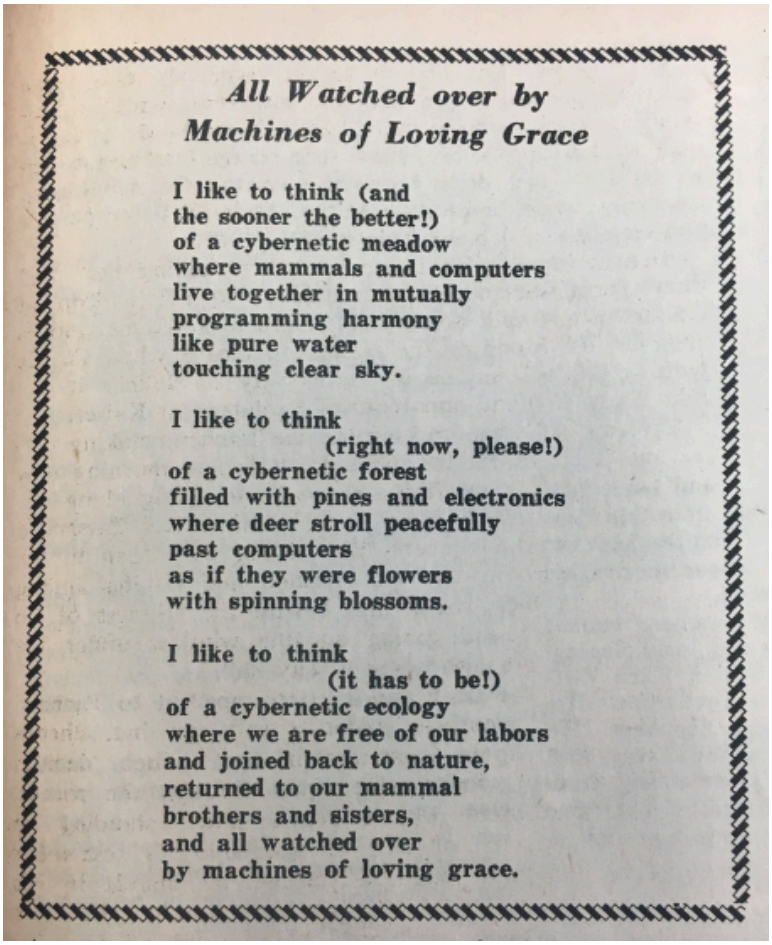
[18] See ComCo founder Claude Hayward's remembrance of Brautigan, "Glimpses of Richard Brautigan in the Haight-Ashbury" in *Richard Brautigan: Essays on the Writing and the Life,* Edited by John F. Barber (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2007), 116.

from manifestos to adverts for the Black Panthers. When it was finally published in Brautigan's 1968 collection *The Pill versus the Spring Hill Mine Disaster,* the poem's anodyne gospel had spread far and wide. At first glance, the poem seems of a piece with "hippie romanticism." Yet it has a richly recursive biography worth tending to, a simultaneous existence as pastoral theme and pastoral thing, social fact and literary artifact.

In *The Digger Papers* "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" nestles within a two-page narrative of home birth called "The Birth of Digger Batman." Richard Brautigan appears in the narrative briefly, directly opposite his (anonymous) poem: "Rap rap on the door and I go to open it to Richard Brautigan… Out the door he goes."[19] Brautigan, alas, missed the birth and ceremonial inscription of a poem on the kitchen floor with the umbilical cord. But his own poem, mirroring and enclosed by the blessed event, likewise imagines an alternative world of harmony, leisure, and pastoral dreamtime "birthed" from deepening attachments and entanglements between humans, nature, and technology. Or does it?

On the one hand, "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" operates via pastoral's most obvious codes, those languages, tropes, and underlying fantasies that structure pastoral conventions—in other words, the "myth" that, in the 1950s and '60s, a critic like Leo Marx primed himself to read, crack, or break. On the other hand, the code-breaker or myth-reader doesn't have much to do since the fantasies of pastoral are "just there":

[19] "The Birth of Digger Batman," *The Digger Papers* (San Francisco: Free City, 1968), 10.



All Watched over by
Machines of Loving Grace

I like to think (and
the sooner the better!)
of a cybernetic meadow
where mammals and computers
live together in mutually
programming harmony
like pure water
touching clear sky.

I like to think
(right now, please!)
of a cybernetic forest
filled with pines and electronics
where deer stroll peacefully
past computers
as if they were flowers
with spinning blossoms.

I like to think
(it has to be!)
of a cybernetic ecology
where we are free of our labors
and joined back to nature,
returned to our mammal
brothers and sisters,
and all watched over
by machines of loving grace.

Figure 8, from *The Digger Papers,* p. 11

Comco founder Claude Hayward and others admired this poem because it "fit right in with our optimism over the promise of the computer."[20] As Barnard Turner has observed, "Brautigan's work has so often been defined by its readership the it has been taken as integrally related to it; once the counter-culture moves on, the work then will be mausoleumized."[21] Turner echoes Alastair Fowler's insight that modes can become too tightly identified with obsolete values; they ossify cultural moods and are ossified in turn. In this case, the poem's description of a coming harmony between "pines and electronics" rings hollowly, as hopelessly or dangerously naïve, to

[20] Hayward, "Glimpses of Richard Brautigan," 118.
[21] Barnard Turner, "Richard Brautigan, *Flânerie,* and Japan: Some International Perspectives on His Work," *Richard Brautigan: Essays on the Writings and Life*, 237.

wiser, older ears. And by the 1990s, Hayward looked askance if not at this poem then at his own belief in "its magical references to benign machines keeping order… Silly dreamers," he called the Diggers.[22]

"All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace" may enshrine a familiar dream but it also exposes pastoral's dreamtime to new technologies, which is to say the poem captures the moment when pastoral codes could be analogized to computer codes, each performing rote operations. The poem's three stanzas are iterations that proceed with algorithmic logic: each begins "I like to think," each is immediately interrupted by a parenthesis, each joins "cybernetic" to some "natural" analogue—meadow, forest, ecology—in the third line. The outputs are similes of groovy equilibrium, where mammals and computers are programmed together "like pure water / touching clear sky," and computers sprout numerous as plants. It may seem anachronistic that Brautigan here likens flower to computers since mainframes filled entire rooms and were far different from the miniaturized "devices" so common to us now. However, by 1967, thanks to developments including the integrated circuit, the era of the "minicomputer" was dawning. Much smaller than mainframes, these minicomputers were "designed for direct, personal interaction with the programmer."[23] Brautigan, the 1967 poet-in-residence at CalTech,[24] underscores how computers were operable by human agents, rather than environments to which human operators

[22] Hayward, "Glimpses of Richard Brautigan," 118: "The poem caught me with its magical references to benign machines keeping order. The potential of the cybernetic revolution was beginning to dawn on some of the heavy Digger thinkers… Silly dreamers; we should have realized that of course the machines would be enslaved by the owners to create wealth rather than liberate workers."

[23] The PDP-8, released by Digital Equipment Corporation in 1965 and the most popular minicomputer by far, "occupied only half of a standard electronics equipment cabinet." See "Rise and Fall of Minicomputers," https://ethw.org/Rise_and_Fall_of_Minicomputers.

[24] See his poem, "At the California Institute of Technology" which begins, "I don't care how God-damn smart / these guys are: I'm bored," *The Pill versus the Springhill Mine Disaster* (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1968), 23.

were subject. As a new sort of pastoral "thing," a computer could be an instrument of human good.

And yet the final lines reproduce the poem's title verbatim, as if this dream of techno-paradise were on a loop—endlessly repeatable and repeated. Computers and electronics then suggest another iteration of the pastoral "program," the familiar script that Leo Marx would instantly recognize as "simple pastoral": an outsize belief in the powers of technology to remake nature into a "middle landscape" of abundance and (human) comfort. Performing one set of cultural truisms or tropes—about the coming utopia of leisure that machines would in part bring about—"All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace" simultaneously suggests that such dreams *are* fantasies. The poem's au courant language name-drops emergent discourses like cybernetics and ecology but the effect is to point out that these may simply be the newest dream of all: cybernetic ecology appears in the poem as another fanciful term, like "cybernetic meadow."[25]

Far from silly, "cybernetic ecology" was, for much of the latter part of the twentieth century, more or less just ecology: "an ecosystem consists of multiple interconnected parts, which act on one another," Barry Commoner wrote in his best-selling work on the "environmental crisis," *The Closing Circle* (1971). "Our ability to picture the behavior of such systems has been helped considerably by the development, even more recent than ecology, of the

[25] By the late 1960s conservation movements and organizations were undergoing dramatic change as the modern environmental movement was born and older conservation movements gave way to holistic systems thinking, practices, and, increasingly, policy measures that went under the sign of and took inspiration from the new science of ecology. Cybernetics thinking and terminology informed the new ecology in myriad ways, from providing vocabularies commensurate to the complexity of living systems, to forging new epistemologies that cut against centuries of western science's specialized study of the natural world as discrete disciplinary objects.

science of cybernetics."[26] If cybernetics and ecology were synonymous for Commoner, Brautigan's poem disarticulates the terms into oxymoronic relation. Like the image of a "cybernetic forest," which remains quixotic rather than descriptive, "cybernetic ecology" lodges in the poem as potential nonsense rather than useful science.

One could argue that "All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace" isn't really about cybernetics or ecology but the fantasies such words inspired. But my point here is that we can't determine whether the poem condones or condemns the coming techno-idyll without thinking about its biography—where it was printed, who it was read by, what it was situated alongside. Within the *Digger Papers* the poem does seem to capitulate to the collective dream of "benign machines keeping order." Take the paper's opening manifesto, "Trip Without a Ticket," a diagnostic screed on the perversions of capitalism that uncannily echoed contemporary thinking on the specific freedoms promised by computers: "*Give up jobs so computers can do them!"* the manifesto cries.[27] Surrounded by Digger hyperbole, it's easy to see how "All Watched Over" could be read as just another '60s dream. Certainly the sincerity of the birth narrative muffles the irony of Brautigan's poem, bathing it in celebrations of alternative community, non-western medicine, nonmodern rituals, and the like. But the coincidence of

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[26] Barry Commoner, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man, and Technology* (New York: Knopf, 1971), 33. Only in recent years have eco-critics understood their own biases in regarding nature as a basically stable self-organizing system, the "balance" of which might be preserved through careful monitoring of human activity and intervention. Such biases, argues Greg Garrard, have to do with pastoral's longstanding grip on how the good life is figured and landscaped.

