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## Review Essay

# European Avant-Garde Coteries and the Modernist Magazine

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***The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines: Volume III, Europe 1880–1940*. Peter Brooker, Saschu Bru, Andrew Thacker, Christian Weikop, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. xxxiv + 1471. $250.00 (cloth).**

Modernism is synonymous with cosmopolitanism. In their groundbreaking collection of essays, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane argued: "Conspicuous in the age of Modernism is an unprecedented acceleration in the intellectual traffic between nations . . . in this climate, international exchanges and unacknowledged borrowings flourished."[1] Successive waves of transnational avant-garde movements—symbolism, expressionism, cubism, Futurism, Dada, surrealism, constructivism—swept across Europe. In *Extraterritorial* (1972), George Steiner directed attention to the polyglot milieu of twentieth-century literature shaped by exile and expatriation, and, following the upheavals occasioned by two world wars, the displacement of millions of refugees. Steiner's attention to a modern multilingualism as a condition of "extraterritoriality" indicates that concepts like "modernism" may be more culture-bound and stubbornly resistant to translation than we think.

Modernist art thrived in cities—in cafés, private clubs, salons, galleries, theaters, libraries, bookshops, publishing houses, and magazines—or in the "metropolis," as it is customary to say in modernist studies, although the term should be used with discrimination (the entire population of Zürich in 1880 would fit into modern-day Wembley Stadium). Little magazines were arguably the key institution of modernism constituting the social channels that energized artistic communities and facilitated the dissemination of ideas and styles. The third volume of Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker's *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, which examines a large selection of twentieth-century European periodicals, recruits two new editors—Saschu Bru and Christian Weikop—to strengthen an approach

to wider comparative angles of intellectual history. This undertaking presented the editors with considerable theoretical and methodological challenges.

Volume 1 covered British and Irish magazines and concluded in 1955, embracing the entire run of *Scrutiny* (which, aside from a brief flirtation with the poetry of Ronald Bottrall, did not champion creative writing). Volume 2 on North American periodicals extended to 1960, taking in its stride the smart middlebrow *New Yorker* and *Esquire* magazines. Volume 3 stops abruptly in 1940 and focuses on the historical avant-garde. Brooker's general introduction confronts Peter Bürger's over-simplified theorizing of an impassable divide between the political activism of the avant-garde and the bourgeois meliorism of modernism. Brooker seeks to pull the vanguard closer to the modernist mainstream by employing Raymond Williams's pluralism of "alternative," "oppositional," "emergent," or "residual" cultural formations, turning down the political temperature of pre- and postwar Europe to lukewarm. When Brooker says that "the avant-garde migrated in a rhizomatic movement across national and international borders" (15), one wonders how these non-hierarchical networks intersected with fascism and communism, crucial contexts for the understanding of Italian and Russian Futurism.

Several thousand European cultural magazines were published in the period from 1880 to 1940. Faced with an almost impossible task of navigating a clear path through periodicals so dissimilar in form and function, Brooker's introduction keeps an admirably cool head as he plunges into the labyrinthine "twisted paths" (2) of sixty years of European history (political, socio-cultural, economic, technological). He rejects a "totalizing survey," adding that "the many magazines discussed here do not add up to one story; indeed they resist the very impulse to search for or enforce a single narrative" (21). This is wise, especially when the narrative to be imposed would be an Anglophone one, inevitably heavily weighted towards American and British scholarship (of the fifty-six chapters here, forty-two were contributed by individuals working in English-speaking institutions). The editors' selection of some 300 magazines from nineteen European countries does represent a significant shift in focus from the earlier volumes. Only one of *The Criterion*'s four like-minded European collaborators on an international fiction prize in 1930 is accorded a place in this volume. This decision is evidence of a bias towards the editorial policies and polemics of programmatic, coterie, low-circulation, and short-lived avant-garde magazines, thereby downplaying the significance of the more eclectic and stable postwar critical reviews. Brooker suggests that this volume is "less about determining categories than encouraging a field of grounded analysis" (21), and anyone working in modernist studies must record their gratitude for the herculean editorial labor that has gone into this 1,500-page volume—a gateway to further studies in this field. This review follows the structure of the editorial organization of modernist magazines into eight regional sections, although my engagement with the detail of each section is necessarily selective and partial.

