



**HAL**  
open science

# Homo Duplex: Ford Madox Ford's Experience and Aesthetics of Alterity

Isabelle Brasme

► **To cite this version:**

Isabelle Brasme. Homo Duplex: Ford Madox Ford's Experience and Aesthetics of Alterity. Isabelle Brasme. Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2020, 978-2-36781-343-1. hal-04386259

**HAL Id: hal-04386259**

**<https://hal.science/hal-04386259>**

Submitted on 11 Jun 2024

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial - NoDerivatives 4.0 International License





# Homo Duplex

*Ford Madox Ford's Experience  
and Aesthetics of Alterity*



## « Horizons anglophones »

Direction collégiale

Comité scientifique

Vincent DUSSOL, Jean-Michel GANTEAU, Judith MISRAHI-BARAK,  
Anne-Marie MOTARD, Christine REYNIER

La collection « Horizons anglophones » publie des recueils et des monographies en anglais et en français dans les domaines des littératures, arts, cultures et sociétés des pays anglophones. Elle se décline en quatre séries :

- *PoCoPages*, anciennement *Carnets du Cerpac*, a pour vocation d'étudier les littératures, arts et cultures dans la sphère des études postcoloniales.
- *Politiques et Sociétés* vise à observer les évolutions récentes des sociétés contemporaines dans une perspective pluridisciplinaire et comparative.
- *Present Perfect*, créée en 2005, publie des volumes qui ouvrent des perspectives originales sur la littérature et les arts britanniques du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle jusqu'à nos jours.
- *Profils Américains* a publié entre 1991 et 2010 vingt-deux volumes dont chacun était consacré à un écrivain américain. Souhaitant ne plus se limiter à la critique littéraire, elle s'ouvre dorénavant aux autres domaines de la culture américaine (arts, cinéma, musique, etc.).

Cette collection, dirigée par des membres d'EMMA (équipe « Études montpelliéraines du monde anglophone »), a pour ambition de réunir des contributions de spécialistes du monde entier et de favoriser le dialogue dans ces domaines de recherche.

« Horizons anglophones »  
*Série Present Perfect*

Homo Duplex  
*Ford Madox Ford's Experience  
and Aesthetics of Alterity*

*Edited by*

Isabelle BRASME

*Ouvrage publié avec le concours de la Ford Madox Ford Society*

2020

PRESSES UNIVERSITAIRES DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE

*Avec le soutien financier de*

**F**ord  
Madox  
Ford  
Society

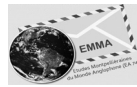


Illustration de couverture :  
Ford Madox Ford and student, Olivet College.  
Letter from Ford Madox Ford to his wife Elsie, 1904.

Mots-clés : Alterity, Ford Madox Ford, Literary Collaboration, Modernism,  
Psychoanalysis, World War One.

*Tous droits réservés PULM, 2020.*

ISBN 978-2-36781-343-1

# Contents

Isabelle BRASME	
<i>Introduction</i>	9
<b>1 The Other in Ford's Making</b>	
Sara HASLAM	
<i>Elsie, fiction, and collaboration</i>	21
Helen CHAMBERS	
<i>Elsie Martindale and Joseph Conrad, Readers, Critics, Co-writers</i>	43
<b>2 Ford as Other: The German Period</b>	
Zineb BERRAHOU-ANZUINI	
<i>'At Home in Germany': Ford as 'the Desirable Alien'</i>	63
Lucinda BORKETT-JONES	
<i>'My Friend the Enemy': Ford's Construction of the German Other in Wartime</i>	87
<b>3 The War as Ford's Radical Experience of Alterity</b>	
Robert HAMPSON	
<i>Touch and Intimacy in Ford Madox Ford's novels</i>	107
Harry RICKETTS	
<i>The Great War and Othering the Self: Siegfried Sassoon and Ford Madox Ford</i>	131
<b>4 Aesthetics of Alterity in <i>The Good Soldier</i></b>	
Seamus O'MALLEY	
<i>Spa Modernism: Freud's Dora and Ford's The Good Soldier</i>	141
Leslie DE BONT	
<i>'I am so near to all these people': Narrative Alterity in Ford's The Good Soldier and Sinclair's Tasker Jevons</i>	155

## 5 Historical Alterity in Ford's Fiction

Laurence DAVIES

*So Far and Yet so Near: Ford and the Otherness of History* 175

Georges LETISSIER

*Napoleonic Fiction Twinning: Ford Madox Ford's A Little Less Than Gods (1928) and Joseph Conrad's Suspense (1926)* 193

# Introduction

Isabelle BRASME

Université de Nîmes—EMMA, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3

‘Identity can only occur through alterity’.<sup>1</sup> This statement by Henri Meschonnic, in his work about the ethics and politics of translation practices, seems particularly apt for an author such as Ford Madox Ford, who constantly navigated between England, Germany and France, and thus lived in a perpetual translating mode, poised between languages and cultures. Ford’s duality has been an abiding paradigm in much of the criticism devoted to the author since the publication of Max Saunders’ critical biography, *A Dual Life*, in 1996.<sup>2</sup> The two-volume monograph reignited scholarly interest in Ford, played an immense role in the vitality of Fordian studies worldwide, and can still be considered today as one of the richest and most informative works on Ford. The notion of duality has thus been at the heart of many studies of Ford, and indeed appears to account in an illuminating and highly functional manner for the singularity and ambivalence of Ford’s place in time: poised between the nineteenth and the early twentieth century; in geography: between the city and the country, between England, France, and Germany; and in aesthetics: between the formidable influence of his grandfather and the Pre-Raphaelites, and the avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century. The aim of this collective volume is to investigate a specific aspect of duality—that best expressed in the phrase used by Ford himself, *homo duplex*. Max Saunders initially describes it as such:

---

1. My translation. Original: ‘L’identité n’advient que par l’altérité’. Henri MESCHONNIC, *Éthique et politique du traduire* (Lagrasse: Verdier, 2007) 9.

2. Max SAUNDERS, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, vols I and II (Oxford: OUP, 1996, reissued with new preface 2012); subsequently referred to throughout the volume as ‘Saunders I’ and ‘Saunders II’.

It is an idea which informs much in his life and work: the difference between his various selves, especially between his pre-war and post-war incarnations; the similarities he found between himself and others. But it particularly stands for the writer as someone who is, precisely, both a life and its works. (Saunders I 2–3)

The phrase *homo duplex* thus encapsulates the productive tension between identity and difference, and takes on particular significance for Ford as a writer.

In recent years, a renewed emphasis has been put in literary studies on the notion of alterity in literature, following the work of Derek Attridge<sup>3</sup> or Jean-Jacques Lecercle and Ronald Shusterman.<sup>4</sup> It appears this notion may be fecund in approaching Ford Madox Ford's writing, and may help refine the notion of duality to a further degree, focusing on the relationship and the tension between the two terms articulated in this duality. Analysing the notion of duality from the perspective of alterity allows us to explore—yet again—a *double* form of alterity that is at work in Ford's life and writing: the alterity of the outside world, and the alterity from within. Inseparable from the notion of duality, indeed, is the notion that alterity is fundamental to identity; that contact with otherness allows for the emergence and construction of the self. Paul Ricœur voices this paradox as an 'acquired identification by which some other enters into the composition of the same'.<sup>5</sup> This definition of the subject via otherness, however, occurs without any blurring of the boundaries between identity and alterity. Central to Emmanuel Lévinas's work on alterity, indeed, is the notion that whilst the subject is dependent on, and in eternal debt to the Other to define itself, the Other remains radically alien, and irreducible to the same.<sup>6</sup>

Going back to the notion of '*homo duplex*', then, Saunders' analysis of the phrase is especially enlightening in his chapter entitled 'Ford's Autobiography', in the second volume of his monograph—the whole chapter is indeed highly relevant to the question here at play:

---

3. Derek ATTRIDGE, *The Singularity of Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).

4. Jean-Jacques LECERCLE and Ronald SHUSTERMAN, *L'Emprise des signes. Débat sur l'expérience littéraire* (Paris: Seuil, 2002).

5. My translation. Original: 'Identifications acquises par lesquelles de l'autre entre dans la composition du même'. Paul RICŒUR, *Soi-même comme un autre* (Paris: Seuil, 1990) 146. English translation: Paul RICŒUR, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen BLAMEY (Chicago: Chicago UP), 1994).

6. Emmanuel LÉVINAS, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso LINGIS (1969, Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1999); *Otherwise than Being, or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso LINGIS (1978, Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 2000).

Published writers are public people, and ‘every public man has a dual personality’, wrote Ford; ‘is, that is to say, *homo duplex*’.<sup>7</sup> [. . .] Not only are authors particularly subject to what he called ‘the agonies of the duplex personality’, but it makes them particularly sensitive to all human contradictions. (Saunders II 463)

This remark pinpoints the dual source of alterity: from within and from the outside, and its crucial role in Ford’s experience and aesthetics. For if the focus in the aforementioned quotations is on Ford’s own identity as a writer, the paradigm of *homo duplex* and the question of the subject’s relationship with the Other also vastly contribute to shape his fictional writing, characterisation, and aesthetic choices.

Derek Attridge’s *The Singularity of Literature* is helpful to negotiate the transition from the role of alterity in the construction of the subject from a philosophical standpoint, to the more specific field of literature. His chapter on ‘Creation and the other’ is especially apt for our purposes. According to Attridge, alterity lies at the core of literature: ‘Verbal creation [...] is a handling of language whereby something we might call “otherness”, or “alterity”, or “the other”, is made, or allowed, to impact upon the existing configurations of an individual’s mental world’ (Attridge 19). Attridge poses the dynamic relation to alterity as a condition for the emergence of literature. Literary creation is possible when the other—from the outside or from within—is accepted and embraced:

Creation is as much a matter of alertness to hints of as yet unexplored possibilities as it is of skillful handling of known materials. By contrast with creation, straightforward *production*, what is often called ‘making’, introduces no alterity and instigates no transformation of the cultural field: it redeploys existing components according to accepted norms. (Attridge 25)

In the same vein, in an interview about *L’Emprise des signes*, a volume he co-authored with Ronald Shusterman, Jean-Jacques Lecercle declared: ‘true literature is not the place where identity is being asserted, but rather the place of auspicious contact with alterity’.<sup>8</sup> Rather than constructing a fixed representation of identity, literature enacts the very process of self-discovery, through the subject’s interaction with alterity.

7. Ford Madox FORD, *Between St Dennis and St George* (London: Haskell House, 1915) 24.

8. My translation. Original: ‘La vraie littérature n’est pas le lieu de revendication d’identité mais plutôt le lieu de contact faste avec l’altérité’. Jean-Jacques LECERCLE, ‘Littérature et Altérité : Entretien avec Jean-Jacques Lecercle’, *Vox Poetica*, <http://www.vox-poetica.org/entretiens/intLecercle.html> (last accessed 6 Sept. 19).



How does this ‘auspicious contact with alterity’ occur in Ford Madox Ford’s writing? What are the conditions for its success? What exactly is ‘the other’ for Ford as an individual and a writer, and within his literary work? What kind of relationship with alterity is being enacted in his writing, and how does this relationship impact and contribute to shape Ford’s particular—or to use Attridge’s phrasing, *singular*—mode of literary creation?

This volume interrogates the role of alterity in Ford’s self-discovery as a writer, and subsequently, in the elaboration of his fictional writing. It is therefore articulated along two main axes: the first one is biographical, and explores the major role that contact with others, or with alterity, played in Ford’s self-construction, as well as in his reconstruction as someone else: from Ford Hermann Hueffer to Ford Madox Ford. The second perspective is literary, and demonstrates that alterity works as a central paradigm in Ford’s writing.

This collective volume is issued from a conference entitled ‘Ford Madox Ford and the Other’ that was held at the University Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3 in September, 2017, and in no way means to be exhaustive and conclusive on the topic of alterity in Ford’s life and writing. Rather, it may be regarded as a starting point that may initiate further thought and debate.

## The Other in Ford’s Making

The first two chapters were written conjointly and work as a fascinating pair, bringing to the foreground an aspect of Ford’s *Bildung* that has hitherto been vastly overlooked: the influence of his wife, Elsie Martindale, on his emergence as a writer. Both papers stem from a close reading of Ford and Elsie’s correspondence and of some of Ford’s unpublished early manuscripts, and quote letters, diaries, and fiction that have been to this day mostly ignored—or unknown—and unpublished. Some of these documents were only recently made available to Sara Haslam on her visit to the Lamb family in 2019, thanks to Katharine Hueffer Lamb’s grandson (and Ford’s great-grandson) Charles. Haslam’s chapter, ‘Elsie, Fiction, and Collaboration’, examines at close range the relationship between Ford and Elsie such as it transpires from their intensive correspondence and from Elsie’s diaries, and makes the unusual and strongly convincing argument that Elsie was a most significant and stimulating agent in Ford’s emergence as a writer in the mid-1890s. Haslam’s chapter starts by emphasising

the element of alterity inherent in the writer's stance, or 'heterotext',<sup>9</sup> which she defines as 'Fordian metadrama', and is paramount to Ford's self-construction as a writer. In his letters to Elsie, Ford explicitly mentions their budding relationship as a 'tale'. Yet beyond Ford's paternalistic tone towards Elsie—his reading advice, his rewriting of their relationship as a medieval-inspired romance—, Haslam demonstrates how their ardent, correspondence allowed him to project and construct himself as an artist—and through a dynamics of mutual emulation, had the same effect on Elsie's emergence as a writer. More than that, Haslam's unearthing of Elsie's diaries demonstrates that the pair were, in fact, co-writers.

Helen Chambers starts by highlighting the influence of Ford's family members on his formative reading, as delineated in much of his memoirs and fiction, and investigates its role in his correspondence with Elsie, implying a shared education and cultural background that greatly contributed to strengthening their mutual understanding. As Chambers states, 'the letters reveal a tightly knit intellectual, as well as emotional, dyad', where emotions are fostered by literary influences, and were philosophical ideas—'our philosophy', as Ford often wrote to Elsie—, and even co-writing, are underpinned by passion. The collaboration between Ford and Elsie has been vastly ignored, and this acknowledgement of Elsie as this Other in Ford's early writing paves the way for captivating new research. In Ford and Elsie's writerly relationship, what matters is not the 'I' of each writer, but a 'we', the possibility of a community—where one becomes at turns active and passive, subject and object, writer and reader, in an interdependent relationship of mutual vulnerability and mutual benefit.