[27] *The Digger Papers*, 4. Conventional and even unconventional wisdom coming from groups like the Diggers predicted an imminent era when computers and machines would free up enormous amounts of leisure time for ordinary folks. Various institutions—labor, government commissions, university-funded bodies—vied for influence over the conceptual space of leisure. A coming "leisure problem" was diagnosed in the *Congressional Quarterly*'s 1969 *Editorial Research Reports on Cultural Life and Leisure in America,* where new forms of automation leading to changes in the "work-leisure pattern" preoccupied an array of specialists and government bodies. See *Editorial Research Reports on Cultural Life and Leisure in America* (Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1969).

Brautigan's arrival in the birth narrative on the page opposite also grounds the high-flying utopian rhetoric in a moment of community politics, the complicated negotiations people make around belonging and the ways in which they get along or don't, feel welcomed or not.[28] In turn, this moment seeps back across the page into Brautigan's poem, staining this prototypical 60s pastoral with counter-counter-cultural hues.

Brautigan, as I've noted, "appears" on both pages, as author of the poem and visitor to the homebirth. In the narrative, Brautigan arrives only to almost immediately disappear. "Out the door he goes." Rather than "in time" (or "tune") with the celebration, Richard is early, outside, even ancillary to what's about to occur. He's nowhere to be found at the birth of Digger Batman, which is "watched" by a circle of Diggers: "Beneath the belly skin you can see the baby making its movements. Around Joan about a dozen Diggers and Digger ladies looking like all the accumulated faces of the Universe, the Divines of Ever pouring from each eye."[29] Compare this scene and sense of "watching" to Brautigan's poem, on the opposite page, in which the meadows, computers, deer are, after all, surveilled actors, i.e. "watched over" by the era's dominant metaphor for state violence, environmental degradation, and various institutional

[28] Also at issue here is the Diggers' own "arrival" in the Haight-Ashbury "urban village" at a moment of intense demographic change; according to Christopher Agee Lowen, the neighborhood swung from 97 percent white in 1950 to 33 percent black, 14 percent Latino, and 10 percent Asian-American by 1970. Shopping and local commerce as well as community organizations contributed to "a village environment appreciated by long-time residents and newcomers alike" (215). However, after the 1968 election of Mayor Joseph Alioto, rifts between the hippies and the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Committee (HANC) developed over approaches to policing: "HANC continued to plead for police-resident cooperation. In doing so they diverged from those hippies who insisted that neighborhood residents could provide their own law enforcement. For instance, hippies connected with the Church of the Good Earth—a collective following in the tradition of the by-then defunct Diggers—took it upon themselves to intimidate speed dealers out of the neighborhood. HANC's leadership, by contrast, saw police as necessary for neighborhood safety" (226). See Lowen, *The Streets of San Francisco: Policing and the Creation of a Cosmopolitan Liberal Politics 1950-1972* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).
[29] *Digger Papers,* 11.

oppressions. Brautigan's humans and mammals are *prisoners* well as patrons of the poem's pastoral techno-fantasy.

Reading "All Watched Over" in this context reveals the rhetorical contradictions and experiential contingencies the poem uncovers in the Diggers' pastoral positions, even as the poem seemed to freely espouse, to its various readers, the very conditions it called into question. And here its history as "free literature" entails a further contradiction. "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" was eventually copyrighted, printed, and sold as the opening poem to Brautigan's collection *The Pill versus the Spring Hill Mine Disaster* (1968). In this new context, the poem reads differently yet again. As with that book's title poem, which yokes together reproductive technologies and extractive capitalism—i.e. two modes of altering "nature"—in a joke of questionable taste,[30] "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" now might seem to skewer the fantasy that "harmony," presented here as anachronistic pastoral dreamtime, will come from deeper entanglements between humans, nature, and technology.[31] I mean, doesn't it?

While Brautigan's poem doesn't change in its various reprintings, a kind of shifting or sliding quality results anytime a literary object is reframed or recontextualized. Now as the opening poem to a book of poetry—rather than a broadside, pamphlet, or newspaper item—we might see more clearly how Brautigan's poem really *is* like Marvell's "Garden," staging pastoral retreat as meditation or withdraw into an imaginative space of personal freedom. But even as

[30] "When you take your pill / it's like a mine disaster. / I think of all the people / lost inside of you." *The Pill versus the Springhill Mine Disaster* (1968), 100.

[31] This progressive ideology has deep roots in Enlightenment rationality, and its nineteenth century American archive had recently been excavated by Leo Marx in *The Machine in the Garden* (1964); a counterforce to an overriding belief in the ameliorative powers of science and technology existed in Romantic appeals to the authenticity of nature which were, at the moment Brautigan was writing, finding new acolytes in 1960s counterculture.

"cybernetic ecology" underwrites the techno-fantasy—the "I like to think"—of mutuality and balance between human, animal, vegetal, and technological registers and artifacts, the meditating mind is interrupted by recurring parenthetical exclamations: "(and/the sooner the better!)" shouts one; "(right now, please!)" demands the next; "(it has to be!)" intones the third. While "outside" the poem's scenography, these voices are made internal to it by the nestling, nested logics of parenthetical address. Ancillary to the mind thinking, but also the stuff of the dream itself, these interjections supply the poem with new ideological flavors by invoking an alternate and intrusive pace, animating a temporality diametrically opposed to pastoral leisure—one of supply and demand, anxiety, need, and determinism. Pastoral exists *because* of the voiced demands of work; it's mental leisure and "free" time are, as Theodor Adorno was also noticing, shackled to their contrary, to a growing unfreedom that constituted not just capitalism's division of labor but the encroachment of the culture industries which dictated and proscribed social roles, relations of production, aesthetic values, patterns of thought and ideological habits, the whole she-bang.[32]

So Brautigan's poem simultaneously held, and holds, many "messages." It celebrates pastoral harmony and remains skeptical of pastoral's vision. Pastoral "freedom," literalized by the work's initial circulation as free lit, wars with a nagging suspicion that pastoral leisure and free time are impossible (and the work didn't remain free—it was bundled into a book and later into the triple-decker edition of *Trout, The Pill,* and *In Watermelon Sugar,* a volume that made

[32] Theodor Adorno, *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 167-175. Adorno argued people no longer knew what to do with their time because they had been "deprived of it beforehand." Given a proscribed set of "hobbies" by specialized industries that reinscribed and reaffirmed the divisions of labor on which capitalism runs, free time was merely a continuation of labor. And yet leisure might hold open a space of mental freedom, a kind of "reservation…Apparently the integration of consciousness and free time has not yet wholly succeeded" in part because the contradictions upon which society is founded prevent complete acceptance—indeed, they spark questions. Free time thus "appropriates people but, according to its own concept, cannot do so completely without overwhelming them." (175) Adorno gave a version of this radio address in German ("Freizeit; Zeit der Freiheit? Leben als Konterbande") for Deutschlandfunk, 25 May 1969.

Brautigan a whole lot of money). It counsels retreat to the mind and drops in on home birth. Far from flagging a wavering politics, the poem's indeterminacy suggests an intensification of what Michael McKeon describes as pastoral's "cultural mechanism," its test of "the dialectical fluidity of dichotomous opposites."[33] In Brautigan's poem those opposites reside both "in" the poem itself and outside it, in its various publishing contexts and amongst its reading publics and their interpretative procedures. "All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace" first circulated in a community of readers who would have connected Brautigan's poem to the "revolutionary pastorals" of Gary Snyder, Diane Di Prima, and other mainstays of the 1960s San Francisco scene.[34] Such revolutions should be understood as returns to older values *and* manifestations of contemporary publication rituals, compositional contexts. The poem's use of the pastoral mode can't be interpreted or understood without an account of how that mode actually functioned—where it appeared and how it did so, who to spoke to, how it was written as well as received.

The poem's biography takes another turn. The Diggers' interest in redefining social existence by overturning concepts like property had roots in English political pastorals, but the project also resonated with the distinctive poetics circulating in San Francisco at the time. The central figure here, poet Jack Spicer, predated the Diggers by at least two decades. Spicer believed that poets did not "write" poems and thus could not "own" them; for Spicer, the poem arrived to the poet as a transmission, an entry or emission from a tradition or community of

[33] Michael McKeon, "The Pastoral Revolution" in *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution,* edited by Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 272.

[34] I take "revolutionary pastoral" from Margaret Ronda who also reads pastoral as operative in works from the 1960s that detail "scenes of free life that involve an imaginative deletion of current realities in order to reveal simpler possibilities"; such works, Ronda argues "swerve" away from the present through a "process of pastoralization" where pastoral is an imaginative speculative project that opens up new horizons by imagining simpler, older forms of living in common (79, 80). See *Remainders: American Poetry at Nature's End*.

poetry and readers that preceded and post-dated the poet. "The poet steps outside of his own work so that the Real—an unknown, X, an alterity Spicer call the Outside—can flood in to occupy the poem."[35] Michael McClure remembered that, as much as he may have been a Digger poet, Brautigan "was a disciple to some extent, or mote [sic] aptly a *pupil,* of Jack Spicer… Richard was an aficionado of Gino and Carlo's Bar, Spicer's hangout."[36] Brautigan's friendship with Spicer, who pointedly eschewed copyright on most of his books, may have provided intellectual grounds for considering poems "free" already.

While the Diggers' free ethos had more practical and overtly political dimensions than Spicer's "Martians" transmitting poem-messages from the "Outside," Brautigan's most time-consuming project with the group also riffed on Spicerian experiments with the book. In *Please Plant This Book* (1968), Brautigan's poems were printed on seed packets and distributed for free. Readers participated in the contemporary vogue for organic and home gardens, but they were also reminded that the lifecycle of a book began in the natural world, that books were metaphorical "seeds"—of knowledge, learning, growth, whatever—as well as bound to actual seeds. The project's title perhaps contained a speculative challenge to reconceptualize all these terms—reading, planting, books, seeds—in light of one another, not simply as metaphors but as physical and material practices. *Please Plant This Book* was thus both a book and a "social fact" that, qua the Diggers, might lead to "theories of economics" that valued poems, plants, and people equally.

Like seeds, free poems might be accidentally or serendipitously "planted"—they might be broadcast, sown, strewn about, used in unintended ways and to unforeseen ends, recalling the

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[35] Peter Gizzi, afterword to *The House That Jack Built: The Collected Essays of Jack Spicer* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 174.
[36] Michael McClure, "Ninety-One Things About Richard Brautigan" in *Richard Brautigan: Essays on the Writings and Life,* edited by John F. Barber (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co, 2007), 163.

earlier Diggers' quote on "improvisations" as fundamental to their political goals. Digger activities, in conversation with free economics, likely also produced another kind of contingency, that inevitable product of free stuff—trash. "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" was printed and reprinted, distributed in multiple forms over the course of the year to roughly the same reading public, and we can only surmise what sorts of improvisations befell it. As a poem that "fit with" its own time, the poem also foregrounds the problem of timing. Pastoral is always subject to foreshortened or thickening temporalities, as communities of readers who share in a given era's "sensibility" coalesce and dissipate, and the object world to which pastoral does respond passes in and out of fashion while the more ancient object world it persists in representing accrues new auras or sheds old meanings. Which is to say pastoral is part and parcel of a material world characterized by disturbance and decay as well as durability and persistence. "All Watched Over" is both about the old dreams we ascribe to new things like computers and itself a "thing"—a gratis broadside or free folio—whose fate is to be discarded, crumpled up, thrown away.