## I. *France*

Brooker's introduction to the opening section on France states that Paris was at the "geo-cultural centre" (25) of modernism. Christopher Butler has noted that many accounts of modernism "tend to privilege the relationship between the Anglo-American tradition and France."[2] Could there have been a defamiliarizing advantage in beginning the volume in Berlin or Vienna, Milan or Moscow? The chapters on French journals tend to reinforce rather than interrogate the legend of bohemia that has been depicted by English-speaking writers from George Moore to Ernest Hemingway. Diana Schiau-Botea colorfully evokes Montmartre as a "'paratopic' area, where working-class people and poor artists mixed with prostitutes, pimps, drunkards and delinquents" (42). "Paratopy" involves "a difficult negotiation of place and non-place" (42n); in this case, a real place blossoming in the traveler's imagination.

Little magazines were an essential accoutrement for a Parisian *fin de siècle* dandy. From the countless evanescent *petites revues* associated with symbolism, Alfred Vallette's *Mercure de France* emerges as the most durable (in its heyday, Remy de Gourmont's essays were a star attraction) and *La Revue blanche* as not only the most elegant but also the most politically engaged (it was forthright in defense of Captain Dreyfus). Yet neither of these magazines were straightforward

advocates for symbolist aesthetics. Alexia Kalantzis's chapter helpfully characterizes the aspirations of *Mercure de France* as a "high quality disinterested criticism which allowed for a broad cultural cohesion far from the exclusive club of Symbolist 'little magazines'" (71). On the other hand, *La Revue wagnérienne*, a rallying ground for symbolists, is not examined in this volume.

In the years leading up to the First World War, Paris was the site of notorious attacks on the literary and artistic establishments. Guillaume Apollinaire is a nodal figure in this section. Willard Bohn's chapter describes Apollinaire's *Les Soirées de Paris* as "the most important 'little magazine' in Paris" (125) in spite of its struggle to secure readers. Apollinaire's calligrammatic poetry and his influence as a cultural impresario arguably loom larger in the history of the European avant-garde than in the history of modernism. At the time of his death, Apollinaire could appear a somewhat marginal figure in comparison with Anatole France, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1921.

The emphasis of this volume on extremist avant-garde movements can unsettle and at times obscure the testimony of literary history. Anne-Rachel Hermetet's treatment of *La Nouvelle Revue française* does not give an unequivocal sense of this monthly's pre-eminent position among Parisian journals during the interwar period. As a platform for André Gide's ideas and a proponent of Paul Valéry and Marcel Proust, it was crucial in establishing major reputations of the period. To my mind, the *NRF*'s skepticism towards the theory and practice of surrealism is not an indication of an indifference towards modernist experimentation but rather a principled expression of critical standards that were quite different from those proposed by André Breton.

The *NRF* shares a chapter with *Commerce* in which the latter receives just two and a half pages. As a consequence, a catalogue of names takes the place of an expansive analysis of the contents of this fascinating journal. Furthermore, by confining the treatment of French classicism to the *NRF*, this volume ignores the "neo-classicism" associated with Jacques Maritain (who was an intimate of Jean Cocteau as well as a number of Dadaist and Futurist artists).[3] Charles Péguy's *Cahiers de la Quinzaine,* which was important to a prewar Catholic revival, is omitted from this volume. The postwar *rappel à l'ordre* looked to the reconstruction of the canons of the past, sometimes allied to right-wing cultural and political formations. When T. S. Eliot visited Paris during the 1920s, he was attracted to the cenacle of Charles Maurras's *Action française* rather than the cosmopolitan salon of Gertrude Stein. Reactionary politics may be distasteful to the editors, but it is an act of ideological cleansing to sweep its adherents from the historical record.

Brooker argues that Paris is best understood "as a zone of intersection than an island capital" (26), and yet the exclusive concentration on Parisian magazines ignores proponents of regionalism in this period (for instance, *Les Cahiers du Sud*). Brooker and Thacker's volume on British and Irish magazines did not restrict itself to journals published only in London. A great deal of the lively section on French magazines is preoccupied with the sectarianism of the Parisian avant-garde. A broader sense of the literary field is supplied by John Attridge's exemplary chapter on the "eclectic" *Les Écrits nouveaux* and *La Revue européenne*. Attridge acknowledges that an avant-garde needs the foil of established authors and ideas to sharpen its polemics.