## Ford's German Period: Becoming Ford as Other

The second pair of chapters centres on another form of otherness—one of a national nature, during Ford's 'German period' from 1903 to 1914. Ford is here placed literally in the position of the other—or *alien*, to use Violet Hunt's phrasing in the title of the book she published in 1913, which was written during Ford and Hunt's stay in Germany, and to which Ford contributed. The full title—*The Desirable Alien: At Home in Germany*—indeed epitomises the tensions inherent in Ford's

---

9. Marjorie STONE and Judith THOMPSON (eds), *Literary Couplings: Writing Couples, Collaborators, and the Construction of Authorship* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006) 19.

relationship to his father's country. Zineb Berrahou-Anzuini focuses on the complex and fraught relationship between Ford and Germany, and the ways in which it reflects more personal forms of alienation—from his wife Elsie, as he attempted to disengage himself from his marriage by trying to obtain a divorce in Germany, and then from Violet Hunt herself. Berrahou-Anzuini's chapter draws on research that she conducted in Giessen, where she found unpublished archives and letters between Ford and his German relatives that contribute to elucidate his failed attempt at naturalisation. These documents attest to the complexity of Ford's relationship to Germany, at a time of growing antagonism between Britain and Germany. Ford thinks of Germany as his *Heimat*—a word that shares the same root with 'home'—and yet never stops thinking of himself as primarily British, and therefore as an outsider in Germany. Ford's stance as *homo duplex* is here of a national and cultural nature, and resists simple, clear-cut interpretation.

Lucinda Borkett-Jones's chapter investigates the evolution of Ford's relationship to Germany as the First World War broke out, and the shift of his own name from Ford Hermann Hueffer, to Ford Madox Hueffer, to Ford Madox Ford in 1919, thus erasing every German component from his official identity. Borkett-Jones provides us with a nuanced interpretation of Ford's description of Germany in Hunt's *The Desirable Alien* as his 'beloved country', or of Giessen as 'utopia', and argues that Ford's apparently unreserved love for pre-war Germany is in fact mostly staged, and fails to account for the whole of his experience there. This allows for a better understanding of Ford's evolution towards an opposition to Germany as the war broke out. Conversely, Ford's propaganda articles during the war express a more complex and ambivalent criticism of Germany than has usually been perceived. Borkett-Jones thus invites a re-examination of Ford's propaganda articles on Germany among the 'Literary Portraits' that he published in *Outlook* in 1914 and 1915. The identity of his German enemy is shifting, and as a result, Ford's own identity is in flux, both due to his own German paternal heritage, which he never denies, and to his need of reasserting his own British identity at a time of suspicion.

## The War as Ford's Radical Experience of Alterity

As Ford arrived at the front in 1916, the war provoked schisms of another form in his identity—moving from a cultural and national

form of alterity, to one of a psychological and ontological nature. In Ford's representation of the war experience, the soldier becomes the quintessential *homo duplex*. Talking about the soldier at the front, Ford describes him as follows: 'He is indeed, then, *homo duplex*: a poor fellow whose body is tied in one place, but whose mind and personality brood eternally over another distant locality'.<sup>10</sup> The experience of the man at war is thus the epitome of what Ford considers human experience to be, and of what he considered behaved modern writers to render, as he described in his 'On Impressionism' essays—essays that were concurrent with the beginning of the war. The war zone thus appears as the very locus of impressionist experience, or as Saunders puts it, and in an echo to 'On Impressionism': 'the soldier, like the impressionist (or a reader), is in one place with his mind somewhere quite other' (Saunders II 197).<sup>11</sup> Using Jean-Luc Nancy's and Mark Paterson's analyses of touch and Santanu Das's monograph on *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* as starting points, Robert Hampson's chapter examines the semantics and hermeneutics of touch in *The Good Soldier* and *Parade's End*. The relationship to alterity explored through this lens takes on an ethical dimension. The chapter also explores alterity of a wholly different order—not that of the other subject, but the radical otherness of the object that impinges on the subject, particularly in the form of mud, and that threatens the subject with dissolution. The very essence of being is jeopardised by the brutal encounter of otherness.

Harry Ricketts' chapter adopts a different perspective to account for Ford's representation of the experience of alterity in wartime. Offering a cross reading of Siegfried Sassoon's *The Complete Memoirs of George Sherston* (1928–1936) and Ford's *Parade's End* (1924–1928), Ricketts points out the autobiographical undertones in both sets of novels. The chapter considers the ways in which the filter of fiction, by othering the authors' selves, allows them to mediate their experience of the war. Beyond the more evident psychological element inherent in this process, Ricketts demonstrates that this strategy allows both authors to navigate their fraught relationship to Englishness, via protagonists that appear at first sight as quintessential embodiments of English values, yet on closer inspection share their creators' deep ambivalence towards Albionism.

---

10. Ford Madox FORD, *It Was the Nightingale* (London: Heinemann, 1934) 197.

11. 'We are almost always in one place with our minds somewhere quite other', Ford Madox FORD, 'On Impressionism', *Poetry and Drama* 2.6 (June–December 1914) 167–174 (173).

## Aesthetics of Alterity in *The Good Soldier*

In the early twentieth century, Saussure foregrounded language as an eminently human and social tool: 'Language [. . .] is the social side of speech, outside the individual who can never create nor modify it by himself; it exists only by virtue of a sort of contract signed by the members of a community'.<sup>12</sup> Following Saussure's work, the notion of language as a consensual or conventional code shared by members of a community, so that individuals may understand one another, has been uppermost in the minds of thinkers and writers in the early twentieth century—either to support it, or to expose the limits and frequent failures of such a contract. Language is experienced, and experimented with, as an imperfect tool allowing one to bridge the gap with the other. The possible failure of this communication is at the heart of *The Good Soldier*: through a typically Fordian paradox, this very dysfunction constitutes the structural linchpin of the narrative process, in the tentative and questionable relationship between the narrator and the implied reader; it is also one of the major themes of the novel, through the myriad deceptions and misunderstandings that occur between the characters, underlining the impossibility to commune with others.

Both chapters in this section use a close cross-examination of *The Good Soldier* with another text to bring out the irreducible alterity of the narrator in *The Good Soldier*. Seamus O'Malley explores the striking resemblance between the narrative processes in Ford's novel and in Sigmund Freud's *Dora: an Analysis of a Case Hysteria* (1905). This has the dual consequence of examining Freud's text from a literary and narratological standpoint on the one hand, and of considering Dowell's narrative as therapeutic on the other. While Freud's text is demonstrated as wholly partaking of modernist technique, the psychoanalytic potential of Dowell's narrative is analysed in deeper detail than has hitherto been the case in criticism on *The Good Soldier*. Both texts, O'Malley argues, are the result of their authors' fascination for the subject, and their innovative narrative techniques stem

---

12. Ferdinand de SAUSSURE, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade BASKIN (New York: the Philosophical Library, 1959) 14. Original phrasing by Saussure: 'La langue [. . .] est la partie sociale du langage, extérieure à l'individu, qui à lui seul ne peut ni la créer ni la modifier ; elle n'existe qu'en vertu d'une sorte de contrat passé entre les membres de la communauté'. Ferdinand de SAUSSURE, *Cours de linguistique générale* (Paris: Payot, 1931) 31.

from Freud's and Ford's endeavours to render the impervious and unaccountable quality of the other's psyche.

Likewise, Leslie de Bont conducts a joint study of *The Good Soldier* and May Sinclair's *Tasker Jevons: the Real Story* (1916), and confronts Ford's and Sinclair's texts with a view to highlight the ways in which both narratives render the irreducible character of alterity. The impossible representation of the other is revealed as programmatic and structural in both novels. The narrators' 'rhetoric of uncertainty' produces unstable and unreliable accounts not only of others, but also of themselves as alien to themselves. Drawing from Attridge's and Ricœur's work on alterity, de Bont demonstrates that the relation to the other constitutes a mode of investigation of the self in these first-person narratives, since identity relies equally on the alterity of others and on the alterity within the self. The chapter thus demonstrates how both *The Good Soldier* and *Tasker Jevons* offer examples of Ricœur's 'narrative identity', as they 'revolve around multi-layered and unexpected experiences of alterity for the characters, the narrators, the readers and even the authors'.

## Historical Alterity in Ford's Fiction

Turning to lesser-known novels from Ford's repertoire, the final two chapters explore alterity through yet another lens: that of historical distance. Laurence Davies analyses Ford's representation of the alterity of the past via the paradigms of allochronism (Johannes Fabian) and nonsynchronism (Ernst Bloch). Starting with Nietzsche's distinction between the antiquarian, the monumental, and the critical types of historical writing, Davies delineates an intricate triangulation of these modes of writing in some of Ford's earlier novels: *The Half Moon* (1909), *The Portrait* (1910) and *The Young Lovell* (1913), through the complex entanglement of fiction and nonfiction, 'nonsynchronous thought and partisanship'. Bergson's distinction between time and duration,<sup>13</sup> to which Davies appends chronology, or 'itemised time', also proves fruitful to pinpoint the subtle relationship to temporal distance, and more largely, the individual's self-mediation within temporality in these three historical novels. The precision with which temporal alterity is approached produces an enlightening analysis of

---

13. Henri BERGSON, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (1889, Paris: PUF, 2013).

these seldom studied novels, and would also constitute helpful tools to examine Ford's better-known historical novel, *The Fifth Queen*.

Georges Letissier's chapter offers a perceptive insight into *A Little Less than Gods*, one of Ford's late fictional works (1928), and highlights the ways in which various modes of alterity intersect and interact in this complex Napoleonic novel. The dissociation provided by historical distance is investigated in terms of 'historical doubling': the author's treatment of the final days of the Napoleonic era mixes the epic and the parodic along a carnivalesque dynamics, never settling on either of these stances. Letissier uses the Fordian trope of the mirror to account for this representative mode: 'not so much wrongly, as with a distortion, as you may see in certain mirrors that broaden you out, diminish you or turn you all askew'.<sup>14</sup> Georg Lukács's analysis of the historical novel is also put forth to pinpoint the combination of historical and fictional elements—the latter often derived from Ford's experience—to generate psychological authenticity in the narrative. Beyond historical distance and doubling, the chapter reveals that *A Little Less than Gods* can be read as a complex exploration of the *homo duplex* paradigm, both at the structural and thematic levels. Letissier demonstrates that Ford's novel may be read as a form of dialogue with Joseph Conrad's own Napoleonic novel, *Suspense*, which was left unfinished when he died in 1924. It may even be regarded as a deferred form of collaboration between the two authors, despite—or perhaps, Letissier argues, thanks to—the radical distance caused by Conrad's death. The incest motif that lies at the heart of both narratives, introducing another form of reflection on questions of identity and alterity, is a solid argument in favour of this deferred tandem writing. The *homo duplex* paradigm, which we have seen to be consistently central to Ford's writing throughout his career, is here prolonged by that of *duplex auctor*—of a writer who thrives and finds his auctorial identity through a sustained, intense and multi-layered interaction with alterity. Reaching the end of this volume, it thus appears that the alterity at the heart of Ford's experience and career, and the alterity at the heart of his aesthetic choices, work in an endless loop of mutual enrichment and development.

---

14. Ford MADOX FORD, *A Little Less than Gods* (London: Duckworth, 1928) 108.

Part One

**The Other in Ford's Making**





# Elsie, fiction, and collaboration

Sara HASLAM

Open University

The playwright Tony Kushner has written that ‘[i]n the modern era it isn’t enough to write... You must also be a writer. You become a character in a metadrama into which your own dramatising has pitched you’.<sup>1</sup> This quotation, part of a prologue to a book about writing couples, collaborators and the construction of authorship, brings Ford Madox Ford immediately to mind. Being a writer meant negotiating domestic politics, emerging markets, and the real difficulty of making a living in the context of his Edwardian publishing, as I have argued elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> But Ford was first in print in the 1890s, when Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* dispensed the shock of the new, and there is much still to learn about how and why he became a writer from the years surrounding his marriage to Elsie Martindale in 1894. Elsie has received some detailed treatment in the biographies of Ford (especially Max Saunders’<sup>3</sup>) but almost none in Fordian criticism.<sup>4</sup> However, she was an integral part of Ford’s early writing

---

1. Marjorie STONE and Judith THOMPSON (eds), *Literary Couplings: Writing Couples, Collaborators, and the Construction of Authorship* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006) xi.

2. Sara HASLAM, ‘Ford as Edwardian Author: Publishers, Trends, Markets’, *The Edwardian Ford Madox Ford*, eds Laura Colombino and Max Saunders, *International Ford Madox Ford Studies* 12 (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2013) 35–48.

3. Max SAUNDERS, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, vols I and II (Oxford: OUP, 1996); subsequently referred to throughout the volume as ‘Saunders I’ and ‘Saunders II’.

4. See my Introduction to Sara HASLAM, Laura COLOMBINO and Seamus O’MALLEY (eds), *The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), as well as my co-written chapter on Ford’s letters in that volume, for an introduction to my arguments in this chapter. On Elsie’s 1903 translation of Maupassant stories, see Helen CHAMBERS, “Le Traducteur E. M. (une Femme)”: Conrad, the Hueffers and the 1903 Maupassant Translations’, *Ford Madox Ford’s Cosmopolis: Psycho-Geography, Flânerie and the Cultures of Paris*, eds Alexandra BECQUET and Claire DAVISON, *International Ford*

life, almost from the first, and to a far greater degree than has been understood to date. As collaborator, co-conspirator, fellow writer, and motive force as well as the woman with whom he eloped, she was, I argue here, the ‘Other in Ford’s Making’. Elsie was fundamental to both the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of his early career. What we already know, and possibly appreciate, about an innovative Ford—his belief in collective effort over individual glory, his hope for a republic of the arts, his impressionism—is augmented by close, gender-inflected critical attention to the woman he married and their life together. This chapter benefits from archival research in the Lamb family papers held by Charles (Ford’s great-grandson) and Gillian Lamb, most significantly consultation of two unpublished diaries kept by Elsie, and the fiction she herself was producing in the immediate aftermath of her marriage to Ford.<sup>5</sup> It offers new analysis of Ford’s fraught and fantastical journey to authorship, and his first experience of collaboration. Discussion of Ford’s unique exemplification of the author as ‘heterotext’, and the ways in which his maternal grandfather stimulated his creative life, frame my approach to Elsie and the collaborating couple she and Ford made.

## Fordian metadrama

The idea of an essential, writerly, metadrama offers a persuasive way of approaching the story of Ford’s life and career. Alan Judd quotes H. G. Wells on Ford’s ‘great system of assumed personas and dramatised selves’ as he paints a more sympathetic picture of Ford’s self-dramatisation than Arthur Mizener had done in the 1970s, as well as Ford’s related, ‘uncanny’, ability to identify with others.<sup>6</sup> Max Saunders describes in his introduction to *A Dual Life* how Ford could appear to contemporaries as ‘dangerously un-moored to fact, fantastic, uncertain, self-contradictory’ (14). But twenty-first century criticism offers a new way of reading this side of Ford. Stone and Thompson,

---

*Madox Ford Studies* 15 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016) 155–174. In paired papers at the 2017 Ford conference in Montpellier Helen Chambers and I adopted a critical approach to Elsie: via writing cultures (my paper), and (Helen’s focus) their shared reading.

5. Charles and his wife Gillian hold the majority of this family archive, in Dublin. Charles’ father, John, was Katharine Hueffer Lamb and Charles Lamb’s oldest son. I am very grateful to Charles and Gillian for the opportunity to consult the papers in their possession. During the same research trip I also met Charles’ mother, Rose, a great privilege, and listened to her memories of Katharine, her mother-in-law.

