

MODERNISM—Peter Caulfield and Seamus McNerney

Humanities 324—Fall 2009

Introduction

I. The dates and places of Modernism

A. The broad limits: 1880-1950

B. Germanic Modernism: 1880-1900

1. Germany

2. Austria

3. Scandinavia, esp. Norway

C. Anglo-American Modernism: 1900-1925-30

1. France (haven for Modernist artists)

2. England

3. America

II. Modernism in relation to other movements

A. In relation to Enlightenment

B. In relation to Romanticism

III. Influences on Modernism

A. Nietzsche and Freud

B. Rapid economic and technological growth

C. Scientific breakthroughs

D. WWI

E. Primitivism

IV. Reading from Joyce's Ulysses

V. Ten salient features of Modernism

VI. Three overall characteristics of Modernism

A. Interiorization

B. Fragmentation

C. Restructuring

VI. How Modernism manifested itself

A. In Literature

1. Flaubert as forerunner

2. Joyce, Faulkner, Woolf

VII. Reading from Woolf's The Waves

VIII. Modernism in Art

Impressionism and Post-Impressionism

Selected Modernist Artists (Munch, Kollwitz, Max, Marc, Mondrian, Picasso, Chagall, Leger, Ray, Dali)

DATES OF MODERNISM

BROADEST LIMITS 1880-1950

GERMANIC MODERNISM 1880-1900

ANGLO-AMERICAN MODERNISM 1900-1925-30

From Ulysses by James Joyce (Random House, 1914)

By LORRIES ALONG SIR JOHN ROGERSON'S QUAY MR BLOOM walked soberly, past Windmill lane, Leask's the linseed crusher's, the postal telegraph office. Could have given that address [?] too. And past the sailors' home. He turned from the morning noises of the quayside and walked through Lime street. By Brady's cottages a boy for the skins lolled, his bucket full of offal linked, smoking a chewed fagbutt. A smaller girl with scars of eczema on her forehead eyed him, listlessly holding her battered caskhoop. Tell him if he smokes he won't grow. O let him! His life isn't such a bed of roses! Waiting outside pubs to bring da home. Come home to ma, da. Slack hour: won't be many there [in the

pub]. He crossed Townsend street, passed the frowning face of Bethel. . . . And past Nichols' the undertakers. At eleven it [the funeral] is. Time enough. Daresay Corny Kelleher bagged that job [this funeral] for O'Neill's. Singing with his eyes shut [the corpse?]. Corney. Met her [a memory of a woman] once in the park. In the dark. What a lark. Police tout. Her name and address she then told with my toolroom tooraloom tay. O, surely he bagged it. Bury him cheap in a whatyoumaycall. . . .

In Westland row he halted before the window of the Belfast and Oriental Tea Company and read the legends of lead-papered packets: choice blend, finest quality, family tea. Rather warm. [the weather]. Tea. Must get some from Tom Kernan. Couldn't ask him at the funeral though. . . .

So Warm. His right hand once more more slowly went over again: choice blend, made of the finest Ceylon [in the far east] brands. The far east. Lovely spot it must be: the garden of the world, big lazy leaves to float about on, cactuses, flowery meads, snaky lianas they call them. Wonder is it like that. Those Cinghalese lobbing around in the sun, in dolce far niente. Not doing a hand's turn all day. Sleep six months out of twelve. . . . Ah in the dead sea, floating on his back, reading a book with a parasol open. Couldn't sink if you tried.: so thick with salt. Because of the weight of the water, no the weight of the body in the water is equal to the weight of the. Or is the volume is equal to the weight? It's a law something like that. Vance in High school cracking his fingerjoints teaching. The college curriculum. Cracking curriculum. He turned away and sauntered down the road (71-2).

MODERNISM'S SALIENT FEATURES

1. ANTI-REPRESENTATIONALISM (IN PAINTING)
2. AN ATONAL QUALITY (IN MUSIC)
3. FREE VERSE (IN POETRY)
4. STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS NARRATIVE (IN NOVELS)
5. A DEHUMANIZATION OF ART IN GENERAL
6. A RADICAL REMAKING OF FORM
7. AN OVERALL BLEAKNESS, DARKNESS, ALIENATION
8. A SENSE OF CONTINGENCY AS OPPOSED TO CERTAINTY
9. A FEELING OF DISTORTION; SOMETIMES A NIGHTMARE QUALITY
10. A SENSE OF FUTILITY AND ANARCHY

MODERNISM'S THREE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

INTERIORIZATION

FRAGMENTATION

RESTRUCTURING

From The Waves, by Virginia Woolf (Harcourt, Brace, & Co., 1931) "Here I stand," said Jinny, "in the Tube [subway] station where everything that is desirable meets--Piccadilly South Side, Piccadilly North Side, Regent Street and the Haymarket. I stand for a moment under the pavement in the heart of London. Wheels rush and feet press just over my head. The great avenues of civilisation meet here and strike this way and that. I am in the heart of life. But look--there is my body in that looking glass. How solitary, how shrunk, how aged! I am no longer young. I am no longer part of the procession. Millions descend those stairs in a terrible descent. Great wheels churn inexorably urging them downwards. Millions have died. Perceival died. I still move. I still live. But who will come if I signal?"