The French section devotes five whole chapters to Dada and surrealism, over one hundred pages in total, although one chapter covers New York Dadaist magazines (the rationale for including the Paris-based *transatlantic review* in volume 2 examining North American periodicals and *New York Dada* in volume 3 covering Europe is not compellingly argued). Ruth Hemus's chapter is enlivened by "the significant and successful efforts made by Tzara to unite the bright young things of the Parisian avant-garde around the Dada moniker" (194). Hemus argues that the appearance of Tristan Tzara's magazine *Dada* in Paris in 1920 "provided a flexible platform for Dada that evolved with the movement's preoccupations" (198), although the suspicion as to whether anything as anarchistic as Dada could "evolve" is a moot point.

Raymond Spiteri's incisive narrative of the successive histories of *Littérature* (1919–24), *La Révolution surréaliste* (1924–29), and *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* (1930–33) is a model chapter that sheds light on some extremely challenging questions. *Littérature* was pivotal in first exhibiting and then leading artists away from the "work of demoralisation" (222) associated with Dada's wartime revolt and in the direction of Breton's 1924 *Surrealist Manifesto,* with its creative emphasis on the liberating nature of automatic writing. Spiteri is extremely good at giving a flavor of the magazine's iconoclastic contents, always situated within precise socio-economic

contexts. He likens the eye-catching photomontage on the cover of *La Révolution surréaliste* to illustrations in popular science journals of the day.

*Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* was more sober in appearance and, as the title suggests, signals the fraught entanglement of surrealism with the French Communist Party: their embittered unravelling is neatly epitomized by Spiteri as evidence of the movement's "ambivalent status beyond art, yet before politics" (219). Surrealism was riven by schisms and excommunications. Eric Robertson directs enthusiastic attention to the violent ethnographic obsessions of Georges Bataille's dissident *Documents*. The French section closes with Jed Rasula's reflections on *Minotaure*, a sumptuous venue for the very brightest luminaries of surrealism, which joined *Cahiers d'Art* at the deluxe end of the art-periodical market. Rasula's contention that surrealism "played out much of its original literary initiative" (265) before the launch of *Minotaure* is an admission that the movement's true legacy was artistic, not literary.

## II. *The Low Countries*

Brussels was a major center of surrealist activity, led by René Magritte and the poet and collagist E. L. T. Mesens (who organized a *Minotaure* exhibition in Brussels in 1934). As early as the mid-1920s, the appearance of Paul Nougé's *Correspondance* mounted a surrealist challenge to the dominance of *7 Arts*, a periodical with close links to constructivism. The independent-mindedness of the Brussels avant-garde during the interwar period was more pronounced than it had been during the *fin de siècle*, when a number of symbolist magazines—in spite of contributors of the stature of Émile Verhaeren and Maurice Maeterlinck—were too much in the shadow of Paris. In Antwerp, the Flemish nationalist movement and an ingrained conservatism complicated and, to some extent, inhibited the flourishing of avant-garde periodicals. Daphné De Marneffe's chapter on Antwerp provides an informative sample of Flemish magazines little known outside of the Low Countries.

Sascha Bru explains that Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Dutch society in general were not very receptive to modernism, suggesting, perhaps with sly irony, that the existence of an avant-garde in the 1880s exhausted the need for a newer one. Theo van Doesburg's *De Stijl*, which christened a style of geometric-abstract art, was unquestionably Holland's prestige modernist magazine, even if it hailed from the old university town of Leiden. *De Stijl*'s vision of utopian community never caught on with readers, but its distinctive, elegant typography looks fresh today. In common with many of the journals in this volume, *De Stijl* has a more secure place in art history than literary history. Bru mentions in passing Mathijs Sanders's revisionist account of the Catholic journal *De Gemeenschap*. Sanders argued that if success is measured in terms of the excitement generated by new ideas among a sizeable readership, then this magazine outstripped *De Stijl* by some distance.[4]

## III. *Spain and Portugal*

Iberian modernisms were born in a climate of political decline and instability. Spain and Portugal are usually assigned a marginal place in modernism, with the greatest significance often accorded to exiles: Picasso, Buñuel, and Dalí. Lori Cole's chapter on Madrid draws out the interlocking generational networks between the Generation of '98 and the Generation of '27. The avant-garde writer Ramón Gómez de la Serna and his editorship of *Prometeo* provided a bridge between these generations. Marinetti's "Futurist Proclamation to the Spaniards" was published in *Prometeo*.