6. Alan JUDD, *Ford Madox Ford* (London: HarperCollins 1991) 6, 7–8.

who quote Kushner in their preface (see my opening quotation), argue in their chapter 'Contexts and Heterotexts' that

the paradigm of the unitary author, which has thus far proven more resistant to transformation than the idea of the unitary text, should similarly be replaced by a conception of authors as 'heterotexts', woven of varying strands of influence and agency, absorbing or incorporating different subjectivities, and speaking in multiple voices. (19)

Similar ideas are common in post-Freudian criticism, especially perhaps when discussing creative drives (as well as mental illness), but Stone and Thompson's somewhat flatter structure, describing not what is unconscious but is readily available for creative use is rarer, and more useful in this case. Ford's artist mother and musician father were significant to Ford's artistic life, of course, and have been explored as such. But Stone and Thompson's organic image of an author made like homespun cloth out of interiorised subjectivities, influences and agencies which play out in the texts they produce, suggests most obviously Ford's grandfather, the painter and Pre-Raphaelite mentor Ford Madox Brown. Brown was, arguably, the most significant agent in his adoption of the artistic life (Saunders I 23–30).

## **Ford Madox Brown and the past**

Ford adored his grandfather, but Brown, who had strong views about the proper occupation for his kin, also put the fear of God into him. When Saunders agrees with Mizener that Ford was, in a sense, 'idle' in the early 1890s, and didn't try more than once to get a job, it was because 'Brown would have blasted him out of the house' (42) if he had repeated his attempt at the civil service instead of dedicating himself to an artistic life. Saunders is not joking. Brown took Ford (and his brother Oliver) into his home in St Edmund's Terrace after the death of Francis Hueffer in 1889 and Ford wrote both lovingly and apprehensively about his sensitivity to his grandfather's world of old masters both living and dead. I do not detail here the elegiac nature of the very air Ford breathed in Brown's company (Saunders's biography does this brilliantly), but I do want to stress—because of what I note later about Ford's difficulties with finding the present tense—that Madox Brown was a historical painter. What has been termed the Calais-born Brown's 'exile's fervour' for British history after he settled in England in 1846 led to paintings of Chaucer, Wycliffe, King

Harold, Lear and Cromwell.<sup>7</sup> Even Brown's modernity (the lack of 'botanical gloss' in his landscapes, his eschewal of an artistic moral) was expressed historically (Newman 60). When Ford was at work on Brown's biography in 1895 he would study his technique, as well as his *oeuvre*, in great detail, of course, but Brown had already helped to make Ford an author, by both restricting his choices and using his influence. He became part of Ford's first book in 1891, as an illustrator, and by name (*The Brown Owl*). *The Feather*, also a fairy story, and published the following year, came complete with a frontispiece by Brown as well, and when Ford started work in 1893 on the unpublished *Idylls and Ideals, being Five Prose Idylls* by Eff Aitch-Emm, his dedicatory words were these: 'To Mr Ford Madox Brown this little book is gratefully dedicated by the Author'. The Preface told readers that Ford was providing a collection of 'short stories conceived and narrated in an Idyllo-Idealistic frame of mind'. He was looking both up (dedicating 'this *little* book') and back, employing characters he also calls 'excessively primitive', adopting the retrospective artistic lenses Brown had left around for him to use.

Brown's influence and agency were tangible in each early text. More than a 'spur to Ford's creativity' (Saunders I 26), then, Brown was a supreme influence and agent in the young author as heterotext. I don't believe Ford was at all idle in the early 90s: I believe he was struggling to contain and direct the results.

Ford's precocious success makes it seem like a straightforward matter, the decision to write. It was not. He goes on and on about it, testing it, fighting it, scared of embracing it and equally scared of what will happen if he does not act. Brown was not the only influence or agent at work in Ford as subject, and he can seem at times both overwhelmed and paralysed by the pressure these forces exerted. He dramatises the need to make a professional choice in the third of the five idylls he began in 1893, setting it in Fitzroy Square, where Brown had lived and where Cotymore, the protagonist of 'The Idyllic Courtship of Cotymore' also lives, 'along with a choice crew of literary, artistic, and literary-artistic spirits whom he looked upon with awe and reverence as being initiated in the mysteries of the arts in which

---

7. Teresa NEWMAN and Ray WATKINSON, *Ford Madox Brown and the Pre-Raphaelite Circle* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1991) 4.

he failed so signally'.<sup>8</sup> These 'literary-artistic spirits' seem close to the 'strands of influence and agency' from Stone and Thompson's model—but they are not, in the quotation below, at all useful or 'friendly' to Ford. Failure in the arts does not mean Cotymore is free to alter his course, but nor can he identify with it, try as he might: '[w]hen I say that Cotymore was aesthetic', the narrator recounts,

'I don't mean to say that he was from choice, or because he liked it, but the fact was, he thought it was the right thing... Therefore Cotymore tried hard to be artistic, literary and musical at one and the same time. His abilities as a painter, however, did not carry him any further than painting black and red sunsets, therefore he gave that up. His music, also, was rather a failure. He knew that he ought to admire Wagner<sup>9</sup> and the music of the Future and he did so immensely... [but in the end] he fell back upon Literature as a last resort and after having studied diligently the more incomprehensible sonnets of Rossetti ... he sat himself down for a course of Browning and Walt Whitman [for] ... he knew these things were very beautiful and that he ought to admire them, and therefore he did'.<sup>10</sup>

Literature as a 'last resort'? This is comedic with hindsight, considering Ford's eventual output, but, without hindsight, the sense of desperation is palpable. Cotymore does not yet possess his own benign and motivating influences, the narrator suggests, but knows that somehow he must find those that rightly belong to 'a writer', and employ them.<sup>11</sup>

After a failed attempt at publication, the bitter fate of becoming a 'Philistine' hovers over him. And so Cotymore promptly falls 'incontinently' in love with two sisters 'very much alike in face and figure', because of the 'frame of mind' he was in. '[W]ilst Lydia admired

---

8. Unpublished AMS (autograph manuscript), Cornell 4605/9.16. See SAUNDERS I 104, for more discussion of this manuscript.

9. As did Ford's father, music critic Francis Hueffer. See Nathan WADDELL, 'Ford, family and music', *The Routledge Research Companion to Ford* 79–93.

10. See note 8 above.

11. Ford's first book of memoirs (1911) was titled *Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections*. Perhaps *Ancient Lights* was a different word for the 'literary-artistic spirits' he feels plagued by here? See Saunders I 68, in which he explains that an 'ancient light is a window whose light is legally protected from obstruction by new buildings', reading Ford's use of the term as, in part, about 'anxieties of influence'. See also the autobiographical text reproduced in my Introduction to the *Routledge Research Companion to Ford* (13–15), on this subject of literature as a last resort. Late in his career, Ford was still sensitive to the idea that he had not been destined for the literary life.

and revered aestheticism, Lucy scoffed at it', and so one he woos with Dante's sonnets; the other with Twain's scorn of the Old Masters. Between them, would they help him make up his mind who to be?

Cotymore needs women to help him decide, and possibly to write about. As the fictional projection suggests, Ford already thought he himself did. After a day-trip with the Martindale family on 22 July 1892 he wrote up the experience.<sup>12</sup> This seven-page narrative, written in archaic style, opens with Ford's confession that 'although in all other things I have been unsteadfast, wavering and wanting in determination—in this alone have I been persevering, in my love for her'.<sup>13</sup> He continues, '[f]or her alone do I struggle and work, for her alone would I earn name and fame'. Later in his write-up of the trip, he notes the 'strangers present', who prevented them sharing their true minds. First of these was Elsie's sister, 'a damsel of fresh healthy colour, fair and with a sweet face and of a prettiness at first sight more apparent than that of my Love'. Mary Martindale had her role, then, which she and Elsie would reprise in the Cotymore narrative the following year.

In this hybrid text (its fictional techniques are paramount), dated 23 July, the sisters are not dramatically imbued with the differing aims of Ford's professional life, Philistine or artist, and he does not admit to falling in love with both of them, but Elsie, as he imagines her here, does help him to resolve another of his Hamlet-esque problems. She adds to Brown's imperative a new reason to write, to earn, and achieve. (One that would play a prominent part in the ensuing negotiations with her parents.) Elsie was young: seventeen. She also therefore presented Ford with the opportunity to sound a further resonance with Brown's 'exemplary' artistic life (Saunders I 27). When Brown painted his first Pre-Raphaelite painting, *The Pretty Baa-Lambs* (1851-2), the model, in eighteenth-century costume, was Emma Hill, whom he met, *she* told him, when she was fifteen (she stuck by the story but she was in fact 20 in 1849: see Newman 46). Brown taught her to read, and undertook her education, at the same time as 'family life sharpened his vision' (Newman 61). The role of paternalistic educator was an early aspect of Ford's relationship with Elsie, as he

---

12. Elsie and Ford had gone to school with each other, and the families knew one another.

13. Unpublished AMS, Cornell 4605/2.10

represented it at least. On the July trip, Ford ‘talked of the books that she should read—or at least that I would have her read for the more certain opening out of that most beauteous of all flowers, her mind’. With his naïve muse, Brown’s grandson was modelling what he then understood of artistic experience, as a way of proving he was doing his best to become a writer. Ford is working up, and practising using, the influences and agencies that *will* help him to succeed in the arts: his grandfather, and now Elsie. Ford throws his medieval-revival-inspired voice as he writes about the trip, woeful and hopeless as ‘waterborne and gliding [they] fared through the land—between banks receding and advancing’.<sup>14</sup> (Three months later, on Tennyson’s death, Ford would write his obituary; he also set his words to music [Saunders I 53 note 18; 83]). In addition, he is busy locating the dramatic conflict in the story of him and Elsie, sounding the notes of the hostile parents, and even the suicide they may need to undertake in order to be together in the ‘thereafter’.

Finally, Ford describes their time that day as ‘passed away as a tale that is told’. This 19 year-old writer needs the story to be a good one, the right one, and already he knows it as though he has read it, heard it, or told it before. Elsie and Ford’s future is from the very beginning imagined, conceived and then swiftly narrated as the past, the stuff of fairy tale, even before they have lived almost any of it. In a letter in March 1893 Ford states his belief to Elsie that the *story* will be worth repeating, to themselves and perhaps to an audience at large too: ‘we will pass a lazy, restful life in the quivering of the waters, and we will tell the tale of our loves again and again by the fire when the rain and mists are abroad’.<sup>15</sup> (This is a very different fireside tale from the one imagined 22 years later in the opening of *The Good Soldier*, but it has a similar tranquilising, other-worldly, quality.)

Ford was taking the task that Brown had set him, to become an artist, in deadly earnest. Elsie realised it with him. Elsie and Ford’s love

---

14. ‘Critics and historians agree that in nineteenth-century England the Medieval Revival was not only a powerful imaginative force in art and literature, politics and culture—most immediately apparent in the architecture of the age—but also “a territory of the mind”, inseparably interwoven with the fabric of nineteenth-century thought and touching all classes of Victorian society.’ Marion SHERWOOD, “‘To Serve as Model for the Mighty World’: Tennyson and Medievalism”, *Tennyson and the Fabrication of Englishness* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) 103.

15. This and all letters quoted are at Cornell’s Carl A. Kroch Library, held in the Ford Madox Ford Collection—this one is dated 14 March 1893. Cornell 4605/33.05.



affair, as revealed in texts such as ‘As a wounded hart’, the July diary text, but primarily in the letters that they exchanged at a frenzied rate in the early 90s, enabled Ford fully to inhabit the artistic world Brown had directed him towards; it allowed him to become an artist. Without her, he was stuck. With her, he found a perfectly pitched level of drama to respond to his grandfather and generate an imaginative life, which, for the time being, he conceived of mostly in the past tense. (‘[W]hen I have written, and whatever I have written, has been written with a view to perpetuating your memory’, Ford wrote to her.<sup>16</sup>). The couple must, however, have looked forward occasionally, for example to plan a response after her parents forbade their meeting and she ran away from home in March 1894.<sup>17</sup>

Ford and Elsie married on the 17th May, both lying about their ages to the registrar.<sup>18</sup> Ford signed the marriage certificate Joseph Leopold Ford Hermann Madox Hueffer, but there was still room for Elsie’s name. They were summoned to a hearing as Elsie’s father attempted to have her made a ward of court—before he knew they had married at Gloucester. A court order forbidding further intercourse was instituted instead, between May and June. Not just the protagonists, but all involved, ‘felt they were taking part in a novel’ (Judd 40). Or performance art, perhaps? Ford published a piece in the *Star* as the case was being heard, headed ‘A Poet’s Love Affair: A Chancery Court Chapter of *The Queen Who Flew*’, naming his latest fairy tale, which appeared in print just before their wedding. The piece began ‘In Chancery Court Nr. 2 today a rarely romantic story was unrolled before Mr Justice North...’ Alan Judd records that Elsie wore a feather in her hat during these early court appearances, a reference to Ford’s fairy tale of the same name (41), and Lamb family lore also bears witness to this act of defiant role play. The couple’s love letters over the previous two years had anticipated, and prepared them for, this moment.

---

16. Quoted in SAUNDERS I 65, n.d. but before their marriage.

17. Given Brown’s significance it’s important to note that he had died in October, 1893. The Martindales had been opposed to their relationship for some time, for reasons that included the fact that Mary, Elsie’s sister, had fallen in love with Ford too. Ford’s letters to Elsie reveal they knew that she was suffering, and he expresses their responsibility to be kind and careful with her. On 2 May, 1893, Ford wrote to Elsie about the fact that her parents were trying to separate them, temporarily at this point, ‘for Mary’s sake’—and he notes that ‘it behoves us to weigh it well’. Cornell 4605/33.08.

18. Ford’s age was recorded as 24, Elsie’s as 21. Judd writes that ‘Katharine Hueffer Lamb was later to say that her mother had not planned to elope but simply to flee from her parents ... until [they] agreed she could go on seeing Ford’ (Judd 39–40).



FIG. 1 — A studio photograph of Elsie with infant Christina, c.1898

## Elsie: the ‘Other’ in Ford’s making

Many of the richest and least known sources of critical material for thinking about Ford’s pitching into his metadrama, and of his related negotiation of the border territories between fiction and reality, self and other, are early, in his first fictions, and in the narrative relationship with Elsie that was building at the same time. Ford felt, and needed, the power of her character, as evidenced by the texts already quoted here, as well as by the many letters he wrote to her. He also felt the antagonism their affair caused, and responded in kind: ‘It is evident that an advance all along the line is meditated by your mamma and her relatives—therefore let us be prepared to act’.<sup>19</sup> These letters are vital for understanding all that Elsie represented to him as they fell in love.

Their relationship was enabled, and even partially created, by a late-Victorian postal service which meant that they mostly made their love on paper, according to narrative device. In her book about the Victorian revolution in letter writing, Catherine J. Golden points out that in 1830 the post office was contributing more to the exchequer than customs and excise *combined* under Charles II.<sup>20</sup> By 1895, however, the Post Office was in decline, and so Elsie and Ford were in at the swan song, doing their best to keep its profits high and taking advantage of its ‘affordability and efficiency’ (3). Golden also writes about the Victorian post as part of that era’s commodification of ‘things’ (5), and the couple used it sometimes multiple times a day as they honed their writing craft and their status as wronged lovers, as well as conducting their love affair. The Penny Post was accused of bringing the wrong family together, spreading vice and slander, and promiscuity. (Mr and Mrs Martindale may well have agreed.) Its ability to bring ‘any two people into contact’ would undoubtedly have been of great imaginative interest to a writer who would become similarly intrigued by the telephone later in his career.<sup>21</sup> The contact by letter could be almost as profligate if desired. ‘From 1857 until the First World War, central London offered twelve daily deliveries, and suburban areas had six or seven, with service beginning as early as

19. ? June, 1893; Cornell 4605/33.013. We only have Ford’s letters to Elsie, which were sold to Cornell by the family. We do not have hers to Ford from this period.