This gives us a sense of how trash pastoral at once recycles worn tropes and participates in the concrete situations of literary modes. Pastoral was, has always been, a kind of cultural technology, where *technê* is related to the ancient arts of building or engineering, craft and making. Pastoral remodels or refurbishes social existence by reconfiguring current realities, re-conjuring older even ancient moral geographies and the primacy of art to social and political life. Brautigan's "machines of loving grace" in this sense rehabbed the military-industrial or societal "machine" metaphors dominating countercultural discourse in the 1960s, metaphors expressive of the "deeper ideological continuity between nineteenth-century pastoralism and the radical

Movement."[37] But machines were not just metaphors for Brautigan, and reading his uncanny object world, as I do in the next section, highlights the potential of pastoral's fantastic, anthropomorphic play. Meanwhile, putting his pastorals back into the world of things and practices—of literary journals, writing workshops, neighborhood events, local newspapers—in which they circulated and took meaning from discloses the mode's multiple and myriad inflection points in midcentury countercultural production.

Trout & Trash

Brautigan's celebrity rests on one bestselling and iconic work: *Trout Fishing in America.* Built of short chapters that loosely chronicle a family camping trip through the Pacific Northwest, the novel bears similarities to romance and quest narratives: episodic encounters, a search for the ever-elusive "Trout Fishing in America"—whether person, place, scenario, or something else altogether—structure the meandering progress of both narrator and plot. Widely reviewed in the years after its publication, the book, Barnard Turner has noted, can seem frozen, interred, stuck there. It's hard to describe without recourse to how it's *been* described: as a parable of "a lost American Eden" (TLS, 1970); an "autobiography of a societal drop-out" (Seib, 1971); a book-length contrast of "temporal and geographic America with a timeless America that is 'often only a place in the mind'" (Vanderwerken, 1974). But this critical micro-history is ultimately useful as a snapshot of how readers understand the stakes of literary modes and apply those conventions very widely. "In tune with everybody," Brautigan's book is a sort of seismograph registering groundswells in popular culture of its day and its own seismic event, sending and eliciting waves of modal information and transformation that reverberate still.

[37] Marx, *The Machine in the Garden,* 384.

In this section I argue that attending to *Trout's* anthropomorphic assemblages, rather than its mythic plots or signifying games, reveals how Brautigan's trash pastoral coordinates and organizes the possibilities of living with pollution, garbage, and waste rather than simply enshrines a pre-pollution or anti-pollution lost Eden. Pollution and pastoral have always operated dialectical fashion, opposing and informing one another in equal measure. Recall George Bowling, another fisherman, gazing at his favorite childhood pond turned "rubbish-dump" in Orwell's *Coming Up for Air* (256); or Sylvia Townsend Warner's private discovering his home fields covered in a "plague of caterpillars"—temporary hutments for troops in WWII (*Museum of Cheats,* 220). Attempted retreat from the "polluting" effects of urban complexity and the search for a simple life far from cityscapes and suburban sameness forms the core of the pastoral idyll, or as Peter Sloterdijk has put it, "the metaphysics of vacation," the right or privilege to "take one's leave from social ties and obligations."[38]

Such metaphysics had to be reorganized in a world penetrated by chemical pollution, the effects of which might be invisible or microscopic—poisoned cells not vistas emerged as primary preoccupations in the 1960s. And yet the era's blockbuster exposé of polluted nature, *Silent Spring* (1962), starts on an undeniably pastoral note. "There was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings," Rachel Carson began, highlighting how pastoral might figure the affective dimensions of new environmental threats—as catastrophes not just for ecosystems but the human communities, traditions, and lifeways that depend on them. [39] The book's scientific reportage meanwhile demonstrated the power of nonfiction to explore, explain, and reason out consequences of alliances between bio-

[38] Peter Sloterdijk, *The City and Its Negation: An Outline of Negative Political Theory* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2017), 134.
[39] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* ((New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 1.

tech and big business.[40] In this way, Carson's inaugural work of "eco-criticism" suggested pesticides kill more than organisms: pastoral's codes and conventions couldn't formulate a response commensurate to mounting threats against nature.

Literary critics tended to agree. By the 1970s, critiques of pastoral sharpened distinctions between various emerging eco-genres and traditional literary representations of nature.[41] Pastoral presupposed a vision in which human presence reigned supreme over natural fact. "From the outset, pastoral often used nature as a location or as a reflection of human predicaments," observes Greg Garrard, "rather than sustaining an interest in nature in and for itself."[42] These critiques reified a sense of pastoral as primarily pictorial, a literary device that consolidated cultural attitudes toward land and landscape or, as in Carson, generated pathos through nostalgic appeals. Carson's gambit indicates the extent to which pastoral by the 1960s was readily identifiable as kitsch, those "fictional feelings," as Adorno described it, "in which no one is actually participating."[43] The appearance of the pastoral parable at the opening of *Silent Spring* relies on what Dwight MacDonald described as kitsch's "Law of the Built-In Reaction": the "checkerboard of prosperous farms," autumn blazes of color, and barking foxes could be counted on to elicit readers' sympathetic reactions.[44] Likewise, an imperiled "town in the heart of

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[40] Lawrence Buell notes that pastoral imagery and ideology proliferated around Carson and the Love Canal disaster; "toxic discourse" often enlists "pastoral support," Buell argues. "It refocuses and democratizes the pastoral ideal: a nurturing space of clean air, clean water, and pleasant uncluttered surrounding that ought to be ones' by right" (38). Buell alludes to Leo Marx when he writes that toxic discourse narrates the "rude awakening from simple pastoral to complex" (38). See Buell, *Writing for an Endangered World. Literature, Culture, and Environment in the U.S. and Beyond* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[41] See Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture*, especially the chapter on "Pastoral Ideology" for a discussion of the critical history of pastoral in twentieth century American intellectual culture.

[42] Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism, Second Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 39.

[43] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* 239.

[44] Dwight MacDonald, "Midcult and Masscult," *Against the American Grain* (New York: Random House, 1962), 17.

America" didn't require—could not conceivably evoke—any response other than profound dismay.[45]

Pastoral kitsch provided affective and aesthetic ballast to environmental discourse from the mid-twentieth century on by stabilizing attempts to narrate a wild and poisonous new reality, offering a collective vision of the "environment" that excluded altogether the urban and those populations—primarily poor and of color—who lived there. To the extent that it offered an "image of what America's landscape ought to be," pastoral was "one of the faintly heard grace notes" of the modern environmental movement, a trill or dog whistle heard by preservationists, recreationists, and others aligned with what historian Samuel Hays called in 1972 the "limits to growth" or amenities focus of environmental foment.[46] These affectively normy whiffs of pastoral—as attachment to landscape for spiritual sustenance, the ineffable rightness of remote locales, a conservative and middle-class yearning for good old days in rural America—perfumed contemporary reactions to Brautigan's novel.

In fact, a process of modal ossification can be read through critical responses to *Trout Fishing in America.* Contemporary reviews highlight the extent to which pastoral's generative, active, and organizing elements were muffled by a sense that the world it had seemed germane to or capable of imagining was disappearing, "despoiled," as one reviewer put it, "by accumulating garbage."[47] Reviewers from the 1970s understood the novel as in some sense essentially pastoral.

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[45] This sense of kitsch, as "predigested art" (Clement Greenberg) or tainted catharsis (Adorno), transfixed midcentury cultural commentators who considered kitsch to be repackaged aesthetic experience, effortlessly consumable. But since the 1990s kitsch has become interesting again, precisely because it indexes what Greenberg himself described as a "social interval"—kitsch was the common reader's registration of dissatisfaction with formal culture and the social orders that support it. In this way, kitsch names a "particular subject-object relation" (Brown, 4) that constitutes "things."

[46] Philip Shabecoff, *A Fierce Green Fire: The American Environmental Movement* (Washington: Island Press, 2003), 7-8. See also Samuel P. Hays, "The Limits-to-Growth Issue: A Historical Perspective" in *Explorations in Environmental History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998).

[47] Tony Tanner, "The Dream and the Pen," *The Times Saturday Review.* July 25, 1970, p. 5.

It was built on "contrasts"; it seemed nostalgic for a "lost" America; it featured a character in "retreat"; it privileged fantasy, dream, and imagination as forms of escape; it was closely connected to the hippies of "Woodstock Nation." Here is John Clayton writing poignantly on his disenchantment with *Trout Fishing in America* in 1971:

> I want to live in the liberated mental space that Brautigan creates. I am aware, however, of the institutions that make it difficult for me to live there and that make it impossible for most people in the world. Brautigan's value is in giving us a pastoral vision which can water our spirits as we struggle—the happy knowledge that there is another place to breathe in; his danger, and the danger of the style of youth culture generally, is that we will forget the struggle.[48]

Pastoral is closely related to mental freedom, respite, withdraw, forgetfulness. Identifying Brautigan with his book, Clayton takes "pastoral" as that which modifies Richard Brautigan's vision on the one hand, and constructs a particular kind of picture on the other.

The indeterminancy of the word "vision"—both static image and mode of looking—suggests something of the subterranean struggles around definitions of pastoral in the 1960s; it also connects the various threads of this project. Blitz writers investigated pastoral vision with particular reference to geopolitical order and new technologies like aerial warfare and radio; in the late 1940s and '50s, Paul Goodman's pastoral vision was based around fluid gestalts, presupposing a perceptual openness to the world and its objects. Here, pastoral emerges as the opposite of institutions and "struggle," an immaterial, apolitical realm of the imagination purposefully "liberated" or "floating free" from realities of the present. The mode had

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[48] John Clayton, "Richard Brautigan: The Politics of Woodstock," *New American Review,* no. 11, edited by Theodore Solotaroff (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), pp. 56-68. http://www.brautigan.net/trout.html Accessed 10/23/2108.

crystallized or calcified, that is, into this adjectival sense as reviewers suggested "pastoral" was now simply synonymous with bygone times but also bygone nature. *Trout's* reception history is thus also a reception history of pastoral—a peek into conventional usages of the mode and its meanings at a moment of consolidation, when the "code" was exposed as never before. New forms of social belonging and consumer behavior as well as newly visible environmental threats stretched but also codified or reinforced those inherited notions or intuited senses of what pastoral could or could not accommodate in an ecologically perilous age. *Trout Fishing in America* thus offers an example of an "enshrinement" moment when pastoral is rendered strange because the values it once seamlessly communicated appear alien, off, bizarre.