Cole's decision not to explore José Ortega y Gasset's *Revista de Occidente* in depth is a mistake. Ortega was a key theorist of the modern "dehumanization of art," and under his directorship *Revista de Occidente* was a shaping force in the earliest conceptualizations of modernism. Antonio Marichalar mediated the works of Joyce to readers of this monthly magazine.[5] As *The Criterion*'s Madrid contact, Marichalar persuaded Eliot to publish an English translation of a piece by Gómez de la Serna, which bemused even the author of *The Waste Land*.

Barcelona, the Catalan metropolis, was the home of *modernisme* (a precursor of, rather than a synonym for, Anglo-American modernism) and later incubated a vibrant strain of "Dada" during the First World War. Geoffrey West's usefully detailed chapter opens with the claim: "In the late nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth, Catalan Barcelona was considerably more receptive to outside influences and more enterprising culturally than the national capital Madrid" (392). In Barcelona, Francis Picabia published the first four issues of *391* (named in homage to Stieglitz's *291*), illustrated in machinist style, before decamping to Paris in 1917. West argues that the avant-garde little magazine *Troços* was seminal to the development of 1920s magazine culture in Barcelona, until the advent of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1923 extinguished Catalan radicalism.

Peter Brooker's introduction to the Iberian section states: "For the Portuguese avant-garde we look therefore to Pessoa, *Orpheu*, and the magazines prior to *Presença*" (368). The international reputation of Fernando Pessoa makes him an irresistible figure on which to hang a cultural history of avant-garde magazines in Lisbon. Clara Rocha's chapter traces Pessoa's role at the heart of the *Orpheu* group and his presence in seven other Portuguese magazines. Her gesture towards the cultural contact between Iberian writers is less startling than Brooker's claim that Spain and Portugal's border is "the longest in the world" (364).

## IV. *Italy*

According to Lawrence Rainey, "Nothing did more to shape the concept of the 'avant-garde' in twentieth-century culture than Futurism."[6] Futurism was born in Milan, the industrial, economic, and publishing center of Italy. Although Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's Milanese magazine *Poesia* (launched in 1905) savored of French symbolism, Eric Bulson explains that it was important in the birth of Futurism. In 1909, *Poesia* republished the Futurist Manifesto from the French newspaper *Le Figaro*. "If Futurism grew out of *Poesia*," Bulson comments, "it also outgrew *Poesia*" (519). Marinetti's association with advanced groups in Florence lent Futurism added cultural prestige. Luca Somigli's urbane chapter describes the Florentine journal *Lacerba*, edited by Giovanni Papini and Ardengo Soffici (who had split from *La Voce*, another leading magazine), as "arguably the most influential avant-garde journal of the pre-war period" (470). Somigli's chapter provides clear-sighted analysis of the aggressive and iconoclastic nature of the journal's contents—"teppismo intellettuale" (intellectual hooliganism) in the words of one commentator. Although radically experimental in cover design and layout, *Lacerba* was popular, reaching a readership of 18,000, the majority of whom were from the working class. Tensions between the Florentine modernists and Marinetti's Milan group, exacerbated by the outbreak of war, led to *Lacerba*'s fragmentation in 1915.