20. Catherine GOLDEN, *Posting It: The Victorian Revolution in Letter Writing* (University Press of Florida, 2009) 1.

21. As demonstrated in the novels *A Call* (1910) and *A Man Could Stand Up-* (1926) (Golden 155).

7am and extending as late as 8.50pm' (197). Ford and Elsie relied on the postal service. ('Here I am back from St E[dmund's] T[errace] & find your letter awaiting me' Ford writes on 22 July, 1893, his reply 'ought to have reached you—but the times are out of joint [...] & so are the posts.'<sup>22</sup>) What would they have done without it?

Often Ford's letters begin with an account of whether her latest has reached him, or its impact on him by its absence ('My dearest, dearest love, Your longed for letter has at last come'; 'I have got home ... and I have been waiting anxiously for your dear letter to come').<sup>23</sup> There are so many of them that they replicate a conversation, complete with misunderstandings and confusions ('I have got home at last, but it's later than ever and there is no dear letter from you to cheer me up and so I am miserable'; 'I could not for the life of me work out why your dear letter never came'<sup>24</sup>) that it takes a few hours to sort out—but, constructed in prose as they are, they marry the immediacy of one communicative form to the narrative tension of the other. Ford regularly charts her letters' transformative effects, leaving the (eavesdropping) reader either relieved or asking, 'what happened next?': 'I have got home and I have been waiting anxiously for your dear letter to come till now and now I have it and I kiss it and kiss it and try and kiss away the dismalness';<sup>25</sup> '[t]he last post has gone and brought me nothing—nor did I indeed expect anything but only hoped—and since the hope is deferred my heart is sick'.<sup>26</sup> But the post also often provides a helpful punctuation, a pause in the drama. After writing desperately on 1 May that 'oh my dear, I love you, love you, love, love, love, love, love you more, more, more, more, more every second and perhaps, after all, these trials [are] only one trial and nothing worse may follow' Ford adds a postscript: 'if you do not manage to write before the quarter to 1 you had better address it to Brook Green'.<sup>27</sup>

Ford's letters to Elsie also reveal that she helped him work out (or to 'perform') some of the politics of Brown's household: loving her and battling with her parents gave Ford the opportunity to enact his grandfather's distaste for the middle classes, for example. (In 'Cotymore's Courtship' the dead father made money from a medical patent

---

22. Cornell 4605/33.026.

23. 25 February, 1893; Cornell 4605/33.03. 2 May 1893. Cornell 4605/33.08.

24. 27 February, 1893. Cornell 4605/33.04. 6 July, 1893; Cornell 4605/33.022.

25. 2 May, 1893. Cornell 4605/33.08.

26. 31 May, 1893. Cornell 4605/33.012. Was this particularly intense relationship with the postal service an added resonance for Ford much later, in *Last Post* (1928)?

27. 1 May, 1893. Cornell 4605/33.07.

and the mother ‘was a truly awful person to have to deal with’.) It was easy to be dismissive of money, and it may have felt good to be so, but Ford also needed it, and he seems never to have reconciled these two very different imperatives. When they married Ford found himself in a particularly vicious, and possibly familiar, double-bind:<sup>28</sup> his love affair became the story he had to tell, and simultaneously made money even more essential. He had tried to be aware of this, and take positive action, but the evidence we have does not bode well. As early as March 1893 he is warning Elsie that they will have to make savings, even though ‘the artistic spirit is averse to economy and its methods’.<sup>29</sup> Ford returns to money pressures in November when Elsie has her singing lessons taken away from her as punishment by her parents, on this occasion saying he will pay for them.<sup>30</sup> Max Saunders’ biographical treatment makes money a significant early feature of Ford’s wrangling with ‘strong-minded women’—his mother made him equalise the pocket money given by his father to him and Oliver which, as Ford was older, favoured him slightly (Saunders I 21). And in 1894, immediately after the marriage, Ford’s mother is intervening again—this time with financial support for the couple, although not to the degree that Elsie felt they needed or deserved. Two ‘strong-minded’ women were now managing these matters between them. Cathy Hueffer wrote to him about the ‘state of affairs’ she has had to explain to Elsie. ‘I fear she thinks me better off than I am’, she notes, chiding Ford that £1 a week is all she can afford.<sup>31</sup> Elsie had taken matters into her own hands, it seems, and written to ask for more. (She was unusually confident around money; she wrote her first cheque, from her own ‘banking account’, in November 1899—to Liberty’s, for material, and was making a red cloak for Christina by mid-December.<sup>32</sup>)

Ford was often in ‘extravagant mood’, as he put it, in his letters to Elsie, and in some ways not so differently from any teenager in love. She was his ‘dearest, dearest love’, who ‘assuaged the darkness’ of his heart. When she had suffered an allergic reaction her poor swollen

---

28. Ford Madox Brown nearly left England again in the 1850s because he had no money, and had found little recognition as an artist.

29. Cornell 4605/33.05.

30. Cornell 4605/33.035.

31. Cathy HUEFFER ALS to Ford, dated 14 July 14, 1894; Lamb family archive.

32. Elsie MARTINDALE 1899 diary, Saturday 18 November and Tuesday 22 November; Lamb family archive.

lips needed his attention as well as that of lip-salve.<sup>33</sup> But in his letters it's their dramatised, embattled status that he most frequently attends to—the higher the drama the better, it seems. Even in the July 1892 narrative, Ford had used the phrase 'Philistine-parent', but the terms in which he constructed this hostility became increasingly heated in his letters (he rails against the 'petty tyranny, the obtuse rectitude and the spiteful malice' of Elsie's parents in an April 1893 example).<sup>34</sup> Stock characters from fairy-tale fiction populate the letters, even as Ford's obsession with her hair evokes 'Rapunzel'—although rather than a living escape Ford most powerfully imagines her 'soft hair' as an aid to forlorn suicide.<sup>35</sup> ('Porphyria's Lover', though murderously shocking instead, has some evident intertextual life here, and Ford did write of Cotymore undertaking a 'course' of Browning.) Ford apologises for becoming carried away on one occasion having imagined Elsie's mother as a vindictive Holy Mother who burned her 'spurned daughters [...] affected by new ideas and a new lover'.<sup>36</sup> Crucially, though, their 'ignorant, arrogant, spiteful and unscrupulous abusers' must be allowed to 'commence hostilities', Ford says, to allow Elsie and him in turn to be abused lovers, even though he feels her mother would rather see her dead than married to 'that man'; and Ford Madox Brown has to be prepared for battle in the Martindale household on their behalf more than once. ('It is now somewhat near 2', Ford wrote on May Day 1893, 'and I have been all the time engaged in drilling my VP and guardian into the arguments he is to use tomorrow morning'.)<sup>37</sup>

Their 'transgression,' Ford makes explicit in early June 1893, 'is at least conducive of work', 'even if it bears no better fruit'. He writes again in the same vein the following day, explaining that he can think of nothing save her and work.<sup>38</sup> As such, it transpires on closer examination, the transgression is beneficial to them both. They are, by this stage, working together, on the fairy tales that also help Ford find the language to conjure images of over-bearing, even murderous, women. The fact that they were working together by May 1893 is one of the key factors Madox Brown took to Elsie's parents in the request not to

---

33. 25 February, 1893; Cornell 4605/33.03.

34. 29 April, 1893. Cornell 4605/33.06.

35. Heroines' hair is a constant feature in his stories of the time, and Ford had written 'Princess Goldenhair' for his sister Juliet at Christmas, 1889. ?4 March, 1894; Cornell 4605/33.055.

36. ? June, 1893; Cornell 4605/33.013

37. Cornell 4605/33.07.

38. 2 June, 1893; Cornell 4605/33.016/33.017.



separate them. ‘The interview [Ford writes to her on 2 May] was, in a measure, not unsatisfactory inasmuch as Mr M. promised that he had not the slightest idea of separating us—that he had not known we were working together’.<sup>39</sup>

And so they were, but Elsie was not only working with Ford—as critical reader, say, or helping him to work up his plots. Elsie was *writing* with him. In the last and most significant manifestation of Elsie as Ford’s creative ‘Other’ that I will discuss in this chapter, their letters reveal that Elsie was a trusted and able co-author. On 25 May Ford spends a portion of a letter on the kind of educational task he had imagined in ‘As a wounded hart’: ‘as for blank verse it is by no means difficult—you would and will very soon master it—by taking a line of Shakespeare as a model and writing a few lines after it’, but he also tells her that ‘the proofs have come’ and he will bring them with him ‘for you to see tomorrow’.<sup>40</sup> On 31 May, however, he writes about sharing work at a much earlier stage of production; he believes he will have a new portion of a manuscript to bring with him the following day.<sup>41</sup> He expected her to add to it. In the June letter in which he conjures up images of mothers burning disobedient children it is easy to overlook the fact that he also writes about her work. He tells her that it is ‘astonishingly good’, and, moreover, that he will ‘be able to keep it nearly all and only add a little to it’.<sup>42</sup> He is writing it into the draft manuscript, in other words. ‘How are we to manage about continuing it?’, he asks her on 2 June—and note the second person plural.<sup>43</sup> On 22 July Ford writes that he is ‘sorry’ that she is going away so soon, partly because ‘Poor H will languish for a time’ (I interpret this as a reference to JoHannes), ‘but perhaps’, Ford continues, ‘a holiday will pick him up’.<sup>44</sup> In November Ford seems to offer criticism of a story that Elsie is working on herself: ‘You have certainly improved the plot, in a way, but it is exceedingly startling

---

39. Cornell 4605/33.08.

40. A possible reference to *Questions at the Well*. In an undated letter [Oct–Dec 1893 33.029] Ford says that he’s sending her the original MS of ‘Questions’ which she ‘may like to possess’ as he has no other MS to send her at the time.

41. Abbreviated as ‘H’ this could refer to (Jo)Hannes, protagonist of the ‘Idyll of the Spessart-Wald’—from the same series as the Cotymore story. 4605/33.012.

42. Cornell 4605/33.013. I can identify none of Elsie’s handwriting on the *Idylls* or further contemporary fairy tales. Perhaps there was a further fair copy made if she did write directly onto the manuscript, or perhaps Ford copied in her additions. Detailed study may identify her interpolations, but the fact they are writing genre fiction makes this a more difficult task.

43. Cornell 4605/33.016.

44. Cornell 4605/33.026.

& needs a certain amount of consideration. You would need to make the m.i.l. [mother-in-law] an exceedingly villainous person—& her husband too.—Couldn't one of them have committed a murder that is not traceable to one of them—say, of the lover'.<sup>45</sup> By March 1894 the focus is back on their joint writing. He encourages her to 'set to work' on the F[airy] T[ale] as a way of dealing with the difficult domestic situation with her parents (work will do her 'more good' even than him telling her how much he loves her), and, in a related letter, he acknowledges receipt from her of the 'F.T.' and asks 'shall I send you my remainder for you to go on with, or what?'.<sup>46</sup> These two missives are separated by one in which Ford tries to reassure her about the threat of 'legal proceedings'.<sup>47</sup> He recognises her parents are capable of launching a case against them, but says he is not afraid. Presumably the work, therefore, is a welcome distraction for them both. Ford and Elsie, co-workers and co-conspirators, married on 9 May, 1894. From which point, Elsie's papers help to fill in more of the story of their writing lives.

## Writing Life

Elsie was a strong enough character to defy her parents and marry Ford. (She was also a strong enough character to raise their two girls to healthy and successful adulthood after Ford left her in 1909.)<sup>48</sup> She was no passive receptacle of Ford's projected drama and, I have argued here, she played her role with energy and enthusiasm. More significantly still, the couple jointly turned their experience of adversity into the fiction that was to enable them to begin their married life. Ford wrote to her in November, 1893, lamenting his failure to 'screw money out of Bliss, Sands & Foster' (who published *The Queen Who Flew* the following year).<sup>49</sup> He needed money badly, but felt in the end it was no bad thing that the publishers had delayed publication, as the money would help fund their marriage. The fact that the

---

45. Cornell 4605/33.039.

46. Cornell 4605/33.052/33.056.

47. Cornell 4605/33.054.

48. He met Violet Hunt in 1908 and began an affair with her soon after (Saunders I 238–55).

49. Cornell 4605/33.039. This fairy tale has been re-issued, for example in Michael NEWTON's *Victorian Fairy Tales* (Oxford: OUP, 2015) 276–326. Newton points out in his introduction that as a 'business' fairy tales were a sensible proposition, affording 'to writers a dual market of children and adults' (xii).



tale was finished by late 1893 also raises the possibility that this was one of the MSS the couple were jointly working on—in the absence of a complete set of letters it is impossible to clarify the detail of the co-authorship in this and other cases.

Elsie shared, but also shaped and recorded, Ford's writing life in a way that demands a fundamental reassessment of the way she has featured in accounts of his life, creative and personal, to date. Joseph Wiesenfarth's book about the artistic women with whom Ford lived, *Ford Madox Ford and the Regiment of Women*, was published in 2005, with chapters dedicated to Violet Hunt, Jean Rhys, Stella Bowen, and Janice Biala. Elsie, we can now fully discern from the record, requires a similar chapter of her own. Elsie had been, I suggest, both figuratively and non-figuratively carrying off 'The Pen of the House' for many years before Ford wrote to Olive Garnett in 1900 about her volume of short stories, and used that phrase.<sup>50</sup> The papers Elsie herself left behind, and her words, allow us to assess more fully the shape and size of the gaps in our knowledge and understanding of her role, beginning with a diary she kept in 1895.