In *Trout* this off-ness is partly connected to a natural environment debased by commodity culture—the Coleman lantern effect of the "camping craze" that swept America in the 1960s. In the book's chapters following the family camping trip, campers are insulated from the obdurate, irreducible otherness of "dead" nature by commodities, the names of which appear frequently: "The only thing that separated him from the dead body was a thin layer of 6 oz. water resistant and mildew resistant DRY FINISH green AMERIFLEX poplin"; "As much as anything else, the Coleman lantern is the symbol of the camping craze that is currently sweeping America."[49] The pastoral "camping craze"—a frantic effort to remember the self by "connecting" with nature—is no more than a "cloud of brilliant white dust. The dust looked like the light from a Coleman lantern."[50] Dirt masquerades as insight, but even insight's just another brand-name. In exploiting the inner tensions of pastoral—its reliance on dichotomous oppositions between nature and culture—*Trout* thus fits nicely into Terry Gifford's account of "anti-pastoral," an instantiation of the mode that exposes the distance between reality and artifice. These distances are not simply

[49] Richard Brautigan, *Trout Fishing in America* (San Francisco: Four Seasons Foundation, 1967), 75, 74.
[50] Ibid., 74.

reducible to economic realities but also to "cultural uses of the pastoral," such as the idealization of rural life or simplistic "worship" of the natural world.[51] Pastoral conventions coagulate into a substance or strata of literary experience that feeds or informs further instances of the mode.

In *Trout Fishing in America,* then, Brautigan seemed to excavate the hollow promise of pastoral in consumer and commodity-obsessed America, engineering a semiotic system that gleefully emptied and refilled language, willy-nilly swapping signifieds for "Trout Fishing in America," which at various moments in the book is a trans-historical presence, an activity, a hotel, a political program, a patron of the ballet, and of course the book itself. Brautigan, in other words, all too happily fulfilled Frederic Jameson's unforgiving periodization of the 1960s as the moment when the "autonomization of culture as a process" began.[52] With its glossy intertextual surfaces, endless appetite for self-reference, and eagerness to show off its status as commodity/fetish (the book begins with an ekphrastic chapter on its own cover), *Trout Fishing in America* was, indeed, a kind of book-monster with "a vast inner world in which little by little the images of things and their 'ideas' begin to be substituted for the things themselves."[53] Its adroitness at mythic-semiotic system-making was a good fit for pastoral critics in these decades as well: if Leo Marx argued that nineteenth-century machines in gardens legitimated the resuscitation of pastoral, Neil Schmitz found that *Trout*'s language—a machine made of puns, allusions, and similes—created the garden that the 1960s frolicked unwittingly in. "There is no escape from its [pastoral's] signifying presence, its multifarious appeal to that passion for

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[51] Terry Gifford, *Pastoral* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 128.
[52] Frederic Jameson, "Periodizing the 60s," *Social Text,* No. 9/10 (Spring-Summer, 1984), 198. For Jameson, structuralism inaugurated a fateful decoupling of language from its referents so that the Sign "rained" down back onto social reality, saturating the cultural sphere until "culture is coterminous with social life in general," making critique impossible since culture is everything and everywhere, including daily life itself, and art becomes merely a repository of gestures, styles, and tics severed from historical reality.
[53] Ibid., 198.

pastoral simplicity, the natural life in the woods."[54] Brautigan, argued Schmitz, ruthlessly ironized "the pastoral sensibility that reappeared in the sixties."[55]

Such readings of *Trout* focus on what little there is to the novel's plot, tracing movement between urban and rural spaces at the level of its "drop-out" main character, but also discovering a pastoral "design" in the actions of language: Schmitz reads a "tragic descent" as the book gradually codifies "trout fishing in American" into "Trout Fishing in America," shedding the particulars of "what exists in history" as it travels nostalgically backward into "mythic speech."[56] These commentators focus on *Trout*'s non-sequential narrative as a novel with a plot—albeit a language plot. However, the book's genre is not so easily parsed. It is also a poem with a mentor. Although Brautigan called it a "novel," *Trout*'s connection to Jack Spicer, don of the Bay Area poetry scene, means that "it is actually closer to a serial poem… Each chapter, like the sections of a serial poem, echoes and resonates against the others in innumerable and elaborate ways, yet the surface of the book is so plain and impersonal that it was read in the late 1960s simply as entertainment."[57] It's this opposition between the book's reception as "entertainment" and its roots in avant-garde poetics that provides both a new way to read *Trout* and a more nuanced understanding of pastoral as product of specific aesthetic practices and window into shifting orders of the object-world.

Like Spicer's *The Holy Grail,* which he composed in the months he was also editing Brautigan's work, "Trout Fishing in America" is a super-saturated entity that motivates action

[54] Neil Schmitz, "Richard Brautigan and the Modern Pastoral," *Modern Fiction Studies,* Spring 1973; 19, 1, 122.
[55] Ibid., 125.
[56] Schmitz, "Richard Brautigan and the Modern Pastoral," 125, 124.
[57] Edward Halsey Foster, *Jack Spicer*, Boise State University Western Writers Series No. 97 (Boise: Boise State University, 1991), 46.

and language play by remaining always just out of reach.[58] *Trout* is in contact with Spicer's poetics to a degree little noted by critics, in particular with Spicer's narrative collage technique that shared aesthetic oxygen with the "California funk aesthetic developing in the fifties in San Francisco and Los Angeles."[59] Assemblage practices underline the way found objects and texts structure and oppose aesthetic claims for value; they also mark a particular historical intersection between aesthetic and material culture. In the catalogue to the 1961 MoMA "Art of Assemblage" show, William Steitz highlighted the relationship between the artist-"assembler" and the "modern poet" since both use elements that "retain marks of their previous form and history. Like words," the junk, trash, and detritus used in assemblages "are associationally alive."[60]

Such associations might knit works together formally, but they also formed networks of relations external to the object and to prevailing regimes of art, since ordinary items used in assemblage violated aesthetic separateness and shifted authority from maker in complete control of his material to the chancy contingency of things themselves. Transferred back to poetry, these associations or reverberations further effaced the vatic presence of the poet. In Spicer's serial poems, Stan Persky notes, "The work was held together not by the familiar personality or author's voice of the standard poetry 'collection,' but by the correspondences of the subject matter."[61] So rather than fixating on pastoral figures and designs, reading the book as tale about a "societal drop-out" wandering in search of lost American Eden, we might consider how *Trout*

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[58]Jack Spicer allegedly told a friend, "'Brautigan's written a great poem!... I just got through reading the whole thing. It's called *Trout Fishing in America*'" (qtd. *Poet Be Like God*, 223). According to Spicer's biographers, Brautigan "brought it to Spicer page by page, and the two men revised it as though it were a long serial poem" (223). See Lewis Ellingham and Kevin Killian, *Poet Be Like God: Jack Spicer and the San Francisco Renaissance* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan, 1998).

[59] Gizzi, *The House that Jack Built,* 217.

[60] William Steitz, *The Art of Assemblage* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961), 17.

[61] Stan Persky, "'The candles will blow themselves out': The Richard Brautigan Saga," *Los Angeles Review of Books.* https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-candles-will-blow-themselves-out-the-richard-brautigan-saga/#! Accessed September 18, 2018

assembles correspondences and how such echoes and resonances draw our attention to *Trout*'s object-world, the matter of its subject matter.

Charting correspondences underlines how *Trout* generates energy from the most disabused pastoral elements. The chapter "On Paradise" works with pastoral tropes to depict "paradise" overrun with sheep shit. Sheep shit is a cheeky metonymy of pastoral's primary object, of course. Another example of Brautigan's "anti-pastoral." But in, "On Paradise," sheep and shit aren't just inversions of pastoral precepts, they are radically new substances. Sheep shit is an atmosphere or miasma, a smell emanating from the sun: "When the sun went behind a cloud, the smell of the sheep decreased, like standing on some old guy's hearing aid… That afternoon the sheep crossed the creek in front of my hook. They were so close that their shadows fell across my bait. I practically caught trout up their assholes."[62] A whole sensorium is created here, one that can hear smells and smell light. The effect isn't to deflate, as in "The Camping Craze" chapter, pastoral code or convention. Instead "On Paradise" creates a waste world that, with its trout-shitting sheep, is weirdly, grossly fecund.

Far from mourning its death in midcentury consumer America, I read *Trout Fishing in America* as peculiarly awake to pastoral's anthropomorphic potential. New theories on anthropomorphism in turn suggest how critical habits renew a pastoral commitment to the imagination's speculative, social role. *Trout* exuberantly satirizes historical and cultural misappropriations of nature by engulfing its protagonists in relentless extended similes that stretch, conflate, and collapse categories, proposing a mutable world in which anything at all might be animated with agency. Of Brautigan's haywire simile-making, Joseph Mills noted that "initially descriptive, his metaphors extend until they no longer have a referent to reality, but

[62] Brautigan, *Trout Fishing in America,* 50.

only to themselves."[63] Rather than create a sealed-off world of discourse, an air-tight semiotic system, Brautigan's anthropomorphizing subtly interrogates what Jane Bennett calls "the default grammar of agency, a grammar that assigns activity to people and passivity to things."[64] Such "default grammar" distinguishes Brautigan's materialist junk or trash pastoral from the "fictional feelings" of the mode as kitsch. Looking at how trout, as a material thing (rather than "Trout Fishing in America" as linguistic phrase) collects and distributes "associations" in the book makes this distinction clearer.

In the chapter, "Trout Death by Port Wine," "the Supreme Executioner" offers last rites (port wine) to a rainbow trout, effectively poisoning it. "It is against the natural order of death for a trout to die by having a drink of port wine," the chapter begins. "It is all right for a trout to have its neck broken by a fisherman and then to be tossed into the creel or for a trout to die from a fungus that crawls like sugar-colored ants over its body until the trout is in death's sugarbowl."[65] Enumerating the "natural order" of trout death, the chapter turns to evidence, culled from a list of (actual) fishing books, 1496-1960. The mock-serious opening ironizes the syntax of Law, where language names what is "natural," "right," and "reality"; the bibliography too seems like a joke about authority and discourse, canonicity and power, peppered with titles like *Till Fish Us Do Part* (1949) and *Old Flies in New Dresses* (1898). But, as William Stull has noted, the dates of the bibliography include "the full period of New World history."[66] Language and power, intoxicants and executions, take on new meanings given these dates span the conquest,

[63] Joseph Mills, "'Debauched by a Book': Benjamin Franklin, Richard Brautigan, and the 'Pleasure of the Text," *California History,* Vol. 79, No. 1 (Spring 2000), 15.
[64] Jane Bennett, *Vital Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 119.
[65] Brautigan, *Trout Fishing in America,* 29.
[66] William Stull, "Richard Brautigan's *Trout Fishing in America:* Notes of a Native Son," *American Literature,* Vol. 56, No. 1 (March, 1984), 70.

domination, and colonization of the North American "garden" and its indigenous peoples by Europeans.