In 1916, *L'Italia futurista* succeeded *Lacerba* as the torch-bearer for Futurism in Florence: strident wartime nationalism was damagingly evident in its pages. Futurism had poured anticlerical scorn on Rome as a repository of passé museum culture. Nevertheless, in 1918 Marinetti, Mario Carli, and Emilio Settimelli edited *Roma futurista*. The heroic phase of Futurism was now over and Chris Michaelides claims that *Roma futurista* signals a "turning point in the history of Futurism, marking the transformation of the movement from an artistic to a political one" (572). This division is perhaps too straightforward, but as the fascist regime sought to co-opt Futurism, Michaelides notes that a complex and at times uneasy relationship developed between the two. Arguably the most successful Italian literary magazine during fascist rule and the postwar "return to order" was Enzo Ferrieri's Milan-based *Il Convegno*, whose eclectic and cosmopolitan outlook was received in the 1920s with a measure of liberal tolerance. Bulson shows that *Il Convegno* was a place where the critical consecration of contemporary writers could be achieved. In Turin, *Il Baretti*, which published Croce's philosophy and Montale's poetry, was even more courageously anti-fascist until it was forcibly shut down in the late 1920s. All Italian magazines, including *Il Convegno*, were constrained by a repressive political climate in the 1930s.

## V. *Scandinavia*

The decision to treat the geographical area of Scandinavia in a discrete section, rather than the Nordic region, excludes Finnish literature, most notably the Nobel Prize-winning novelist Frans Eemil Sillanpää, from the contents of the volume (the Baltic States are also not covered). As a reflection of this choice, the maps of Europe on page xxxiv chop off nearly all of Finland, with the exception of the Swedish-Finnish city of Åbo (Turku). Mats Jansson's chapter identifies an avant-garde group of Swedish-speaking Finns in the 1920s, including the poet Edith Södergran, who collaborated on the magazine *Ultra*. By contrast, Jansson doubts whether modernism existed at all in Denmark and Norway until after the Second World War.[7] This characterization is at odds with the writings of James McFarlane, who sought to demonstrate that Nordic modernism has not been given its due. McFarlane drew attention to the Danish critic Georg Brandes's celebration of a "modern breakthrough" pioneered by Ibsen and Strindberg. McFarlane observed that in the 1890s Scandinavia possessed "the most modernistic literature of the day."[8]

Specialists will adjudicate between these viewpoints, but even a non-specialist can see signs of avant-garde life in Copenhagen throughout the historical period covered by this volume. Among the seventeen magazines surveyed in Bjarne Søndergaard Bendtsen's whistle-stop tour of Copenhagen periodicals, Johannes Jørgensen's symbolist *Taarnet* (1893–94), Axel Salto's neo-expressionist *Klingen* (1917–20), and the surrealist *linien* (1934–39), whose driving force was the artist Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen, appear to be more than mere satellites of Paris and Berlin movements. Yet Brooker's introduction is evidence of a lack of excitement about Scandinavian modernist magazines: "If they did not inaugurate a major new 'ism', they assimilated and rearticulated major European tendencies in relation to distinctive traditions and geo-political circumstances" (616).

## VI. *Germany, Austria, Switzerland*

The section on German-language modernism offers a kaleidoscopic succession of magazines from a dozen regional centers, running to over 350 pages. It is here that questions regarding the rationale for the selection of magazines appear in their most acute form. Christian Weikop's introduction points to the "astonishing number" (693) of German little magazines published from the 1890s until the Nazi *Gleichschaltung* (coordination) of 1933 dismantled avant-garde magazine culture in Germany, which had always been heavily dependent on German Jews. Weikop seeks to wrestle this material into some order. The chapters resolve into groupings around cities: above all, Berlin, the German capital after unification in 1871 and thereafter a bustling modern industrial metropolis; Munich, which due to Bavarian court patronage had become a magnet for writers and artists, but whose star sank as Berlin's rose; Vienna, a cultural melting pot at least while it lay at the heart of the Hapsburg Empire; and, to a lesser extent, Zürich, when it was a wartime safe haven for radical writers.

This section's proliferation of provincial cities scatters the critical focus. The composition of chapters is further complicated by the transnational character of Dada and expressionism. The richness of material, then, raises questions too intricate to be solved by titles such as "From the Hapsburg Empire to the Holocaust" (Chapter 44). Once again, major periodicals of a more conservative cast (for example, Stefan George's *Blätter für die Kunst*, Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Neue deutsche Beiträge*, and *Die neue Rundschau* published by Fischer Verlag, which carried new work by Hauptmann, Rilke, and Thomas Mann) are unexamined. One is tempted to conclude that if British and Irish magazines were given an entire volume, then German-language magazines deserve a no-less-comprehensive treatment.