Elsie heads this 5-leaf narrative, kept from April 9-23, 'Bonnington'—the couple's home, near Hythe, immediately after their marriage. (Elsie was writing her own fiction as soon as they moved in: in November, 1894, Olive Garnett made her first visit to their new home, and Elsie gave her a story to read, 'Mrs Larkins' [Saunders I 87].) In the diary, Elsie records Ford's efforts at his biography of Madox Brown; he was 'getting through' a year a day, but she was herself, on the 9 April anyway, finding it impossible to work. By the following day, however, the block has passed and she has finished a story that she has been working at all day. On 15 April [?] she laments that, for the past four days, she and Ford have had 'not a penny' between them. She hopes very much that Robert [Garnett?] or Mrs H[ueffer?] will 'relieve' them the following day (and note here the letter Cathy Hueffer wrote Ford in the previous July on this subject, quoted earlier). The interesting thing about this entry, however, is that it is immediately followed by her admission that there is nothing to do about the situation, at that moment, save write, so she continues with her story 'Mary's Grave'.<sup>51</sup> On 18 April [?], Elsie admits she hasn't yet 'mastered' 'Mary's Grave', but managed to write a whole story 'the other

50. Saunders quotes this 'important' letter in full (SAUNDERS I 126–8).

51. It's impossible not to speculate as to the root of this name, and subject of the story, considering her sister's name and role in their lives in the previous 3 years. However, this story has not yet materialised.

evening', and quickly too, 'on the spur of the moment'. On the 19th she records visits to the Spratfords, neighbours, and since her return has written a story, 'Going Home'. The last reference to her writing in this diary text concludes that she only has 'one more [story] to write' before she sends them 'up to Edward'—almost certainly a reference to the editor and publisher's reader Edward Garnett.<sup>52</sup> Elsie was looking to publish her stories, to make quick money, while Ford was hard at work on his biography of Madox Brown, a longer and more involved project. They were in it together.<sup>53</sup>

Also notable in this diary text are Elsie's observational skills, reminiscent as they are of Ford's depictions of local characters.<sup>54</sup> She sees 'old Jarvis' on one trip, who suffers from paralysis and carries a three legged stool about with him so he can rest whenever he needs to. She uses dialect to render his character in her sketch: 'Guss ye'll gi'e me a cup o'tea', and creates similarly lively portraits in her tale of local strife over a hand cart. These stories have not survived, but we must infer that there were a good number of them. The diary also reveals that Elsie had a professional attitude to her labour, and felt it important to record her literary efforts as well as, and in fact in much more detail than, Ford's.

Elsie's energy is high in this diary. She is full of joy at the spring, and records many natural beauties—particularly bird life—as well as prolific writing. Her energy is much lower in the full year diary she kept across 1899 (this is a bound commercially-produced volume, with a week across a double-page spread).<sup>55</sup> Christina Margaret (who was born in July, 1897) does not sleep, and there are few mentions of Elsie's writing. She did 'half a page of work' on 21 January, but it is Ford's sonnet 'Apollo and Ademetus', that he sends to Meredith (on the same day that he also writes a 'German poem'), that she focuses on in these records. However, I suggest in this conclusion to this chapter, and as a result of the research on which it is based, that there is necessary comparative work to be done on their writing in this later period of their marriage: the gaps in our knowledge cannot be fully scoped without it, although space prevents it here.

---

52. Ford had known the Garnetts since childhood, and Edward's role in his career has been well documented. He introduced Ford to Conrad.

53. So Elsie also, perhaps, felt some pressure to write, because of lack of money, and/or because of her life with Ford and his experiences in this regard—as discussed above.

54. Meary Walker etc. Elsie mentions Mrs Walker, 'a wonderful woman', here. Could this be the same figure?

55. Lamb family archive.

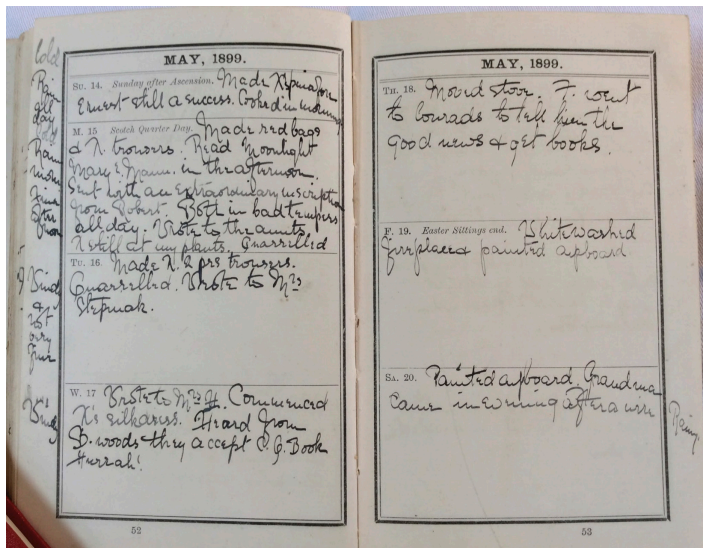


FIG. 2 — A page from Elsie's diary

## Elsie's 1899 diary: publishing, parenting, and socialising in the years after their marriage<sup>56</sup>

On 19-21 March, Elsie records that Ford is playing some golf while she packs up the house for the move from Gracie's Cottage to Aldington (she too plays golf—and is disgusted when Camber refuses 'playing for ladies' on 23 September). From February she has noted exchanges with Blackwoods about *Cinque Ports*, and notes with a 'Hurrah!' on 17 May that they have taken the book. Ford was 'at the typewriter all day' on 14 April, and there are many such records of his work and negotiations with publishers, or their slow responses to letters. She is delighted with Ford's completion of the first *Cinque Ports* chapter on 26 August.

56. Some of the most interesting details here (though less relevant for this current chapter) concern her socialising with the Conrads and Cranes, sometimes without Ford. She also records a visit from the Conrads when Ford was home, on 12 June. 'the Conrads turned up ... They had various discussions. Conrad very affecté. I sang some of Ford's songs.' The Lamb papers contain a note from Katharine attached to a music MS of a song of Ford's, headed 'Bonnington, 1895'. She writes: 'My mother, Elsie, had a very beautiful voice with a most unusual timbre, mezzo soprano'. So Ford was still writing songs after their marriage. Elsie records singing again, 'after tea' on 13 August.

Elsie was not writing much in this period. A version of a story titled ‘At the Cross’, normally understood to be written by Ford, is in the Lamb family archive and dates to the time prior to their move from Gracie’s Cottage. We know they were there when this was written because the typed manuscript of the story has Elsie’s name on the front as well as their address. Without any evidence either way, and with Elsie’s name on the typescript, it is, of course, possible that they either collaborated on this text or that Ford in fact took her dictation. ‘At the Cross’ features ‘shaking Ben’, a character also found in other stories Elsie wrote, including ‘The Burning of the Barn’ and ‘The Care of Souls’. Further manuscripts offer equally intriguing insights into their continuing co-writing. ‘A Ghostly Friend’, an undated story by Elsie, caught my attention because of the line: “‘What times, what times”, he said, but whether he was speaking of the old times before us or of the later days, I don’t know.’ Ford’s unpublished *A Romance of the Times Before Us* was written sometime between 1896 and 1898.<sup>57</sup> One version of the manuscript held at Cornell is thought to be in Elsie’s hand.<sup>58</sup> Elsie’s story ‘A Ghostly Friend’, which employs that very similar refrain about the ‘times before us’, features a Dominican friar and his interlocutor, Sarah. The Ford Collection at Cornell boasts, as the catalogue notes (26.23), an ‘Untitled Short Story or Chapter from an Unpublished Novel’; in greater detail it describes the ‘piece of fiction about a young woman named Sarah and a Dominican friar, which stylistically bears a resemblance to *A Romance of the Times Before Us*’. There is much to untangle in the intertextual relationships here. Most suggestive of all, perhaps, especially when we are aware of the couple’s love of their first daughter (locks of her hair, and then Katharine’s, are frequently saved and kept among the papers<sup>59</sup>),

---

57. See Lucinda BORKETT-JONES, ‘Anglo-German Entanglements, the Fear of Invasion, and an Unpublished Ford Manuscript’ in *Last Post*, no. 1, vol. 1, ISSN 2631–9772, 37–49.

58. The Cornell catalogue notes that one version of this AMS is ‘probably in Elsie Martindale Hueffer’s hand’, and this is David Dow Harvey’s assumption too, along with the possibility that this was ‘a collaboration’. David Dow HARVEY, *Ford Madox Ford 1873–1939: A Bibliography of Works and Criticism*, Princeton (NJ: Princeton UP, 1962), 117. However, I do not think this is Elsie’s hand. One version of ‘Chinese Music’ (written immediately after their marriage when they were living at Bonnington) held in Cornell is in her writing. 4605/3.08. This version has ‘by Ford Hueffer’ under the title. See WADDELL (2018, 80–1) on this piece, and on Sondra Stang and Carl Smith’s 1989 essay on Ford’s music. ‘Princess Goldenhair’, Ford’s story for his sister written at Christmas 1889 (4605/15.36), has ‘some pages in unidentified handwriting’—so these mysteries are old ones in Ford’s career.

59. On Ford’s love for his daughters see also Sara HASLAM, ‘Introduction’ to the *Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford*, as well as Sara HASLAM and Max SAUNDERS, ‘Ford’s Letters’, in the same volume.

are the synergies between Ford's story, 'The Other', which features a small Christina Margaret as protagonist, and an Elsie fragment which begins 'Last night I heard a baby spirit talking to Xina ... As I came to the door the baby spirit was saying—"Do Xina—I wish you would—out there, I am so lonely without you."' 'You see, it was so lonely for the other without Christina,' writes Ford in his version.<sup>60</sup>

Until more detailed work is done on Elsie's stories of the time, and comparisons are made with Ford's work, we cannot know all that the remaining record has to tell of the extent to which they worked and wrote together after their marriage. What we now do know is that they worked together on a range of manuscripts, published and unpublished, and that Elsie almost certainly contributed to fiction published under Ford's name alone. Elsie's strengths as a writer were recognised, and not just by Ford. Violet Hunt's warm, but predictably pointed, review of Elsie's only novel, *Margaret Hever*, which came out in 1909 (a year before Elsie took Ford to court to try and force him to reinstitute conjugal rights), discerns Henry James's influence in the tale of the 'world-wide tragedy of mismating', set in the 'all-pervading quiet of the level marshlands'.<sup>61</sup> John Galsworthy wrote to praise Elsie's essays published in the *English Review* the same year as her novel came out: 'you have such a cool and lucid style, and a directness in the expression of feeling'.<sup>62</sup> Another novel, *Ellen Slingsby*, remains unpublished, as do many MSS that remain in the hands of her family, but her stories appeared in, for example, the *Daily News*.<sup>63</sup> Elsie remained fiercely proud of her association with Ford for the remainder of her life, as did their two daughters. Perhaps one reason she refused to divorce him is that her professional investment in and contribution to their marriage was too important to her—and impossible, in retrospect, and in ways closely related to the critical terms with which I began this chapter, to unpick. Her pride in Ford's writing, as well as in her own, is always present in the diaries that the Lambs hold, as well as implied in the 1893 letters, but it is

---

60. Sondra STANG publishes this story in *The Presence of Ford Madox Ford* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), p. 142–3. The piece has an editorial note by Alison Lurie but is otherwise unedited. There is a typed MS version in Cornell (4605/15.22), with Ford's name at the end of it; an (unattributed) AMS is in the Lamb's archive, along with Elsie's fragment.

61. The cutting file notes the review was published in the *Daily Chronicle* on 7 October.

62. 'The Spirit of Melody' and 'The Art of Enjoyment' had been published in December. ALS dated 10 January, 1910; Lamb family archive.

63. Katharine Lamb attempted to find a publisher for *Ellen Slingsby* after her mother's death. The MSS of this novel is currently missing.

secondary in importance, perhaps, to the somewhat messy *doing* of it, the discussion, the debate, the criticism, and input to each other's work, especially as young and drama-beset lovers, but later as young parents also. Elsie continued to buy Ford's books, even after they had separated, adding her own name to the volumes that Ford would, at one time, have dedicated in love and comradeship to her.<sup>64</sup>

---

64. Rose Lamb has a bookcase in which many of Elsie's remaining books are stored, those by others that Ford gave her as presents (a 12-volume set of Turgenev, for example, at Christmas, 1902). *High Germany* is signed by her, Elsie Hueffer, on 16 February 1912.



# Elsie Martindale and Joseph Conrad, Readers, Critics, Co-writers

Helen CHAMBERS

Open University

As Sara Haslam discusses in detail in the previous chapter, the intellectual and emotional importance to Ford of his maternal grandfather, Ford Madox Brown, is not in doubt. He can be considered as Ford's very first significant Other. By the time of Madox Brown's death late in 1893, the young Ford had already begun to position Elsie as his next valued Other, the person he needed most to help him craft the narrative of his own life as a writer. In order to examine Elsie's role as Ford's early co-reader, co-writer and critic, we need not only to look at Ford's emotional and psychological responses to key events in his early life, but also at his own formative reading, including the influences of his grandfather, his mother Cathy and father Francis, and his uncle William Michael Rossetti. It was through this reading, even before he had formed his relationship with Elsie, that Ford first began to construct, consciously or unconsciously, his own identity as a writer.

It is a relatively straightforward exercise to uncover this reading. Unlike Conrad, who left very little evidence about what, when, how and where he read during his lonely childhood of enforced exile, recurrent illness and frequent displacements<sup>1</sup> Ford, with his enlightened mother, 'advanced' bohemian relatives, supportive stable home

---

1. See Joseph CONRAD, 'Books of my Childhood', *T. P.'s Weekly* (9 January 1903), last accessed at [www.conradfirst.net/view/image-id=27790.html](http://www.conradfirst.net/view/image-id=27790.html) on 20 June, 2019. When approached in 1903 by *T. P.'s Weekly* for a contribution on his childhood reading, Joseph Conrad laconically declared 'I don't remember any child's book. I don't think I ever read any; the first book I remember distinctly is Hugo's *Travailleurs de la Mer* which I read at the age of seven'. Whether or not the seven-year-old Conrad actually read right through Victor Hugo's long work (over 500 pages) or whether it was another of what Ford called 'his mystifications' we can only speculate.



life and structured schooling, left abundant evidence of his childhood reading practices. Furthermore, once he had begun his romantic relationship with Elsie in 1892, his early letters to her, with their often un glossed literary allusions, suggest that she too was well-read. While we have no direct evidence of the extent to which Elsie's youthful reading was positively or negatively influenced by her parents, her stern pharmacist father William Martindale and her unstable, alcoholic mother, it is probable that Elsie and Ford, at their shared co-educational boarding school, came under similar literary influences. Following on from these experiences it is therefore likely that during their courtship and the early years of marriage, they would have shared their reading, including works in French and German.

This chapter takes an approach from book history to examine Ford's construction and positioning of his two valued Others through shared reading and co-writing, with an emphasis on his early and formative reading. It is worth mentioning here the difference between 'childhood reading' (defined by the age range of the reader) and 'children's literature' (defined generically as literature written for children and adolescents or with themes and characters that are of interest to them). 'Childhood reading' may include works for example *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678–84), *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), and *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) all originally intended for adult audiences but which, from the seventeenth century onwards, have also been read by children. Ford himself contributed to a nuanced understanding of this concept with his perceptive comment in *The English Novel*, about a girl in France (perhaps his own daughter Julie), who remarked that

She did not much like *Robinson Crusoe* because, she said, the sufferings depicted were true. She liked, like all children, to read of sufferings, bloodsheddings, and horrors but only as long as she could believe that they were invented, whereas she was of the opinion that the prolonged loneliness and fears of *Crusoe* had actually occurred.