The chapter's second half puts the Supreme Executioner and his fishing buddy in a canyon-cum-department store: "We ended up at a large pool that was formed by the creek crashing through the children's toy section."[67] Brautigan's similes highlight the deep imbrication between natural and cultural registers, habits, practices; thus a creek "crashes" through its canyon like an eager toddler. But there's an extra layer of discursive complexity to the description of trout death that pulls the book into relation with eco-critical works like *Silent Spring*. Brautigan writes of the trout: "Its body shook very rapidly like a telescope during an earthquake. The mouth was wide open and chattering almost as if it had human teeth."[68] Compare this to Carson's description of fish poisoned by DDT. She quotes from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Game extensively; their report is "perhaps a portent of things to come." In the report fish die terrible deaths from DDT poisoning, "they swam erratically, gasped at the surface, and exhibited tremors and spasms… Fish were often seen floating passively downstream in a weakened and moribund condition. In several instances, blind and dying trout were found floating passively downstream more than a week after spraying."[69]

The two accounts are eerily similar. Yet *Silent Spring*'s official jargon utilizes a grammar that literalizes human dominance over natural objects: dead fish are twice rendered "passive" as grammatical subjects and as visual phenomena. They are moribund, floating, indeterminate masses. Brautigan's trout, on the other hand, morphs into various unpredictable others, rendering the stakes of the chapter more clearly. The trout is comprised of multiple vocabularies, disparate

[67] Brautigan, *Trout Fishing in America,* 31.
[68] Ibid., 32.
[69] Carson, *Silent Spring,* 135.

ontologies: as some kind of nature-instrument-human *thing,* the dying trout evokes an instrumental anthropomorphism, victim of the cultural language of a "Supreme Executioner" that selects who and what "seems" or "is" human and "executes"—doubly motivated to mean "kill" and "complete"—accordingly. All "trout" are at the mercy of "the Supreme Executioner", whether we take that to be language, law, or master/author (as he's bringing the eponymous trout in, the Supreme Executioner shouts colonialist non sequiturs surely meant to evoke Ernest Hemingway—"Giraffe races at Kilimanjaro!" "Bee races at Mount Everest!") Here, anthropomorphism injects historical and cultural discourses into a bristling object, a trout-telescope that brings to life the abject fate of human and nonhuman others through material, textual-historical residue.

The traditional brief against anthropomorphizing is that it subordinates everything to human desires, affects, behaviors; the strategy would then seem one centerpiece of anthropocentrism, a worldview that, like pastoral, privileges "human predicaments." However, the unwieldy miscellanies in *Trout* diffuse rather than consolidate human agency. As a strategy, anthropomorphism exerts, as in "Trout Death by Port Wine," centrifugal force by drawing objects away from their "givenness"—that is, as entities already catalogued, autopsied, and understood—and into multiple, unforeseen associations. Anthropomorphism thus works as an "everyday tactic" capable of cultivating "an ability to discern the vitality of matter."[70] In anthropomorphizing, Jane Bennett argues,

> a chord is struck between person and thing, and I am no longer above or outside a nonhuman 'environment.' Too often the philosophical rejection of anthropomorphism is bound up with a hubristic demand that only humans and God can bear any traces of creative agency. To qualify and attenuate this desire is to make it possible to discern a kind of life irreducible to the activities of humans or gods. This material vitality is me, it predates me, it exceeds me, it postdates me.[71]

[70] Ibid., 119.
[71] Ibid., 120.

And here we might consider pastoral as a guide to fascination. New materialist calls to delay questions of ideology in order to attend to the vibrations of "thing-power" are ultimately literary projects. Wonder must be written. Not just attention but attentiveness to style marks Bennett's project: she describes "composing and recomposing the sentences" of her book, "trying to choose appropriate verbs," "rewriting the default grammar of agency, a grammar that assigns activity to people and passivity to things."[72] Striking the correct "chord" requires a discursive style in which human and nonhuman mutually create, inform, inhabit scenarios of "material vitality" that extend or make stretchy our temporal and ontological habits.

To become "perceptually open" to "thing-power" requires the cultivation of an attention that Bennett explicitly links to a "childhood sense of wonder," that state of mind or life when things and objects have efficacy and act not in any individualistic or autonomous sense but as parts of congeries, assemblages, and imaginative play. For Bennett, as for Brautigan, trash focalizes this form of attention to an obdurate material "other" to human and social existence. Itemizing the garbage in a grate in front of "Sam's Bagels," Bennett practices lingering, fascinated, pastoral attention: "I was repelled by the dead (or was it merely sleeping?) rat and dismayed by the litter, but I also felt something else: a nameless awareness of the impossible singularity of *that* rat, *that* configuration of pollen, *that* otherwise utterly banal, mass-produced plastic water-bottle cap."[73] Bennett elsewhere links *thatness* to a "repartitioning of the sensible" where, à la Ranciere, the "power to startle… provoke[s] a gestalt shift in perception: what was trash becomes things."[74]

[72] Bennett, *Vibrant Matter,* 119.
[73] Bennett, *Vibrant Matter,* 4.
[74] Ibid., 107.

As with Paul Goodman's "gestalt shift," Bennett argues for a new version of vision, a mode of looking captured again and again in the pages of *Trout Fishing in America*. Such unruly anthropomorphism suggests that beyond exploiting a structural feature of language in order to create or critique mythic discourse, Brautigan's similes augur new orders of "things," assemblages that draw pastoral's dichotomies—nature/culture, purity/pollution, retreat/containment—into reflexive exchange. *Trout's* engagement with "trash," from loving itemization of terms for "camp-out crapping" to anthropomorphic flights to more subterranean racial rumblings (the book's trash is also *white* trash), marks it as peculiar and peculiarly useful in organizing the social and material implications of pastoral, not because the mode failed to "move beyond" culture into more authentic or eco-critical relations with the earth but because "trash" in the 1960s resonated uniquely with a version of pastoral not merely synonymous with imaginary escapes into the past but vexed encounters with the material excesses and human categories of now.

While works like *Silent Spring* wove an interconnected eco-tale in which pollution was public enemy no. 1, trash, junk, and waste vibrated differently in Brautigan's Digger and Bay Area milieu. Garbage became a "medium" through which social values and natural nature exchanged; it proved a handy metonym for the excesses of consumer culture and rampant conformism, and the bad-faith founding of democratic values on market forces; it was also a sensitive matter of bio-matter around which numerous social and personal rituals developed. The Diggers highlighted the discursive potency of trash in the concluding manifesto to the *Diggers Papers,* "Garbage or Nothing." In the manifesto, the Diggers counseled withdraw not away from but *into* the "natural matrix" of the young, which was garbage:

> America a nation so incredibly wealthy in 1968 that all morality is based on EXCESS: true American career counselors now ask only one questions.

> "Do you want to produce garbage or do you want to collect garbage?"
> Industrialist or politician?
> Fishfarm or junkyard?
> The young people want no part of it, of course, what with garbage their natural matrix & medium.
> Produce it?
> Collect it?
> They want to fuck in it![75]

Hyperbolic and ludicrous in its challenge to the "reigning economic and liberal humanistic logics," industrialism and politics, the manifesto also turns pastoral's metaphysical premise inside out.[76] Rather than retreat into pristine spaces, a truly toxic idyll is imagined. Physical waste but also personal and community practices (of wasting time, getting wasted) sketch alternatives to norms of social behavior and economic arrangements; trash in this sense is less a foe to be vanquished than an invitation to fuck up and off, an opportunity to shift the gestalt from meaningless production/consumption to meaningful pleasure/play.

Trout Fishing in America's Long Biography

> "I am sure that Brautigan and his friends gave tenement porch picnics in North Beach long before Mission District runaway kids across Market Street ever thought of using the *Subterraneans* as a handbook of apartment living."[77]

John Montgomery's review of *Trout Fishing in America* draws attention to the asynchrony marking Brautigan's career as literary spokesperson, pastoral singer, or "gentle poet of the young." In this section I mark the peculiar time and timing of *Trout's* "long biography" as germane to the eclipse of what this dissertation has called "midcentury pastoral," a positive resurgence of one of literature's most durable genres in the context of mid-twentieth century cultural and institutional foment and change. Montgomery's quote reminds us that Brautigan

[75] "Garbage or Nothing," *The Diggers Papers,* 18.
[76] Ronda, *Remainders,* 86.
[77] John Montgomery, "A Nature Book for Hippies," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 8 Dec. 1967

composed his most famous novel in a specific neighborhood undergoing transformation, amongst particular personalities and groups engaged in literary and social experimentation, and with reference to rituals, architectures, and cultural objects yet to appear on the radar of mainstream America. Rather than consign the book to its later critical reception—a reception that owed much to usage of "pastoral" as mystification or kitsch—this section attends to *Trout's* pre-history in order to sketch a more communal portrait of pastoral's prevalence in the countercultural milieu.

In fact, *Trout Fishing in America* first arrived not in print but in person. In a shabby church turned community center in the heart of the Mission on 14th St, Brautigan took center stage and read the entirety of his just-finished manuscript over two nights in early 1963. According to Stan Persky, "a who's who of established and younger San Francisco writers (myself included) was present, with Jack Spicer, one of the book's dedicatees, sitting in the front row, vigorously nodding his pumpkin-like head and guffawing in approval. The event," Persky went on, "was a communal confirmation ceremony of that remarkable thing, the birth of a work of art, half a decade or more before it made its way to a broad, international readership."[78] Unlike the Digger home birth to which Brautigan was "too early," the reading-cum-ceremony confirmed Brautigan's book as fully "in time" with—that is timely to—the early 1960s SF scene.

That scene was dotted with invocations of and experiments with pastoral. Other Bay Area writers were riffing on Arcadia in these years. In Diane di Prima's poem "The Passionate Hipster to his Chick," a witty take on Christopher Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love," lovers settle in for a weekend of getting high. Di Prima refashions pastoral in hipster garb—"You'll get a leather cap and jacket / I know a cat that's in the racket"—and offers "lots of horse

[78] Persky, "'The candles will blow themselves out': The Richard Brautigan Saga," *LARB*.

for when you hurt."[79] In Marlowe's original, the lover's promises of abundance were not natural goods but products labored over; the poem highlighted tensions between the given and the made at work in pastoral's pleasurescapes. Di Prima's version cadges items from underground economies and uses slang as a kind of "cast-off" language that delivers coded consolations—not made but scavenged goods stock this world. Adhering strictly to Marlowe's ballad measure, di Prima's poem costumes dingy realities, including junkies who bolt the door on paradise. But pastoral precedents aren't simply threadbare, nor is the poem entirely kitsch; Marlowe's intertext instead jostles a hyper-specific twentieth-century subculture into newly capacious and historically unruly frames. By the final line, vernacular voices and archaic echoes synthesize and exchange, crosshatching the present with past and vice versa. "I know a bunch that really blows / From Friday night till Sunday goes / If all these kickes thy minde may move / Then live with me, and be my love." To reformulate Adorno's maxim on kitsch, here pastoral's "fictional feelings" are precisely those in which society's "nobodies" participate.