A reviewer's tendency to cavil must be tempered by admiration for the wealth of material on display in the seventeen chapters in this section. Diane Silverthorne's contribution claims that, alone among *fin de siècle* art magazines, the Vienna Secession's *Ver Sacrum* achieved a "singular, unified aesthetic" (993). Timothy W. Hiles draws attention to "the spirit of Munich's thriving art world" (720), which was a catalyst for magazines in the 1890s. In 1896 the Munich Secession's *Jugend* began to promote Germany's native version of art nouveau. By 1905 it had reached a very

considerable sale of 70,000 copies, before the success of expressionism rendered it old-fashioned. Andreas Kramer tells the story of *Pan*. This deluxe magazine of arts and literature, innovative in graphic design, was launched in Berlin in 1895. When the butterfly season of "art for art's sake" had faded, *Pan* was re-launched in 1910 publishing work of an expressionist character (including contributions by Georg Heym, Kurt Hiller, and Gottfried Benn).

Douglas Brent McBride's chapter embraces the two most dynamic magazines espousing expressionism: Herwath Walden's *Der Sturm* and Franz Pfemfert's *Die Aktion*. Both journals have acquired a legendary status. McBride cuts through the myths that have enveloped accounts of the activities within Berlin's Café des Westens to take a hard look at matters of finance, marketing, and audience. McBride contends that: "Like no movement before it or since, Expressionism was constituted in the pages of periodicals" (773)—although the vorticist periodical *BLAST* has an equally strong claim to this achievement. A single issue of Hugo Ball's *Cabaret Voltaire*, published in Zürich in June 1916, marked the advent of Dada. Christian Weikop picks up the trail in Berlin where the political stakes for Dadaists were higher and where "Dada posed an iconoclastic challenge to the spiritual cathedral of Expressionism" (816). Edward Timms follows satirist Karl Kraus's *Die Fackel* from *fin de siècle* Vienna to the "shadow of the swastika" (1014). This chapter is the most elegant and methodologically sophisticated contribution to this volume, providing a remarkable diagram of those "Vienna Circles" representing the creative interactions among fifteen overlapping groups centered on a dominant personality (Kraus, Freud, Schoenberg, and so on) during the years 1900–14. Timms finds a space "for the phenomenon of conservative modernism" (1022).

## VII. *East-Central Europe*

The Danube-oriented, decapitated Hapsburg territories covered in this section present a patchwork of languages and cultural traditions, each situated within nations that emerged from the Treaty of Versailles. Brooker's introduction treads cautiously and skillfully through tangled political and ethnic issues, pointing to the tensions between nationalism and internationalism in a postwar Central European avant-garde where "aesthetics became a near immediate expression of cultural politics" (1059). In Prague, a vibrant Czech nationalism following independence shook off Austrian and German traditions to embrace Russian communist influences. Karel Teige was the leader of an intellectual circle who published in *Revoluční sborník Devětsil*, whose manifesto proclaimed a complete break with the "capitalist" past. The *Devětsil* group had links with the Serbo-Croat journal *Zenit*, edited by the charismatic Ljubomir Micić, first in Zagreb and then in Belgrade. Subtitled an "international review for new art," *Zenit*, in the words of Laurel Seely Voloder and Tyrus Miller, exhibited "a generic avant-garde will to ascend and transcend" (1101), albeit never wholly free of avant-garde caprice or contradiction. The revolutionary energy of these publications was ultimately sapped by domestic politics and Stalin's purge of the Russian intelligentsia. It is worth noting that attention to what chapter 47 titles the "Yugoslavian crucible" does not extend to the rest of the Balkans, thereby omitting any discussion of Bulgarian or Greek modernisms.

In Budapest, bourgeois liberalism was ruffled by Lajos Kassák, whom Brooker describes as "surely one of the most impressive figures of this period" (1060). Kassák's magazine *Ma* championed radicalism in art and literature, as well as the music of Bartók, before political pressures forced the journal into exile in Vienna. While many of the most talented Romanian writers and artists—notably, Tzara, Brâncuși, and Ionesco—ventured abroad, avant-garde circles in Bucharest were nourished by international currents. Irina Livezeanu argues that constructivist *Contimporanul* was "determined and dynamic" (1170), as indeed was *unu*, a shorter-lived neo-surrealist magazine.