Ford then added 'The root of all adult criticism is to be found in these revelations'.<sup>2</sup> He also recalled *Crusoe* much earlier, in an explicit fictional reference to adolescent reading. In *The Feather*, the young Princess Ernalie (who has some features of a very young Elsie) 'went down to her cabin to get a book. She selected a small one that she had

---

2. Ford Madox FORD, *The English Novel* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1997) 62–63. Subsequently referred to as *EN*.

not noticed before. It was called “The Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of Hull [sic], Mariner, who— ”.<sup>3</sup>

Even though the development and marketing of books and periodicals for children has been extensively investigated, it is only recently that children *as readers* have been examined.<sup>4</sup> While children’s books as illustrated material objects, and the bibliometrics of children’s book production, sales, distribution and consumption are easy to investigate, recovering children’s own records of reading is much more difficult. As with Conrad and Ford, traces of childhood reading, whether of works intended for adults or for children, tend to be found in memoirs written many decades later.<sup>5</sup> These are almost always consciously moderated by hindsight or affected by failing memory, and here Ford is no exception. Ford’s records of his reading are, like virtually all else in his reminiscences, often impressionistic rather than strictly factual. They are, he wrote ‘not a sort of rounded, annotated record of a set of circumstances—it is the record of the recollection in your mind of a set of circumstances that happened ten years ago—or ten minutes. It might even be the impression of a moment—but it is the impression not the corrected chronicle’.<sup>6</sup>

Based on this declaration, I argue that it is possible (and justified) to approach Ford’s commentaries on his early reading, as with almost everything else in his later life (such as cooking, gardening, social encounters, conversations, and travel), as records of recollections refracted through an impressionistic prism, rather than as hard evidence, the ‘corrected chronicle’ preferred by historians of reading. Ford’s reminiscences are rich in impressionistic evidence of reading, reflections about his long-remembered formative, sometimes transgressive reading, and appear not only in *Ancient Lights*, *Return to*

---

3. Ford Madox HUEFFER, *The Feather* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1892) 9. This was first published in Unwin’s Children’s Library series and the back matter of this edition includes mention of a new edition of *Robinson Crusoe* with 19 illustrations, described as large crown octavo, cloth, gilt edges 5 shillings, but undoubtedly Ford already had access as a child to an earlier, perhaps more compact, edition such as the one Ernalie discovered.

4. See for example the comprehensive evidence-based study by Matthew GRENBY, *The Child Reader, 1700-1840* (CUP, 2011), which covers genres read, the children’s book market, the uses of books, and the children’s recorded responses and attitudes.

5. Ford and Conrad’s much-admired mutual acquaintance, the Argentinian-born naturalist and writer W.H. Hudson (1841–1922), who only really started reading for pleasure at the age of fifteen when he was bedridden in the family house on the Pampa with cardiac complications of rheumatic fever. See W. H. HUDSON, *Far Away and Long Ago* (London: Duckworth, 1918).

6. Ford Madox FORD, ‘On Impressionism’, *Poetry and Drama* 2.6 (June–December 1914) 174.

*Yesterday*, and a little in *It Was the Nightingale* and but also in the late works, *Provence* and *Great Trade Route*.<sup>7</sup>

In his dedication to *Ancient Lights* Ford wrote: ‘this book, in short is full of inaccuracies as to facts, but its accuracy as to impressions is absolute’.<sup>8</sup> We have no better example than his impressionistic memory of transgressive reading in the coal-cellar at 90 Brook Green, Hammersmith, of the ‘penny dreadfuls’ banned by his father, Francis Hueffer, and particularly the exploits of the character Ford initially called ‘Dick Harkaway’ or ‘Harkaway Dick’ with his tame black panther (or jaguar) and his pair of Winchester repeating rifles. Ford was perhaps confusing Jack Harkaway with Dick Turpin the highwayman, who also featured prominently in these publications. Ford wrote perceptively in *Ancient Lights* about how ‘I used to lock myself in the coal-cellar in order to read *Dick Harkaway* and *Sweeney Todd the Demon Barber* and other penny-dreadfuls. Then I was reacting—and I am sure healthily—against being trained for the profession of a genius’ (41, 228–29).<sup>9</sup> He was thus retrospectively recognising his first act of the transgressive reading which contributed to his self-fashioning as a writer.<sup>10</sup> Ford’s adolescent satisfaction in reading books which he had personally saved his pocket money to buy is again apparent when he writes how he acquired pirated editions of American writers:

I remember still with delight the shilling edition—it was bound in scarlet paper—in which I first purchased at the age of fourteen in a place called Malvern Wells, Artemus Ward’s *Among the Mormons*, Sam Slick’s *The Clockmaker*, Mark Twain’s *Mississippi Pilot*, Carleton’s *Farm Ballads* [. . .]. And, though I was ready at the injunction of my family to read Lope da Vega or Smollett, nothing would have induced me to spend sixpence on taking out from a circulating library the three-volume novels of William Black, Besant and Rice [. . .] when by saving up my pocket-money I could buy for a shilling—or ninepence net—the *Biglow Ballads* or *Hans Breitmann*’. (EN 110-111)<sup>11</sup>

7. Ford Madox FORD, *Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance* (London: Duckworth, 1924). Although this work includes vivid memories of Conrad’s and Ford’s shared adult reading, and an imaginative reconstruction of Conrad’s childhood reading, Ford does not mention his own childhood reading.

8. Ford Madox HUEFFER, *Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1911) xv. Subsequently referred to as *AL*.

9. Ford in *Ancient Lights* remembered these as ‘the happiest times of my childhood’ (41).

10. Very late in his life he recalled this character, here using the correct name of ‘Jack Harkaway’. See Ford Madox FORD, *Provence* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2009) 50, 52.

11. Ford probably meant James Russell LOWELL’s *Biglow Papers* (1848) and Charles Godfrey LEYLAND’s *Hans Breitmann’s Ballads* (1871, numerous reprints), said to be modelled on Lowell’s work.

Ford's father also (but unsuccessfully) discouraged him from reading Dickens whom, according to Ford's memory, Francis Hueffer judged 'vulgar', while Stevenson was rather oddly described as 'meretricious' (EN 108–109). Francis Hueffer nevertheless strongly influenced the young Ford's reading and thinking through his Schopenhauerian connections and more directly his own scholarly writings on the troubadours. Interestingly though, after the age of twelve Ford resisted re-reading his father's book on the Catalan troubadour Guillem de Cabestany whose poem in Old Occitan 'Li dous cossire' Ford had once judged 'the most beautiful poem in the world'.<sup>12</sup> Conversely he declared that it was only as a teenager that he and his friends first read the poems of his maternal aunt Christina Rossetti<sup>13</sup> and in an early letter to Elsie on 1 June 1893, he was to quote one of his aunt's more wistfully sentimental poems, 'Rest, Rest—a perfect rest / Shed over brow & breast'.

Ford wrote a number of full-length critical works, all of which by implication would have involved intensive scrutiny of specific texts and authors. The structured programme of reading/ re-reading he undertook for *The March of Literature* (1939) includes echoes of his early and formative exposure to canonical and popular literature. It is however in *The English Novel* that we find the most resonant recollections of that long ago reading which contributed to his own literary self-fashioning. This is most noticeable in its last main chapter, which is very rich in memories of adolescent reading, including the influence of family members, particularly Ford's mother, Cathy Hueffer. Ford's sister Juliet Soskice recalled how at 90 Brook Green Hammersmith their mother created a hospitable environment for reading, arranging the books attractively on the shelves.<sup>14</sup> Among the titles that Cathy Hueffer recommended were '*Silas Marner, The Mill on the Floss, Wuthering Heights, Sidonia the Sorceress, Lorna Doone, The Woman in White, The Moonstone, Diana of the Crossways* and *Far from the Madding Crowd*.' Ford then adds charmingly 'But then my mother was "advanced" and never wore a crinoline' (EN 108–109).

Ford's reading was equally influenced in various ways by other family members, including his maternal grandfather and his maternal uncle, William Michael Rossetti. Ford claimed to have detested

---

12. Ford Madox FORD, *It Was the Nightingale* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2007) 52–53. Subsequently referred to as *IWN*.

13. Ford Madox HUEFFER, *Collected Poems* (London: Max Goschen, 1914) 22–23. Subsequently referred to as *CP*.

14. Juliet M. SOSKICE, *Chapters from Childhood* (London: Selwyn Blount, 1921) 201–202.

the works of Dante from a very early age, 'because his figure was forced upon my attention by my relatives and connections, the Rossettis, at an age when my sole diet consisted of rusks sopped in milk'.<sup>15</sup> Although some of this formative reading has already been discussed in detail,<sup>16</sup> Ford's additional comments from *The English Novel* are worth highlighting. At least in retrospect, Ford felt that his grandfather was actually 'more advanced' than either of his parents, as he recommended that Ford at seventeen and by then at University College School, Bloomsbury, read:

*Madame Bovary, Tartarin de Tarascon, and Tartarin sur les Alpes.* He was pleased when at school they gave us the *Lettres de mon Moulin* of Daudet, and a little later made me read *Roderick Random, Humphry Clinker, Snarleygow, Midshipman Easy, Waterton's Wanderings in South America* [. . .]. My uncle William Rossetti gave me *The Castle of Otranto, Caleb Williams, Frankenstein*, and another novel of Meinhold's—*The Amber Witch*. (EN 109)

Ford described this as 'the reading of a boy of aged twelve to eighteen from fairly advanced family in the 'eighties of last century' (EN 109). He had first mentioned reading Meinhold's other work *Sidonia the Sorceress* (1848) much earlier (AL 182). He had probably encountered this story, written by a German priest and featuring sixteenth-century witchcraft and sexual domination, in the 1849 translation by Oscar Wilde's mother.<sup>17</sup> Before the end of the century both Meinhold's works had become very popular generally and also specifically with William Morris and his circle. *Sidonia* was the subject of a painting by Edward Burne-Jones, and the book was expensively re-issued in 1893 by the Kelmscott Press, with a lavish design and elaborately illuminated capital letters. *The Amber Witch*, when reprinted in 1895, was illustrated by Burne-Jones' son, Philip. It seems probable that it was these images which populated Ford's imagination. He also noted, referring to his mother's list as well as his grandfather's, that 'with the possible exception of Wilkie Collins' two books, these were all works that would not normally be read in Middle Class families, either because of social outspokennesses, individuality of outlook, or difficulties of style' (EN 109–110).

15. Ford Madox FORD, *The Great Trade Route* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1937) 14.

16. Max SAUNDERS, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, vol 1 (Oxford: OUP, 1996) 33–35. Subsequently referred to as Saunders I.

17. The poet Jane Francesca Agnes, Lady Wilde (pseud. 'Speranza').

We see a link back to Ford's mother's influence on his childhood reading, when Ford was ill in Germany, in 1904. On 12 November 1904 he describes to Elsie how Cathy ('Mrs H') arrives to look after him and administers what would now be called 'bibliotherapy'. He falls gently asleep while she reads Boswell and various novels, ranging from Jane Austen to 'sporting books' and the then very popular *Harry Lorrequer*.<sup>18</sup>

Ford's long preface to his 1914 *Collected Poems* includes several interesting pages about his schoolboy reading of poetry. The references to Ford's age indicate that this reading took place at Ford's second school, the all-boys University College School in Bloomsbury. Ford describes how he and his small group of friends were self-consciously distinguishing themselves from their peers by reading widely outside the curriculum, including obscure classics, and various Elizabethan and Jacobean poets and dramatists, while actively rejecting the mid-to-late Victorian poets (CP 20-21).

As mentioned earlier much of Ford's formative reading (and probably some of Elsie's) can be attributed to the period he spent as a boarder from 1881 to 1889 at Pretoria House. At this unusual co-educational school, with its enlightened directors Alfred and Elisabeth Praetorius, conversation was carried out in three languages (English, French and German) on consecutive days. Ford remembered that there, under the influence of a Dr David Watson, he read, even before the age of twelve, an impressively long list of often quite challenging books. These included 'the *Artaxerxes* of Madame de Scudéry and *Les enfants du Capitaine Grant* by Jules Verne, to ode after ode of Tibullus, Fouqué's *Undine*, all of the *Inferno*, the greater part of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Don Quixote* in the original' (Saunders I 33). His claim to have read Spanish picaresque works in the original does not however seem credible as there is no other evidence that, as an eleven-year-old, he could read Spanish. He had in fact inherited many translated volumes of this genre from his uncle Oliver Madox Brown, who died in 1874. Overall it is clear then that Ford, while enjoying subversive, transgressive, solitary reading had also been subjected to distinctly gendered though complementary influences on his youthful reading, from the 'boys adventure' and classical titles proposed of David Watson and by Madox Brown, the eighteenth-century Gothic tastes of his Uncle William and the gentler influences of his mother

---

18. *The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer* (1857), one of many works by the prolific Irish novelist Charles Lever.



and his maternal aunt Christina. Like Conrad, Ford also wove imaginative representations of his own youthful reading and its bibliographic detail tightly into the fabric of his fiction. Even though the reading historian Kate Flint has sensibly cautioned against using representations of reading in fiction as hard evidence of an author's reading,<sup>19</sup> Ford's fictional depictions of reading offer clues to his own reading practices.<sup>20</sup>

While Ford learnt French early in life from his grandfather, the level at which French and German language and literature were formally taught at Pretoria House must have been high. Elsie, also a pupil at this school, was later sufficiently competent to undertake what were the first stylish and thoroughly readable translations into English of some of Maupassant's short stories, without having, during her adolescence and early adult life, spent any significant time in France.<sup>21</sup> That Elsie also read and understood German is apparent from the quotations and allusions which Ford scattered through his early letters to her; later she was able to undertake research for him on Holbein, where some of the source material would have been in German.

While Ford's memoirs and fiction are rich in retrospective detail about his own formative reading (and his early struggles with writing), it is in his early letters to Elsie that we best see, in real time, how he begins to emerge as a writer and critic. Elsie was, as Sara Haslam recently described her, Ford's 'inspiration, collaborator, necessary partner in his move into fiction, essential imaginative and romantic link between life and art' and she became his valued Other from very early in their relationship.<sup>22</sup> Those letters which he sent (often daily)

---

19. Kate FLINT, 'Women, Men and the Reading of *Vanity Fair*', *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, eds James Raven, Helen Small and Naomi Tadmor (Cambridge: CUP, 1996) 246–62.

20. Beginning with in *The Feather* (1892) and *The Shifting of the Fire* (1892), these representations become very conspicuous in *The Inheritors* (1901) a work which gives us *inter alia* a picture of early Edwardian reading, writing and publication practices. Rather wonderfully, too in the 61 pages of the unfinished *True Love & a GCM*, Ford includes sixteen separate references to acts of reading and mentions 31 titles, all echoing Ford's own formative reading. The titles Morton remembers while he was in the No. II Hospital in Rouen with shell shock, also echo Ford's own early reading.

21. See Helen CHAMBERS, "'Le traducteur E.M. (une femme)': Conrad, the Hueffers and the 1903 Maupassant translations', *Ford Madox Ford's Cosmopolis: Psycho-Geography, Flânerie and the Cultures of Paris*, eds Alexandra BECQUET and Claire DAVISON, *International Ford Madox Ford Studies* 15 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016) 155–174.