The last section ended with the Diggers paradoxical conjoining of garbage and pleasure. Fucking in trash was in fact how readers, and in particular the Bay Area avant-garde, were introduced to *Trout Fishing in America*. In April 1963, just a few months after Brautigan's reading on 14th St., Lawrence Ferlinghetti published three chapters from the book in the inaugural issue of *City Lights Journal.* Under a grainy snap of Brautigan's bowl cut, readers found "Worsewick," an extended grotto scene in which a young couple gets down in a pond full of dead fish and green slime. Sex and death produce and are produced by "waste" in a strangely affecting vignette celebrating the pleasures of non-(re)production. "I didn't want any more kids for a long time," the narrator states at a crucial moment of coitus. "The green slime and dead fish

[79] Diane di Prima, "The Passionate Hipster to his Chick," *Earthsong: Poems 1957-1959* (New York City: Poet's Press, 1968), 4.

were all about our bodies."[80] The doubly-motivated preposition "about" implies both spatial and epistemological valences—the dead-fish-slime surrounds and explains the couple. Fucking in garbage means becoming it. As with the Diggers' toxic idyll, "Worsewick" unexpectedly values degraded environments. There's no ignition of outrage or disgust that might lead to recognizable political responsiveness à la Carson. Sinking into or becoming one with trash (an echo again of George Bowling) forestalls conventionally progressive narratives as corrupted nature inspires its own weird mimesis, a squandering of "seed" or interruption of a different kind of "natural" progress, that of human reproduction.

Earlier I argued that resituating Brautigan's works in their original contexts—of composition, publication, and reception—yields a richer picture of pastoral's intersection with countercultural production; here I hope to demonstrate why such crossings should be understood as distinct from mere recapitulations of Transcendentalist dicta or "ideological continuity" with nineteenth-century American canonical texts. The couple at Worsewick aren't participants in an "interrupted idyll" as Leo Marx would have understood it. Theirs is not an aestheticized harmony broken by the intrusion of modern technology or its waste products. Disruption itself is the idyll, respite from an overdetermined and determining bio-social "nature." In "All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace," pastoral temporality was explicitly structured around hectoring intrusions from "outside" the techno-idyll; parenthesis also made the voicings of "unfree" time internal to the fantasy itself. Repeated printings and diverse horizons of reception meanwhile shifted our sense of the *poem*'s temporality, as material thing and object of interpretation both. *Trout Fishing in America* also has a long biography asymptotic with its later critical reception and pride of place in the hippy pantheon. Its initial print appearance in Ferlinghetti's little

[80] Richard Brautigan, "Trout Fishing in America," *City Lights Journal,* No. 1 (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1963), 29.

magazine put *Trout's* pastoral fables in conversation with Beat world travelers. *Trout's* "birth" is situated in specific archives—the community reading, the April 1963 issue of *City Lights Journal,* and a few months later, the November 1963 issue of *Evergreen Review*. Read within these milieux, Brautigan's pastorals toggle between local contexts and global frames in unexpected ways.

Writing of the poetry community in Bolinas, the California town where Brautigan lived—and very famously died—Lytle Shaw remarks that the typical ways of analyzing the "smaller scale" tensions of center and periphery, which involve critical regional approaches, fail in the case of Bolinas poets, whose literary productions and community engagements refuse the hallmarks of vernacular speech, local traditions, and rich descriptive projects of place.[81] While there is more to be said about Brautigan's place within and outside the Bolinas canon, I want to take up Shaw's insight and apply it to *Trout's* original scenes of circulation. The American regional or pastoral visions *Trout* offered look and feel different against these various backdrops—rather than "about" a particular version of America, when read as participants in the community formed by avant-garde magazines, the excerpts indicate the global reach of a midcentury "macro-pastoral" project involving East and West. While many writers—Beat, Bay Area, and otherwise—were discovering the value of nonwestern thought and religious practices as alternatives to an intensifying consumer culture, East and West as spatial and cultural categories were identified and brought into dialogue through pastoral by William Empson long before the 1960s. I develop an account of macro-pastoral mosaics in this dissertation's epilogue; that long look back to the mode's literary critical history completes this project's circle of

[81] Lytle Shaw, "Presence in the Poets' Polis: Hippie Phenomenology in Bolinas," in *Among Friends: Engendering the Social Site of Poetry,* edited by Anne Dewey and Libbie Rifkin (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2013), 69-70.

midcentury pastoral and its potent but flawed possibilities distinct from utopian projects. Grounded in a here and now, such pastorals made space for, and use of, sometimes distant theres and thens.

Indeed, the *City Lights* table of contents featured a global roundup of place names: "In India," "A Journey to Rishikesh & Hardwar," "Trout Fishing in America," "The Death of 9, Rue Git-Le Coeur," "Afrique Accidentale," "The Road to Topolobampo," Postcard from Warsaw." In the world of *Trout Fishing in America,* Worsewick's toxic grotto is one more stop on the young couple's comic camping trip through a specifically American wasteland. In the original publication context of *City Lights Journal,* however, "Worsewick" is immediately preceded by contributions from Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder reporting from their travels through India, and an item from Debi Rai on the "Indian scene"; these travelogues from the Himalayas and a manifesto-report on a poetry reading in Allahabad evoke far different geographies and cultural landscapes than Brautigan's Pacific Northwest, as well as gather symbolic systems seemingly far afield of western and specifically American traditions of pastoral.

A range of contributors to the first issue of *City Lights Journal* zeroed in on general attitudes, extrapolating similarity if not solidarity between social practices, kinds of persons, and vividly historical temporalities in visions that knit local and global contexts together in weird ways. Allen Ginsberg, "In India," described a scene of untouchables and "drunken saddhus" as "just like mill valley [sic]": the smoking and drinking "so like long vacation in summer, fine weather, everybody drunk or high, doing yoga, eating free temple food, wandering in from the road between different piths […] all the hip rituals in US involving pot have been developed and institutionalised [sic] here, it's like seeing a miniature photo enlarged so you can recognize all

the details."[82] It's unclear which "scene" for Ginsburg is the miniature photo and which the enlarged details; beholding American potheads in California, you might actually and without knowing it view Indian saddhus half-way around the world living in "a sort of hobo jungle in the woods" or vice versa.[83]

Social rituals, values associated with scenarios of holiday, pilgrimage, retreat stand in for and exchange with one another as American and Buddhist cultural practices and marginalized populations are at once the same and different. This "underlying universality of people's scenes" also struck Gary Snyder.[84] Watching the "festival of the Pitcher" parade in Hardwar inspired "a sudden sense of archaic tradition. Not just two or three thousand years, but fifty thousand years. A tribe of bushman shamans on the move. Or marching up out of some Pleistocene stratum under the hills."[85] As with Ginsberg's photo in which geographies "contain" one another, this sudden vista of previous realities located within the present day is a form of gestalt shift familiar from the previous chapter. Rather than a static image, pastoral here marks a particularly fluid exchange of geo-cultural temporality.

After these dispatches, Brautigan's "novel" reads less as fiction than reportage; rather than conventions of novel-writing, it flows out of and along with "poetic" experimentation of poets writing travel memoirs (Brautigan was primarily known as a poet in '63). Ginsberg and Snyder structure their pieces around explicit or implied comparison with an American scene; Brautigan's American episodes in this context seem responsive to a scaled-up pastoral scenario in which global and archaic space-time operates in "dialectical dichotomy" with the local and

[82] Allen Ginsberg, "In India," *City Lights Journal,* No. 1 (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1963), 8.
[83] Ibid., 7.
[84] Gary Snyder, "A Journey to Rishikesh & Hardwar" in *City Lights Journal,* No. 1 (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1963), 9.
[85] Ibid., 21.

contemporary. "Worsewick," we notice now, echoes and "invites" distant locations: "The boards dammed up the creek enough to form a huge bathtub there, and the creek flowed over the top of the boards, invited like a postcard to the ocean a thousand miles away."[86] Ginsberg's and Snyder's descriptions of water, bathing, and nakedness in turn generate new frames for Brautigan's chapter. Nude bathing in dirty waters is rendered less idiosyncratic, informed by non-Western religious rituals but also the apprehension of some "underlying" sense of "archaic traditions" internalized by even modern subjects, or as Snyder put it: "Peter takes a nap under a bridge alongside peasants and pilgrims while Allen and I cogitate on the nature of nakedness. We'd thought of this approach ourselves once."[87] In *City Lights*, Worsewick's nude bathers become "peasants and pilgrims" too.

This kind of exchange bears connection to Goodman's gestalt theory with its shifting or fluid exchange of background and fore; in their engagement with global cultures, Ginsberg's "miniature photo," Brautigan's "postcard," Snyder's "sudden sense of archaic tradition" also bespeak the form of "double vision" George Orwell utilized in *Coming Up for Air.* Recall that Orwell, writing from Morocco and remembering England, notated a certain bifocality that knit temporal and spatial experience together. "It was as if I was looking at two worlds at once, a kind of thin bubble of the thing that used to be, with the thing that actually existed shining through it."[88] In *City Lights Journal,* experiences of what "used to be" veer back and forth through time and space as networks of opposition and association—Mill Valley and encampments on the Ganges; hipsters and saddhus; the Pleistocene and the 1960s—are drawn into distinctive arrangements, proximities as values and ways of valuing or "seeing" others.

[86] Brautigan, "Trout Fishing in America," *City Lights Journal,* 27.
[87] Snyder, "A Journey," *City Lights Journal,* 22.
[88] Orwell, *Coming Up for Air,* 213.

Rather than make all the world a hippy paradise, or spin fantasies of mental liberation, the contributions to *City Lights Journal* remind us that even into the 1960s pastoral might be seen as a way of looking at, negotiating, and parsing disparate realities in historical moments of intensifying cultural and geographic contraction and exchange. This wasn't just about space, place, or even nostalgia; Margaret Ronda describes the wild, fluid temporality of "revolutionary pastoral" that allowed Gary Snyder to see a fifty-thousand-year-old reality unfolding in front of him. Working within horizons of western modernity, Diane di Prima's rewrote Marlowe to similar effect, revivifying the past within the specific subcultural languages of her present but also utilizing the mode's ancient quarrel between given and made, leisure and labor, nature and art.