Polish modernism struggled to escape the shadow of a nineteenth-century nationalist romanticism and ripened only slowly into maturity. Due to partition, Poland had possessed several intellectual centers (Cracow, Poznań, Warsaw) with differing international affiliations. After independence, Futurist and constructivist groups sprang up in Cracow and Warsaw, establishing a series of journals. Przemysław Strożek's sober chapter awards a bouquet to *Skamander* as

"the leading literary journal" (1193) in interwar Poland, although it is apparently not modernist enough to receive full treatment in this volume. The Jewish avant-garde group in Łódź who collaborated on *Yung-yidish* deserves a special mention—a beacon of Yiddish culture in Europe which would be decimated by the Holocaust.

## VIII. *Russia, Soviet Union, Ukraine*

The explosion of modernist experimentation in both the pre-revolutionary and early post-revolutionary period in Russia presents an embarrassment of riches with which modernist studies is still coming to terms. Theories and practices of an astonishingly radical sophistication walked hand in hand not only in literature but in film, theater, music, painting, and the plastic arts. So far as Russian modernist magazines are concerned, this section represents exploratory work opening up seams hitherto hidden from a non-Russian readership. Brooker's introductory overview states: "Between the 1880s to the 1930s Russia was witness to a swathe of artistic groups shifting swiftly through the broad categories of Symbolism, Futurism, Suprematism, and Constructivism" (1238). The pre-revolutionary literary scene in Saint Petersburg and Moscow was presided over by the Russian symbolists, cultivated upper-class aesthetes who published in handsomely produced magazines such as *Vesy* (1904–09), which Oleg Minin characterizes as "the first Russian modernist periodical to have originated and to have been published in Moscow" (1277).

In 1912, the Russian Futurists published an abrasive manifesto expressing contempt for what they considered the decadence of Russian literature. Two years later, they consolidated this groundwork with their first periodical. Futurisms would dominate post-revolutionary Soviet cultural life for a short period. In the pro-revolutionary journal *Iskusstvo Kommuny*, editor Osip Brik's doctrinaire materialist conception of Futurism viewed the artist as a worker at the service of the revolution. However, the poetry of many Futurists was so linguistically bizarre that it was quite worthless as propaganda. Velimir Khlebnikov and Aleksei Kruchenykh were the most formally radical Futurist poets, but the dominant genius was Vladimir Mayakovsky—a love poet of arresting power, laureate of the technological future and of the transfigured modern cityscape. He was a talented graphic artist, and his poems are inventive in their typography and layout, constitutive of dynamic Futurist rhythms. Mayakovsky founded *Lef* (Left Front of the Arts) in Moscow in 1923. For two years he promoted "Cubo-Futurism" in its pages as a non-representational art, although Christina Lodder stresses that *Lef* was a sustained attempt "to produce what has been called 'Communist Futurism'" (1304).

Trotsky's placing of *Lef* and Futurism in *Literature and Revolution* (1924) as a pre-revolutionary art was an ominous sign of the coming times. Emily Finer's chapter recounts the criticism directed at *Lef* from more orthodox communist periodicals. In *Novyi Lef*, launched in 1927 with a constructivist cover design by Aleksandr Rodchenko, Mayakvosky struck a more conciliatory note about the social function of art. When the alliance between Futurists and Bolshevists broke down, it had tragic consequences. By the time of Mayakovsky's suicide in 1930, Futurism was no longer a major force in Russia, although Oleh S. Ilnytzkyj's chapter suggests it flourished in Ukrainian periodicals until an official clampdown on artistic experimentalism. Constructivism survived into the 1930s, partly mitigating the disaster of state-sponsored Socialist Realism, which brought down the iron curtain on one of the most ebullient moments of creative activity in world history. A single Russian-language journal from the 1930s—*International Literature*—is covered by this volume, and a thickly textured cultural history of Stalin's brutal destruction of the avant-garde, examined by decoding the periodical record of commission, omission, and repression from these nightmare years awaits its teller. Nor does this volume examine the Russian-language émigré journals in Prague and Paris, where major figures, such as the poet Marina Tsvetaeva, continued to publish their work.