22. Sara HASLAM's conference paper 'The Other in Ford's Making', at the 'Ford and the Other' conference, Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, 8–9 September 2017.

before their elopement are full of declarations of love and hopes for a simple life together in a rural setting. Ford's letters to Elsie between early 1893 and 1904 also very significantly reveal their shared reading, co-writing and their critical examination of their early work, and show how these interchanges became part of Ford's construction of the narrative of their life. They exchanged books (at this stage the titles were unspecified), as well as manuscripts and proofs.<sup>23</sup> The letters are peppered with allusions and quotations, often without attribution, reflecting their complicity, common educational background and shared reading. Many of these allusions, particularly late in 1893, echo their own fraught situation, for example when invoking Shakespeare 'I am sick & capable of fears / Oppressed with woe & therefore full of fears'.<sup>24</sup> When Ford became particularly dispirited about the Martindale parents' attitude to the relationship, he made a curious allusion, without attribution, which perhaps reflects again their shared reading. Slightly misquoting from John Dryden's satirical poem 'MacFlecknoe', Ford, on 2 October 1893 wrote (referring to the Martindale household), 'It is a case of Shadwell never lapsing [sic] into sense'. At times he was more optimistic, as on 2 May 1893 when he invoked Greek mythology, writing, 'we must be brave—we have love on our side & love Antaeus like grows stronger whenever it touches the hard earth of sorrow'. On 3 June 1893 he writes encouragingly to Elsie that 'Goethe's favourite motto was "Über Graeber vorwärts" and we too must go forward over the graves of our young hopes'. There is also a repeated German phrase about courage 'Nur Muth, es wird noch schief geschehen'—'Take courage there will still be problems' which he uses several times as well as referring in English in February 1894 to the need for 'a fresh load of courage' and 'take courage it will come in time'.<sup>25</sup>

The couple also shared a political engagement, another overt expression of rebellion. Olive Garnett recorded how Elsie and Ford (then aged 17 and 20), used to go together to the regular winter

---

23. Though much later Ford wrote from the Pent to Elsie that 'I am sending you a couple of Turgenevs; see if they will stimulate you—tho' I daresay you have read them before' (presumably these were Constance Garnett's translations which Ford and Conrad both avidly read. This and all letters quoted are at Cornell's Carl A. Kroch Library, held in the Ford Madox Ford Collection—this one is dated February-March 1902. Cornell 4605/34.018.

24. Cornell 4605/33.030; Cornell 4605/33.032. The reference is to *King John*, Act 3, Sc.1 line 12.

25. Cornell 4605/33.08; Cornell 4605/33.017; Cornell 4605/33.050.



lectures by Sergei Stepniak and Felix Volkovsky, as did she.<sup>26</sup> She noted for example that the couple were at a lecture by Stepniak on Russian drama at the Opera Comique in the Strand, with a reading of Ostrowsky's play *Thunderstorm*, presumably in English<sup>27</sup> and a few days later at another lecture by Volkovsky, this time about his escape from Siberia. Ford and Elsie also read and presumably discussed together the articles in that 'lugubrious sheet', the periodical *Free Russia* edited by Volkovsky.<sup>28</sup>

The letters reveal a tightly-knit intellectual, as well as emotional, dyad. This is exemplified by his letter about his dual feelings for her (friendship and love), when he declares: 'First you are my friend, to you alone I can talk with a feeling of perfect ease & your ideas alone fit mine'.<sup>29</sup> Ford, three years older, initially seemed to have been trying to further educate Elsie with reading suggestions. As Sara Haslam points out in her essay, Ford, in his unpublished narrative of the July 1892 trip, comments on how he would like to direct Elsie's reading. None of the extant letters between the two however convincingly display the didactic tone of a man writing to his younger protégée. Despite frequently addressing Elsie as 'Baby,' Ford uses the expressions 'our philosophy' and 'our standard creed'. For example, on 10 November 1893 he writes:

The great Question is, by what test shall we judge things, how know the good from the bad, the vulgar from the inartistic. I made a mistake in calling it 'creed' last night [. . .]. Let us then say 'Philosophic Cult' or Philosophy or what you will. It is a thing to be debated and debated very seriously, this knowledge of Good and Evil.

He then proposes that they 'attack some subject & analyse it to the bottom, in the abortive hope of reading the Centre'.<sup>30</sup> A couple of weeks later (on 7 December 1893), he updates this, writing 'This reminds me that our philosophy is not progressing with the rapidity to have been expected of, or hoped for, from it. At best it would have become a lecture on the Progress of Thought in Europe which would have overwhelmed us both in its coils'.<sup>31</sup> So here Ford is proposing

---

26. Olive GARNETT, *Olive and Stepniak: The Bloomsbury Diary of Olive Garnett 1893–1895*, ed. Barry C. JOHNSON (Birmingham: Bartlett's Press, 1993) 30, 33.

27. Constance Garnett translated this work but it was only published six years later by Duckworth later, in 1899.

28. Ford Madox FORD, *Return to Yesterday* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1999) 103.

29. Cornell 4605/33.045.

30. Cornell 4605/33.038.

31. Cornell 4605/33.040.

shared programme of self-education, in a series of private seminars or tutorials, even if his tone tends to suggest that it was he who would be lecturing her.

One significant aspect of Ford's early development as a writer is the reading and criticism of each other's early works which Ford and Elsie shared. For example, there is the extended dialogue about a character he called 'the H'. On 31 May 1893 he wrote: 'I have done a little more to the H. and I believe I shall have a portion ready to bring with me tomorrow'. In June (undated) 'I begin to be a little more hopeful about H; he seems to be working out a bit better' Then 'I posted the H. quite early today [. . .] how are we to manage about continuing it?' And on 7 June 'I am glad you have been able to get along a little with poor H.—my part of that gentleman has been languishing lately'.<sup>32</sup> This 'H', whom Ford and Elsie were trying to turn into a character despite setbacks, might seem at first to be to be Harfager the Viking, the protagonist of 'The Land of Song', a story that also includes ropes made of hair as a means of escape (as mentioned in Ford's letter of 5 March 1894<sup>33</sup>). Perhaps more convincingly, as suggested here by Sara Haslam, he might be 'Hannes' i.e. Johannes the dreamer, in 'An Idyll of the Spessart-Wald'.

As well as collaborating on the 'H' manuscript, Elsie was writing her own fiction. When in June 1893 Ford wrote: 'I have been reading your work, it is astonishing how good it is again [. . .] I shall only add a little to it', it is not clear whether he meant Elsie's own work such as her never published novel *Ellen Slingsby* or the 'H' MS'.<sup>34</sup> On 22 November 1893 Ford wrote:

You have certainly improved the plot, in a way but it is exceedingly startling & needs a certain amount of consideration. You would need to make the m. i. l. [mother-in-law?] an exceedingly villainous person—and her husband too. Couldn't one of them have committed a murder that is not traceable to them—say of the lover.<sup>35</sup>

This suggests an unspecified, subsequently abandoned sensation novel, since by 1895 Ford was telling Edward Garnett that 'I think I shall send you one of her effusions one of these days—She has taken to writing short stories, having exhausted the possibilities of the novel

---

32. Cornell 4605/33.012; Cornell 4605/33.016; Cornell 4605/33.019.

33. Cornell 4605/33.055.

34. Cornell 4605/33/013. No trace of *Ellen Slingsby* has been found.

35. Cornell 4605/33.039. This plot suggestion does not relate to Elsie's published novel.

form some time ago'.<sup>36</sup> Elsie's first publication in fact only appeared much later, an article in the moderate Liberal weekly *The Speaker*. Ford, in September-October 1902 wrote: 'Dearest E, I have just heard the astonishing and very joyful news that you are a printed and published author'.<sup>37</sup>

By early 1902 there were already inklings of Elsie's second novel, eventually published in 1909 as *Margaret Hever*, under her birth name Elizabeth Martindale.<sup>38</sup> Letters provisionally dated around February-March 1902 make several mentions of a manuscript with a character called 'Margaret'. Ford wrote constructively to Elsie: 'With regard to the point of view, of course it doesn't much matter where it is. Only remember that it is you who write—that the audible point of view is yours & not Margaret's'. He goes on to advise her about developing character and motives. In another (undated, 1902) letter Ford writes 'For instance you might make N[ell] start to steal the diary and while Margaret is in bed',<sup>39</sup> and continues with other hypothetical plot suggestions.<sup>40</sup> It was around this time that Elsie sent a draft of *Margaret Hever* to Conrad for comment. Ford wrote 're the m.s.—I shewed it to C. who praised it a good deal and said it was quite a revelation as to yr. abilities. He sat down at once to write to you about it; but after ten minutes, groaned and began on Seraphina [*Romance*]'.<sup>41</sup>

In 1902-1903 Conrad was to give Elsie considerable help with her translations of Maupassant stories, even though to H-D. Davray of the *Mercur de France* he denied significant input other than helping choose the stories.<sup>42</sup> Examination of the corrected proofs, in conjunction with Conrad's letters to Ford and to Elsie, and Ford's letters to Elsie, make it clear that in fact Conrad had significant input, both into the translations and into Ford's rather odd preface.<sup>43</sup> In an undated 1902 letter from the Pent, Ford wrote 'J. [Conrad] sends many apologies re the Maupassant. He says you are to regard the alterations

---

36. *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Richard M. LUDWIG, Princeton UP, 1965, p. 9.

37. Cornell 4605/34.025. Unidentified, so possibly unsigned.

38. Elizabeth MARTINDALE, *Margaret Hever* (London: Duckworth, 1909).

39. See *Margaret Hever* 296–98.

40. Cornell 4605/34.013; Cornell 4605/34.101.

41. Cornell 4605/34.019. Conrad only replied in July 1902 having been preoccupied with major events. See *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad Volume 2*, eds Frederick KARL and Laurence DAVIES (Cambridge: CUP, 1986) 443. Subsequently referred to as Karl and Davies II.

42. *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad Volume 3*, eds Frederick KARL and Laurence DAVIES (Cambridge: CUP, 1988) 52–53.

43. See CHAMBERS 2016 164–65.

merely as proposals & so on. I haven't spoken about the preface but I shall when occasion offers'.<sup>44</sup> To Edward Garnett early in the summer of 1903 Ford wrote from Winchelsea: 'She [Elsie] is, however, at this moment, working with Conrad thro' the Maupassant—has indeed been doing so during the last ten days, steadily (except when she had to go up to Town). So that you'll get the m.s. practically as early as is consistent with efficiency'.<sup>45</sup> Contrary to what might be inferred from Conrad's letters to Davray and from Ford's rather detached preface, in which he barely mentioned the translator and her work, the unpublished letters suggest that, although the marriage was by then beginning to fail, Ford did actively encourage his wife in the Maupassant project. That they were both extremely familiar with Maupassant's stories is obvious from Ford's comments in his preface. One would indeed like to imagine them, as a young couple, rather subversively reading together in French some of the more sexually adventurous stories, such as 'La Petite Roque', in the various collections which they owned.

Conrad had been featuring conspicuously in Ford's life since 1898, and the friendship was to intensify between 1899 and 1904, the period of their greatest collaboration and geographic proximity, with Ford at Winchelsea and Conrad at the Pent, and briefly in 1904 when both families were living close together in West London. Here and at the Pent, Ford and Conrad read and wrote together, and discussed the craft of writing, late into the night and it was during this period that Conrad displaced Elsie to become Ford's valued Other.

By early spring 1902, when Ford was staying at the Pent and writing to Elsie at Winchelsea, we start to see how Ford's and Conrad's relationship had almost become that of a domestic couple. Ford reported how Conrad was 'greenish [. . .] with the liver or a touch of malaria' and kept falling asleep on the sofa while he (Ford) worked on *Romance*.<sup>46</sup> The friendship between Ford and Conrad has been described by Laurence Davies as one between 'intimates,

---

44. The transcript of the unpublished letter suggests 'c. February–March 1902' but Conrad's first letter to Ford on the subject was not until late July 1902, when he offered advice on rendering Maupassant's style and promised a list of suggested stories. Cornell 4605/34.016.

45. Elsie's mother was terminally ill in London. Presumably this was the manuscript of the translations, since Garnett was Duckworth's reader at the time and it was in Duckworth's Greenback series that Elsie's collection appeared.

46. Cornell 4605/34.018.

conspirators, and tempters of providence' (Karl and Davies II xxiv), and thus strangely mirrors the early Ford-Elsie relationship.

Unlike the Ford-Elsie relationship though, it is not in letters between Conrad and Ford that we see into this friendship, but retrospectively in Ford's memoirs. There are few extant early letters from Ford to Conrad since until late in his life Conrad routinely discarded letters after replying and thus only one side of this conversation is recoverable. Furthermore, the extant letters from Conrad to Ford are 'mostly in the shorthand of a man who knows he can speak more fully at their next meeting' (Saunders I 12). Ford's fictionalised memoir *Joseph Conrad* is the locus in which strongly impressionistic images of conversations about writing, reading, and criticism are revealed in a unique manner, and where it is possible to uncover aspects of both men's formative and shared reading and see how these overlapped. It is worth noting that Ford's own records of the reading he shared and discussed with Conrad are at times twice filtered impressions, consecutively through both men's memories. These conversations on shared reading that the two men had at the Pent during their collaboration on *Romance* and *The Inheritors* are described at length by Ford, though rarely mentioned directly by Conrad. The pivotal literary function, particularly in relation to stylistic matters, of these conversations in the development of both men as writers, is well known.

It is worth also looking from a reading historian's point of view at this anecdotal evidence of shared reading. This evidence can be designated either as 1) memories of past reading, for example when Ford listed in *Joseph Conrad* the historical memoirs that Conrad had read probably at sea (59), or 2) active shared re-reading, such as Maxime Ducamp's memoirs, and 3) the recall of passages from memory such as through their shared 'devotion to Flaubert and Maupassant' and to Turgenev (35–36). As well as influencing his writing style, this mutual engagement with certain texts through their shared re-reading and recall made a very significant contribution to Ford's construction of an intimacy with Conrad as his valued Other. This is wonderfully summarised in *Joseph Conrad*, Ford writing how when their wives were in bed, 'We talked [from ten o'clock until two in the morning] about Flaubert and Maupassant—sounding each other, really [. . .] We talked of Turgenev—the greatest of all poets: *Byelshin Prairie* from the *Letters of a Sportsman*, the greatest of all pieces of writing: Turgenev wrapped in a cloak lying in the prairie at night'. And he went on to write: 'But that which really brought us together was a devotion

to Flaubert and Maupassant. We discovered that we both had *Félicité*, *St-Julien l'Hospitalier*, immense passages of *Madame Bovary*, *La Nuit*, *Ce Cochon de Morin* and immense passages of *Une Vie* by heart. Or so nearly by heart that what the one faltered over the other could take up'. (35–36) This well-known quotation encapsulates the intimacy at the time between Ford and his most valued Other. They also discussed and appreciated certain popular writers, notably Mary Elizabeth Braddon. Ford's memorable image of 'the sub lieutenants and second mates keeping their lonely dog-watches whilst reading Miss Braddon beneath the blazing tropical stars' is an obvious if unattributed reference to Conrad's earlier reading life (*IWN* 75).<sup>47</sup>

There is plenty of evidence of shared reading, for example, late in 1898, when Conrad wrote to Ford about Henry James' new book, *The Two Magics*, in a relaxed complicit way, judging the second of the two stories ['Covering End'] as 'unutterable rubbish. The first ['The Turn of the Screw'] evades one but leaves a kind of phosphorescent trail' (Karl and Davies II 122). Ten days earlier Conrad had written his first critical comment on Ford's own work, *The Shifting of the Fire*, rather ambiguously calling it 'delightfully young' (Karl and Davies II 118). Among Ford's own early pieces of serious criticism was his very long constructive letter to John Galsworthy in October 1900 about the latter's early novel *Villa Rubein* (Ludwig 10–14). Conrad at the same time wrote to Galsworthy that 'Hueffer has been here and we talked of you. H said some intelligent things about *Villa Rubein*' (Karl and Davies II 300). From this and other examples, it appears as though Conrad and Ford were practicing criticism on each other in various ways, as part of an iterative writerly dialogue. Unlike Ford, Conrad was never to become a professional critic, his criticism being mostly private, and part of the economies of friendship within his circle.