This oscillation, interchange, or shifty gestalt is at play in the final chapter from *Trout* excerpted in *City Lights Journal,* "A Half Sunday Homage to a Whole Leonard da Vanici." The chapter's narrator is at home on a "funky winter day" while his wife "slaves away" downtown; the scene is thus set for reverie and indeed Brautigan's explicit invocation of idleness—"I've been sitting here ever since like a toad on a log dreaming of Leonardo da Vinci"—situates this vignette as imaginative play with but also self-absorbed retreat from social realities, the world of work and politics, of the sort later critics would fault *Trout* for. It seems no more than an inconsequential historical revisionist lark.[89]

But the chapter is prescient about the business of aesthetics. Setting California and the Midwest alongside Renaissance Italy, Brautigan's narrator dreams da Vinci as an American schemer and worker, an employee of the South Bend Tackle Company who invents a new spinning lure for trout fishing. "I saw him first of all working with his imagination, then with

[89] Brautigan, "Trout Fishing in America," *City Lights Journal,* 31.

metal and color and hooks, trying a little of this and little of that, and then adding motion and then taking it away and then coming back again with a different motion, and in the end the lure was invented."[90] The process might describe Spicer's serial poetics, Brautigan's own method for assembling *Trout* out of found texts, anecdotes gleamed from acquaintances, childhood memories, observations of his San Francisco scene. Da Vinci's lure, called **The Last Supper** outstrips "such shallow accomplishments" of the "Twentieth Century" such as Hiroshima or Mahatma Gandhi and is bought by all "thirty-four ex-presidents of the United States."

Here the circuitous publication history of *Trout Fishing in America* performs an uncanny demonstration of its own premises. In April 1963, there were indeed thirty-four ex-presidents; John F. Kennedy died in November '63. But by the time *Trout Fishing in America* appeared as a novel, in 1967, 34 ex-presidents no longer included every ex. The list was no longer comprehensive or representative; the chapter demonstrates as well as narrates historical contingency, the gap between making and receiving, writing and reading. It is also weirdly prescient of Brautigan's own book and literary celebrity—as a kind of literary "sensation of the Twentieth Century" selling "millions" of his own Last Supper, *Trout Fishing in America* is a lure shimmering somewhere between a lesson about the past's presence and a present moment unprepared for those lessons.

The da Vinci anecdote captures something of the unstable temporality of pastoral's reception at a moment when culture was undergoing intense commodification, when art and trash were mingled as never before. It's particularly germane to Brautigan's career but also to the fortunes of the pastoral mode at midcentury. John Montgomery concluded a review of *Trout* by noting that through Brautigan's "antics penetrates a stubborn backwoods conservatism that is

[90] Ibid., 31.

straight. More power to him. This book ought to be required reading in hippe [sic] pads." Thus the pastoral mode in this dissertation has been proposed as an active organizing intelligence writers rediscovered at the very moment static and nostalgic pastoral images permeated society. It's the former that Montgomery urges "hippes" take from Brautigan, a way of looking and understanding the self in relation to world broadly construed—the "international scale" as well as local endeavors, urban and rural, the past in relation to the present, the value of what Empson called "humble things" against dominant modes of social and economic organization—that I believe all the writers this dissertation has touched on would instantly recognize.

Coda: Mosaic

Read within the pages of *City Lights Journal,* Brautigan's chapters respond to and reciprocate a wide range of cultural tendencies, aesthetic practices, literary and physical geographies. Any literary journal or magazine presents a variegated image of writers, editors, and readers constellating diverse projects, interests, genres within a common rubric, much like a mosaic where disparate pieces form a shifting, provisional whole. I propose in this final coda that midcentury pastoral is likewise mosaic—a mode that functioned alongside and in relation to other works, to far-flung historical and cultural circumstances, and to sometimes very distant discursive and artistic communities. Pastoral mosaics are arrangements that can set in relief tendencies, qualities, conventions of the mode as they play across as well as within individual works.

We can see Brautigan's American vignettes as participating in the counterculture's orientation toward global poetics, for example, in the way their placement in Ferlinghetti's journal invites comparison to Snyder's and Ginsberg's accounts from India; Brautigan's "postcards" also echo another contributor, William Burroughs, whose three-page dispatch from Panama, "I Am Dying, Meester?" is also a "dead postcard waiting a place forgotten."[1] Susan Stewart understands postcards as engines powering transformations of exterior to interior, public to private; they function as metonyms to an ever receding lived and "authentic" experience which has been relegated to a "beyond in which the antique, the pastoral, the exotic, and other fictive domains are articulated."[2] As a souvenir from a dying arcadia, Burroughs's contribution bears witness to the nightmarish intersection of pastoral and global politics. A collage of junky

[1] William Burroughs, "I Am Dying, Meester?" in *City Lights Journal,* No. 1 (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1963), 47.
[2] Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection,*133.

slang, overheard and reported speech, heightened sensory images brought on by the DTs, "I Am Dying, Meester?" evokes the power play between center and periphery, United States and its "New World" colonies, via a lurking tale of sexual degradation and abuse with imperialist overtones: brutal metonymies like "Genital pawn ticket peeled his stale underwear" and coded admissions—"Casual adolescent had undergone special G.I. processing"—are linked by the refrain "That's Panama," (i.e. prostituted, brutalized, "invaded"), a tonally ambiguous phrase that could register disgust or something far more blasé.[3]

The sum of these entries remains uncaptured by critics who site Brautigan's pastoral in a national context or as product of hippie romanticism. Instead, the excerpts are better understood as part of *City Lights Journal's* macro-pastoral mosaic. Macro-pastoral, in the work of Michael McKeon, names a historical instance of the mode, as writers registered an emerging nation-state system in the eighteenth century. As McKeon describes it, pastoral's structural oppositions can be transformed into a "linked chain of multiple and relative oppositions."[4] In English pastoral literature, London versus the countryside becomes, for example, England versus elsewhere—a polarity that, as we've seen, itself underwent further complication during World War II as English writers renegotiated a crumbling colonial empire and the specter of a post-war order in which England itself was peripheral and minor. Modernity's transformations and exchanges between center and periphery, as Lytle Shaw points out, are typically understood as "colonial dramas that necessarily play themselves out on an international scale."[5] Macro-pastoral responds to this "international scale" as a particularly "supple instrument for discerning and articulating change itself."[6]

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[3] Burroughs, "I Am Dying, Meester?," *City Lights Journal,* 47-48.
[4] Michael McKeon, "The Pastoral Revolution," *Refiguring Revolutions,* 284.
[5] Lytle Shaw, "Presence in the Poets' Polis," *Among Friends,* 69.
[6] McKeon, "The Pastoral Revolution," *Refiguring Revolutions,* 289.

Macro-pastoral thus depicts the process whereby axial differences between country and city are internalized and projected onto a globalizing culture in which distinctions collapse and all locations and positions are equal and fungible in the exchange value of the market. In these conditions, McKeon argues, pastoral's "finely balanced doubleness is *deranged*" as the expectation of structuring oppositions runs aground in a capitalist everywhere.[7] In Burroughs's Panama, pastoral romance is rape and natural paradise no more than doomed enclave: "That's Panama—Sad movie drifting in islands of rubbish, black lagoons and fish people waiting a place forgotten."[8] Recall that for Raymond Williams pastoral encodes social and economic realities and is thus extra- or especially historically determined. In the case of Burroughs, the repeated references to 1910-1920 summon the decade the United States completed and "took control" of the Panama Canal. But in a version of macro-pastoral that uses industrial capitalism and the international state system as primary heuristics we lose sight of pastoral's fluid and even revelatory temporality, the ahistorical or even anti-historical promise that, for example, Di Prima exploited in her rewriting of Marlowe. In macro-pastoral mosaics, we witness an assemblage of situations in which pastoral's organizational potentiality—of space, time, feeling, and value—could be enunciated anew through collective efforts between living and dead, old and new, near and far.

A magazine is one such site of collective endeavor but this mosaic quality was made internal to some of the most famous formulations of pastoral in this era. Midcentury pastoral, a nexus of literary critical attention to and experimentation with the mode, could be said to begin with the publication of William Empson's *Some Versions of Pastoral* in 1935; the book's reprinting in 1974 by New Directions, meanwhile, marks a potential closure to the specific

[7] Ibid., 289, emphasis added.
[8] Burroughs, "I Am Dying, Meester?" *City Lights Journal,* 48.

reformulations and remodulations I've tracked through this dissertation. In his book, Empson provided a different account of pastoral's global reach to McKeon. While pastoral attitudes toward the "humble thing," in particular the prizing of the simple, poor and children as possessors of greater truth or perceptual acuity, is "all part of the normal European tradition," the mode's "interest in the problems of the One and the Many, especially their social aspects," Empson maintained, "is ancient and obvious in the East" also.[9] Philosophical overlap rather than capitalist expansion yokes East and West together through pastoral, which about spatial categories and social forms and collective acts of valuing. "The idea of everything being included in the humble thing, with mystical respect for poor men, fools, and children" as well as the "contrasting idea" of a hero who, like the sensitive pastoral singer, somehow contains or represents society, was, Empson knew from his own travels and time in China, present in Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.[10]

Pastoral thus animates very general attitudes towards kinds or classes of human and nonhuman "things." Both elements are present in *City Lights Journal's* pages which register historical conditions on the one hand and advocate quasi-religious ideas that bridge cultural traditions, vast timescales, human and nonhuman entities on the other. The Beats and Bay Area subcultures identification with and identification *as* "humble things"—beggars, drunks, druggies, or children—who exist with special cross-cultural contingency to dominant society, as global citizens intuiting the values of childlike wonder, spiritual nakedness, idyllic leisure, make Empson's insight that pastoral yokes East and West particularly fruitful in considering at least some of the potent trans-Pacific connections established in the 1950s and '60s as distinct from mere cultural appropriation; macro-pastoral underlines imaginative practices' ability to render

[9] William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral*, 21.
[10] Ibid., 21.

difference as relational and relative rather than static and fixed. We might consider, that is, how a recognition of multiple forms of difference—from western traditions of literature but also from non-western ethics and forms of valuing—that potentially reflects back onto expanded capacities for self-knowing and description drives the journal's pastoral mosaic.[11]

An encounter with values and traditions far afield of typical western precedents that nonetheless produce some new capacity of vision or understanding sutures together Empson's own engagement with pastoral. In fact, Empson wrote *Some Versions of Pastoral* while teaching in Tokyo, where he was professor of English from 1931 to 1934.[12] According to John Haffenden, Empson's "evolving theory of a pastoral 'formula' superseded the old-style view of the pastoral genre: it served to enforce his assault upon the received religion of the West. As an intellectually alert child of his time, Empson had been quick to study the most recent learning relating to anthropology, myth, and ritual that had revolutionized historical and cultural thinking since Darwin."[13] These disciplinary threads and intellectual histories informed Empson's reformulation of pastoral as an allegory of "the artist's terribly solitary vocation as the 'detached intelligence,'" where a Christ-like "sacrificial cult hero" or pastoral singer could at once represent the many and the one by standing apart from the society that produced him in order to

[11] See Rita Felski, *The Uses of Literature,* in particular her chapter on "Recognition" (Maldwell, MA: Blackwell, 2008). The form of "recognition" literary texts allow, Felski argues, "does not depend on the integrity of self-identity" since it takes shape through dialogic encounters that are both private communions of readers and texts and "embedded in circuits of acknowledgment and affiliation between selves and others that draw on and cut across the demographics of social life" (48). Rather than the reflection of "core personhood," recognition underscores the messy partiality by which we form selves through acts of affiliation and dis-affiliation with others.