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In this volume, Jessica Horsley reflects upon the barrier that has impeded the study of Russian modernism: a "cultural barrier, seriously aggravated by the Cold War and only mildly meliorated since the 'thaw'" (757). The central contention of Greg Barnhisel's recent *Cold War Modernists* (2015) is that although the European avant-garde was a "deeply insidious threat to the social and cultural order" in the first half of the twentieth century, their writings were repurposed during the Cold War as an exemplar of democratic individualism, liberty and freedom.[9] It is worth recalling the role played by the stable of magazines run by the Congress for Cultural Freedom (secretly funded by the CIA) in defining the nature of European modernism. The CCF magazines in Britain, France, and Italy—*Encounter*, *Preuves*, and *Tempo presente*—attacked the prestige of communist writers and intellectuals in the spirit of a cultural NATO. In short, European modernism, as the editors of this volume conceptualize it, did not exist in 1940. This volume has not so much reconstructed European modernism as read an ideologically inflected defense of it (forged during the institutional pressures of the Cold War) into the European literature of the years 1880–1940. Moreover, synoptic period labels always draw attention to what Giovanni Cianci and Caroline Patey call dissonant "irregularities and fractures rather than any alleged homogeneity."[10]

When Brooker and Thacker proposed the Modernist Magazines Project a decade ago, they quoted Michael Levenson: "A coarsely understood Modernism is at once an historical scandal and a contemporary disability."[11] When I began my doctorate on *The Criterion* in the late 1990s, I was dissatisfied with existing methodologies for interpreting modernist magazines and noted a "lofty distaste" that academic critics sometimes displayed towards the "commodification of writing in the market-place."[12] Such remarks appear quaint today, when tracing periodical networks—the cornerstone of my thesis—is a commonplace of modernist studies and when some essays on modernist magazines pay more attention to advertisements than to literature. With the digitization of periodicals on the Modernist Magazines Project, the Modernist Journals Project, and the Princeton Blue Mountain Project, it is now easier for researchers to make an exhaustive study of complete files of magazines. All the same, the "materialist turn" in modernist studies gives us grounds for pause. Is it controversial to suggest that modernist poetry demands more complex and concentrated forms of attention than postulating an audience for commercial advertisements? Many of the 133 chapters in this *Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* deploy a more sociological than a recognizably literary-critical methodology. Brooker and Thacker's attention to "periodical codes" (21) is welcome, and yet as the philosopher John Grote remarked, the advancement of knowledge lies in distinction, not aggregation. After more than a million words, the editors of these three volumes face the prospect of an ever-expanding field of modernist journals: but the concept of modernism that can encompass *La Révolution surréaliste*, *Scrutiny*, and the *New Yorker* is stretched almost to breaking point.

## Notes

1. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, "Movements, Magazines and Manifestos," *Modernism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 200–01.

2. Christopher Butler, *Early Modernism: Literature, Music and Painting in Europe 1900–1916* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), xv.

3. For details see Stephen Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism: Mystic Modernism in Postwar Paris, 1919–1933* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

4. See Mathijs Sanders, "Maritain in the Netherlands: Pieter Van der Meer de Walcheren and the Cult of Youth," *The Maritain Factor: Taking Religion into Interwar Modernism* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 98.

5. For a thoroughly researched account of Marichalar's role in European periodical networks, see Gayle Rogers, *Modernism and the New Spain: Britain, Cosmopolitan Europe, and Literary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 37–43, 77–93, 113–124.

6. Lawrence Rainey, "Continental Interlude I: Futurism (1909–14)," *Modernism: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 1.

7. See Mats Jansson, "Scandinavia," *Encyclopedia of Literary Modernism*, ed. Paul Poplawski (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003), 369–71.

8. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, "The Name and Nature of Modernism," *Modernism* (1976), 42–43.

9. Greg Barnhisel, *Cold War Modernists: Art, Literature, and American Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 1.

10. Caroline Patey and Giovanni Cianci, "Introduction," *Transits: The Nomadic Geographies of Anglo-American Modernism* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2010), xiv.

11. Michael Levenson, "Introduction," *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

12. Jason Harding, *The Criterion: Cultural Politics and Periodical Networks in Interwar Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 2.