[12] Empson returned to London for three years after which he went back to Asia and was employed at Peking National University. Beginning in 1937, universities had been sent into exile by Japanese troop and Empson joined students in Hunan province and went with them as they were forced deeper into the country; he left China only when war in Europe was unavoidable.

[13] John Haffenden, *William Empson: Volume 1: Among the Mandarins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 384.

comment on if not critique it.[14] Considering pastoral as a position, attitude, or relation to one's social world—a situation of enunciation—chimed with what Empson was learning about Buddhism as an ethical orientation and historical religion. His concurrent project to *Some Versions of Pastoral* was a manuscript on facial types of Buddhist sculpture, once considered lost but recently republished as *The Face of the Buddha* (2016). The two books have yet to be read together, even as ideas and whole passages migrated between them, suggesting that pastoral, for Empson, had wide applications as well as global frames of reference.[15]

What happens if we think about midcentury pastoral beginning here, in encounters between an English critic and Buddhist statues? How does pastoral's "macro" project live within or emerge out of Empson's careful exegesis of Eastern sculpture and religious thought? Rather than a model like McKeon's, which restricts pastoral to the specific gyrations of industrialization and geo-politics of the nation state, or even Stewart's which relies on the nostalgic operations of an object-world thoroughly colonized by commodity culture, Empson's pastorals were extrapolated from and tested against sources far afield of typical conventions or frameworks, and he relied on practices that cut across, literally, the ideological premises of the souvenir. In the Buddha manuscript he describes cutting up and collaging photographs of statues to test a theory of facial asymmetry. One way to think about these experiments is to consider them part and parcel of Empson's macro-pastoral mosaic, a project that mediates spatial and cultural experience but does so as a sort of homegrown art project that leads to reflection on the oppositional dynamics and pairings—one/many, present/past, town/country—constitutive of the

[14] Ibid., 394.
[15] See Rupert Arrowsmith's introduction to Empson's *The Face of the Buddha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), xlvi. Reviewers and critics have been more likely to understand Empson's fascination with Buddhist statuary and asymmetry as extending his interest in ambiguity, rather than simultaneous to his work on pastoral. See Sharon Cameron, "Introduction by Way of William Empson's Buddha Faces" in *Impersonality: Seven Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

mode. From scrutinizing Buddhist faces, Empson can also be seen as testing elements of pastoral's formulas in such a way as to honor rather than dissolve the force of opposition. "A good deal of the startling and compelling quality of the Far Eastern Buddha heads comes from their combining things that seem incompatible… these qualities must somehow be diffused through the whole face… But I believe there was a standard way of getting them in," Empson wrote, "one which put a strain on the unity; the two qualities were largely separated onto the two sides of the face."[16]

For Empson, the Buddha's face rendered vivid another paradox, that the Buddha is at once meant to "convey detachment from the world after achieving peace and yet this figure is expected to help the worshipper."[17] By subtle differences in eye shape and mouth tension between the two sides, Buddhist statues demonstrate "the power to help the worshipper is on the right, and the calm… inherent nature of the personage is on the left."[18] Printing reverse of frontal photos, cutting them in half, and gluing the same sides together proved his point: "this expression has almost entirely gone."[19] The bringing together of opposite sorts of persons or states of being (conscious and unconscious) not to dissolve them into unity but create a situation in which the "best parts of both were used" so that the reader and author mirrored "in himself" the society of which he was a part, was, Empson thought, one of the "tricks of pastoral."[20] Writing about facial asymmetry in the context of Buddhist statuary, Empson used language familiar to pastoral critics like Auden, who thought the mode related outward appearances to subjective states that could never find purchase in real world events. Yet Empson arrived at the

[16] William Empson, *The Face of the Buddha,* edited by Rupert Arrowsmith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 81.
[17] Ibid., 88.
[18] Ibid., 88.
[19] Ibid., 88.
[20] Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral,* 12-13.

startling conclusion that our very faces constantly toggle between wish and reality—a form of pastoral fundamental to human bodily experience. Facial asymmetry, he wrote, disclosed the "wish-image" of how we wish to see ourselves (on the left) and how others see us, our conventional outward bearing (on the right). And "since we see ourselves reversed in mirrors… we see our wish-image on the side where we are accustomed to see others put their conventional face, and this helps to delude us about our own characters."[21]

What's most interesting to me is how Empson crafts pastoral: it's both very general and quite practical. Rather than done to reality, it's made *by* doing—through operations on photographs, acts of experiential comparison, on the ground encountering. In the manuscript, Empson describes going to Ceylon to see a Buddha:

> I went to Ceylon chiefly because of this photograph of it, and I was only able to convince myself it was the right object by the cracks in the stone. The picture is taken from below near the crossed legs, and gives the torso length; also it brings out a haunting softness in the lightly modulated body, which rises like a flower into its position of eternal deliverance and calm. What is so touching about the photograph, in short, is that the Buddha is still almost a boy. Actually the thing is very stocky; the broad square shoulders rise from a narrow waist that seems acrobatic rather than youthful; the back curves in from the shoulder and juts out decisively at the bottom; the face is not so much innocent and self absorbed [sic] as puggy and determined; from the side the fully curved nose protrudes far beyond the chest, and the straight sag of the jowl gives a Mussolini effect. You feel that if the champion stood up on his bandy legs he would look rather like a monkey—the Monkey of Arthur Waley's translation, to be sure. Photography of course should not be blamed for being a branch of interpretative criticism; the moral is that one ought to have other photographs beside this very beautiful one; but I think it gives rather a one-sided account of the early work of Ceylon.[22]

Empson's description, in which photo and encounter reflect on one another, does not make a claim that meaning resides finally or fully in an interpretation of either object. Instead, "interpretative criticism" is produced over the collation of many photographs, repeated exposure, up-close peering as well as mediated viewing. The touching photograph and the stocky thing are

[21] Empson, *The Face of the Buddha,* 85.
[22] Ibid., 23-4.

at once the same object, glimpsed from different angles and points in time as well as via disparate technologies. A pastoral mosaic gathers together and compounds acts of comparison internal to the mode itself. Such mosaics remain open-ended since another photo or poem or artifact might always be added to resize or rearrange the mode as extension of generic elements (in *Some Versions of Pastoral* Empson asserts Marvell's Garden is "like the seventh Buddhist state of enlightenment") as well as reflect on the particular situation of any critic's enunciation.[23] Buddhist artifacts might also bear the cracks of pastoral's internal dynamics, its most intimate relations and its various uses to readers, writers, selves.

The term "mosaic" also highlights that pastoral is made *from* certain stuff: the mode is assembled, wrought, and arranged rather than simply transmitted, inherited, or recycled. Moments like Empson's reveal the importance of attending to sites and practices of composition as constitutive elements of pastoral. In this way, the recent turn to genre in literary studies might help reinvigorate how and why we read for mode. As admixtures of old and new, Wai Chee Dimock argues that genres "carry on the expressive forms that human beings collectively inherit"—in genre, we need to practice reading with a long background as well as "minute evidence" in mind since any but especially ancient genres circulate as what "we collectively make of it: it can be poetry, fiction, or street performance, just as its habitats are both east and west, high and low, ancient and modern."[24] Genres function as "particles" floating through literary space-time, adhering to other genres in unexpected ways as "irritants" in which past intrudes onto present and "temporal, spatial, and generic lines" of descent or inheritance are muddied, thickened, but also reinvigorated in specific contexts.

[23] Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral,* 119-20.
[24] Wai Chee Dimock, "Genres as Field of Knowledge," *PMLA,* Vol. 122, No. 5, Oct., 2007, 1380, 1384.

Modes, as extended genres but also trans-temporal situations of enunciation, work similarly. Empson's macro-pastoral mosaics in *Some Versions of Pastoral* and *The Face of the Buddha* cannot be said to bear direct influence on contributors to *City Lights Journal* of course but "influence" already presupposes that pastoral streams through texts as a set of inherited tropes or conventions rather than, as I've proposed in this dissertation, crops up unexpectedly in relation to other discourses, disciplines, and histories or is assembled in make-shift fashion by writers and readers enmeshed in particular environments that guide their concerns with and uses of the mode. Considering pastoral with this wider-angle lens highlights how the mode sampled from and drew together diverse situations of enunciation for critic, poet, and reader rather than continues to reify its associations with national origins, nostalgia, and landscape. Although Empson's "versions" of pastoral were considered idiosyncratic upon first publication in 1935, their compositional history and backstory intimate that Empson's sense of the mode's possibilities were culturally ambient for decades to come—not just as the "luminous globe" holding the seeds of romance and realism, poetry and psychology, as Virginia Woolf said in the 1930s of Sidney's *Arcadia,* but as an orientation capable of holding in common the stresses and contradictions of life at midcentury, or any moment.

In a sense this entire dissertation is itself a "pastoral mosaic," an attempt to ascertain how the mode might be opened to accommodate very different sites and scenes, ways of saying and styles of imagining. None other than Cleanth Brooks, reviewing *Some Versions of Pastoral* in 1935, rejoiced that Empson had discovered pastoral wasn't just a costume for graduate students to discover in the museum of their readings but an "inner thing. It is a particular way of relating certain things to other things. It is not external and it is not dead. It is very much alive for it sees

the matter from the standpoint of a practicing poet."[25] This ambiguous final sentence could mean that pastoral is "alive" to poets and used by them, in ways Empson describes; or that Empson understands pastoral as a poet would; or, slightly differently again, that Empson himself occupies the role of the poet, as a critic-singer akin to Leo Marx and Raymond Williams. Or it could mean that the pastoral mode produces standpoints, practices, a "particular way of relating things" for those writers able to catch its particle, ride its wave, cast both anew.

[25] Cleanth Brooks, "Empson's Criticism," in *Critical Essays on William Empson,* edited by John Constable (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1993), 133-4.

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