In striking contrast to Ford's impressionistic anecdotes of long-remembered shared reading, an example from one of Conrad's letters provides on-the-spot evidence and material detail of an intimately shared reading experience. On 1 December 1898 Conrad's new friend, the traveller, writer and Scottish nationalist R. B. Cunninghame Graham, sent Conrad a copy of his very recent *Mogreb el Acksa*, a

---

47. See also Alberto GABRIELE, 'Mary Elizabeth Braddon at the Antipodes', *Book History* 21 (2018) 150–183, for an extensive discussion of the distribution and circulation of Mrs Braddon's works in various book and periodical formats in colonial ports of call, including those frequented by Conrad in Australia.



narrative about Graham's celebrated attempt to enter the forbidden city of Taroudant in Morocco. Conrad wrote immediately that day to Graham from the Pent:

The book arrived by this evening's post. I dropped everything—as you may imagine and rushed at it paper knife in hand. It is with great difficulty I interrupt my reading at the 100th page—and I interrupt it only to write to you. A man staying here has been reading over my shoulder [. . .] No thirsty men drank water as we have been drinking in, swallowing, tasting [. . .]. (Karl and Davies II 124)

We are told not only *what*, and exactly *when*, *where* (in winter, therefore the sitting room, not the garden), and *how* they read (consuming avidly), but also *with whom* (the textual evidence suggesting someone as yet unknown to Graham). This was almost certainly Ford, as two days later Conrad sent Elsie a copy of this book, which has recently resurfaced at auction. It was inscribed by Conrad:

To Mrs Elsie Ford M. Hueffer. In the intervals of concocting, with your husband, circumstantial untruths for sale, we looked into this *truthful* book. And as a proof that even when engaged in the most engrossing occupation man can find in this world, *you* were not far from our thoughts, we remarked that most likely you would like it.<sup>48</sup>

Conrad continued to write to Elsie long after they had finished collaborating on the Maupassant translations, including several warm and supportive letters to her while Ford was in Germany in 1904. Ford's own frequent long letters to Elsie from Germany at this time were affectionate, intimate, but no longer passionate; as well as domestic matters, mostly about his daughters, they included discussions about reading and writing. He reported (15 August 1904) reading 'all of H. J.'s early novels in Tauchnitz, *Washington Square*, *Roderick Hudson*, *Confidences*, *The Madonna of the Future*'. Nevertheless, declaring that he felt *unheimlich* (quite a telling word here for the Anglo-German Ford) in Germany without Elsie, indicated that she was still his Other and still something of a soulmate. She was also useful to him at a distance; he asked her to carry out research in the British Museum Library to complement his own work in Germany on Holbein, for his book on the painter.

Conrad and Ford would continue to see each other frequently over the next few years. Although Conrad spent winters away in Capri in 1905, and Montpellier in 1906 and 1907, there are few letters

---

48. Catalogue of Stanley J. Seeger sale at Sotheby's London Part II, July 2013.

in either direction which reveal much about their shared reading. Conrad poured out his existential *angst* to Cunninghame Graham, and his financial, physical and domestic problems to John Galsworthy, and discussed his reading with them both, now his two most intimate friends, while Ford now had Arthur Marwood as his valued Other.





Part Two

**Ford as Other: The German Period**



# ‘At Home in Germany’: Ford as ‘the Desirable Alien’

Zineb BERRAHOU-ANZUINI

Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3—EMMA, France

Everyone who is familiar with Ford’s writings during the First World War must have been destabilised by his switching sides and turning from an admirer of German *Kultur* and literature at the beginning of the twentieth century to a vociferous opponent, writing propaganda books such as *When Blood Is Their Argument: An Analysis of Prussian Culture* (1915) and *Between St. Dennis and St. George: A Sketch of Three Civilisations* (1915), on behalf of the British government. In these books, Ford publicly rejected his ties with his onetime home, Germany. Indeed, we can observe a double process of alienation in Ford, first from England and his wife Elsie Martindale, when he made the decision to settle in Germany, the land of his ancestors and of Europe’s salvation,<sup>1</sup> in order to obtain German citizenship; then from his mistress Violet Hunt and from Germany, when it came increasingly to be thought of as an enemy, politically and militarily speaking, on the eve of the First World War. After the war, Ford no longer visited Germany or made any effort to maintain contact with his German relatives or friends.

My intensive research at the city archives, the university library of Gießen, and the Darmstadt State archives, enabled me to discover some yet not fully explored material related directly or indirectly to Ford before the outbreak of the Great War. Therefore, the results of my investigation will be studied here in the light of biographical elements as well as the Fordian literary production. They will be placed in the context of Violet Hunt’s experience of the man she was accustomed to

---

1. This idea is strongly expressed in his contribution to Violet HUNT’s book, *The Desirable Alien: At Home in Germany* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1913). Henceforth referred to in the text as *Desirable Alien*.

calling 'Joseph Leopold', using the most Germanic of his given names. Examining documentation of this period proved to be of great help to understand Ford's motivations, but at the same time revealed aspects of a much more complicated story bringing together Ford, the other Ford—i.e. Hueffer—, and his undecided allegiances.

Ford's German period lasted for about a decade, from 1903 to 1914, during which time he made frequent trips to the Continent. His reasons for going varied. He used to travel to Boppard, Telgte, Münster, and other German cities, visiting his relatives, studying history at the University of Bonn, ostensibly for the sake of his monograph on Hans Holbein or looking for inspiration ('The Baron (A Love Story)' and 'The Old Conflict', published by Macmillan's in February and November 1903),<sup>2</sup> but also for physical and mental health, undergoing treatment in various sanatoria. So, when in 1910, Ford again found himself in personal and professional difficulties, travel to Germany offered him an escape from the social pressures of London and the stressfulness of his life, and a relief from the rumours and gossip. He had lost his journal the *English Review*; his male friends were attacking him due to the scandals surrounding his private life and his liaison with Violet Hunt; and his daughters were growing estranged from him. These factors led him to contemplate suicide. In a letter to his mother, Ford wrote that he was 'mentally a wreck. My work is going all to pieces and I cannot even place the last book but one that I wrote [The 'Half Moon'], incredible as that seems'.<sup>3</sup> To make matters worse, his wealthy aunt, *Tante* Laura Schmedding in Boppard, disinherited him when she learnt of his imprisonment, and made Ford's inheritance contingent on his good behaviour for six months (he never received it).

On Violet's proposal, who wanted to see 'decently, sensibly, arranged German things, German customs, German institutions, everything but German cooking',<sup>4</sup> they took a slow boat up the Rhine to Assmannshausen, not far from Boppard, where Ford's Aunt Emma lived. Violet fatefully decided they should visit his German relatives, 'and explain to his surviving aunt, her sister, why he had been obliged by circumstances over which he had no control to take no notice of it?' (*Flurried*

---

2. Gene M. MOORE, 'Ford and Germany: The Question of Cultural Allegiance', *Modernism and the Individual Talent*, ed. Jörg RADEMACHER (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2002) 149.

3. Arthur MIZENER, *The Saddest Story: A Biography of Ford Madox Ford* (New York: World, 1971) 192.

4. Violet HUNT, *The Flurried Years* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1926) 116. Henceforth referred to in the text as *Flurried Years*.

Years 117). Violet was aware of the mercenary aspect of the journey as she later admitted: 'I am ashamed to say that I was mercenary enough to remember that there were only two shaky lives [Aunt Emma and Tante Laura] between him and a fortune, and, anyway, it would be a great adventure!' (*Flurried Years* 117). Ford's decision to stay for a long period in Germany seems to have been influenced by his aunt's advice. In fact, Aunt Emma, who refused to receive Hunt, but felt the family name had been dishonoured by Elsie's lawsuit, suggested that Ford might be able to obtain a divorce under German law if he could establish German citizenship on the grounds that his father's naturalisation years earlier need not be extended to his children.<sup>5</sup> Ford was indeed half-German and had been partly raised and educated in Germany. As such, according to German law, he was himself eligible for German citizenship. All that Ford needed to do was to live for six months or so in Germany and be accepted by the town elders as man of worth and credit (*Desirable Alien* 173). It sounded so simple, as Hunt explains to René Byles:

The dear conceited Germans, you see, do not allow a whimsical father by one rash act to deprive his children of the inestimable advantage of German citizenship, and the Government makes it as easy as possible for them to resume it. They have only to *se donner la peine* of acquiring domicile and getting the burgomasters of some particular German town to accept them as persons likely to be good townsfellows and rich enough to pay their rates regularly. (*Flurried Years* 141)

The case of Holman Hunt, a naturalised citizen and artist who had resumed his German nationality in order to marry his deceased wife's sister, was undoubtedly in Violet's mind and already familiar to her.

As Violet understood the situation from Ford and explained in turn to Byles, the process of Ford's naturalisation would occur in two stages: he would first have to become a subject of the Grand Duke of Westphalia, and would then have to establish residence in a German town (Giessen) by convincing his fellow townsmen of his moral probity and fiscal solvency: 'He was already a German subject, anyhow; he had yet to become a citizen of the town of Giessen' (*Desirable Alien* 158). After he had spent, with Violet and Lita Crawford, Violet's friend and chaperon in Germany, a few days in Bad Nauheim,

---

5. Emma was in fact the widow of an ancient court of appeal's judge in Naumburg, Julius Goesen (1816–1872), and had a good knowledge of law. See Johann Hermann HÜFFER, *Lebenserinnerungen Briefe Und Aktenstücke* (Münster: Aschendorffs Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1952).

probably pondering in part the question of the 'German plan', Ford made the decision to stay in Giessen and on the recommendation of Crawford, Ford consulted *Rechtsanwalt* Ludwig Leun (1872–1928), a lawyer with a practice in the town of Giessen, the German state of Hesse.<sup>6</sup> Leun reassured Ford concerning legal concerns regarding the fact that his father who was naturalised in Britain in the 1870s would affect his right to German citizenship and invited him to fill the request to become a citizen of the Grand Duchy of Hesse. Ford left to Violet the responsibility of looking after his affairs, forwarding his mail, and keeping him informed of the London news.

According to the police records (*Polizeikartei*) and to the civil registry (*Personenstandskartei*), Ford moved to Giessen on October 3, 1910, and left it on May 1, 1912, but there is an official addition that mentions he was already back in London in November 1911. However, the deregistration took place only the following year on June 21, 1913.<sup>7</sup> He first lodged at 29 Nordanlage but as it was critical for Ford to appear a prosperous author and convince the German authorities that he was a respectable citizen worthy of German nationality, he exchanged his cheap student rooms for a furnished apartment in a new building (1910) at 15 Friedrichstrasse, and hired a man and his wife to care for him.<sup>8</sup> To improve his image in the community, he brought his mother to Giessen who chaperoned Violet when she joined them and made social calls.<sup>9</sup> However, he found the legal procedures wearisome and trivial, and at the earliest opportunity, he made off to England, France or Belgium. His trips had to be semi-

---

6. Ludwig Leun (1872–1928), juridical assessor and lawyer at Gießen local court from 1901 to his death. See Darmstadt, Hessische Staatsarchiv Darmstadt (= HStAD), S 1 Nr. *Nachweis*, letter L, HStAD, G 28 B, Nr. 1539 and HStAD, G 21 B, Nr. 966. See SAUNDERS I 314.

7. Gießen, Stadtarchiv Gießen (= StadtA GI), *Polizeikartei*, without shelfmark and StadtA GI, *Personenstandskartei*, without shelfmark. Indeed, the latter mentions as return trip date the 1 May 1913, but police data are probably more accurate.

8. *Ibid.* While this building still exists, Ford's accommodation in Nordanlage was bombed during the Second World War. On Gießen topography, see Hermann OESTERWITZ (ed.), *Wegweiser durch die Universitätsstadt Gießen und ihre Umgebung* (Gießen, Verlag von Emil Roth, 1907) 110 and Karlheinz LANG, ed., *Kulturdenkmäler in Hessen. Universitätsstadt Gießen* (Braunschweig, Vieweg & Sohn 1993) 154–156. For the history of the town at this period see Ludwig BRAKE, 'Auf dem Weg zur modernen Stadt', in Ludwig BRAKE and Heinrich BRINKMANN, *800 Jahre Gießener Geschichte 1197–1997* (Gießen, Brühl, 1997) 182–186 and Ludwig BRAKE, Eckhard EHLERS and Utz THIMM, *Gefangen im Krieg. Gießen 1914–1918* (Marburg, Jonas, 2014) 11–19.

9. Barbara BELFORD, *Violet: The Story of the Irrepressible Violet Hunt and Her Circle of Lovers and Friends—Ford Madox Ford, H.G. Wells, Somerset Maugham, and Henry James* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990) 180.

clandestine because Ford was not supposed to leave Giessen due to his citizenship application. 'Surely sky-larking about the Duchy was a mark of frivolity that would disgust their Profundities?' (*Flurried Years* 179), commented Hunt in her autobiography. When Violet received letters posted outside of Giessen, she was displeased. Why was Ford traipsing around Germany instead of being in his drawing room when the burgomasters called? she demanded. After several months, having doubts as to Ford's sincerity, it was evident that German bureaucracy would detain Ford for up to eighteen months rather than six. In fact, Max Saunders was right when he advanced that 'the City Council of Gießen decided on 11 May 1911 to refuse Ford's application to become a Hessian subject.'<sup>10</sup> Saunders held this information which wasn't available at the time of writing his famous biography on Ford, from Wolfgang Kemp, who was the only person at that point to have consulted the Gießen archives. In his book *Foreign Affairs. Die Abenteuer einiger Engländer in Deutschland 1900–1947*, which tells of the German experience for English writers and of the sometimes complicated circumstances in Germany between 1900 and 1945, Kemp gives explanations concerning the three parties that studied Ford's application for naturalisation, which echoes Hunt's statement in *The Flurried Years*: the Town Council ('who did not like him'), the State Ministry ('that wanted him'), and the *Landsgericht*—the judicial side (who were 'neutral'). According to Hunt: 'the Ministerium ordered the Municipality to accept him, and the Municipality were engaged in offering objections' (*Flurried Years* 164). Kemp adds that the dismissal of Ford's application was based on the case of Hermann Lublinsky in 1893, an English citizen who wanted to obtain the German nationality. The German jurisdiction required him to stay for five years in Giessen in order to obtain German citizenship.<sup>11</sup> The protocols of the city council (*Protokolle der Stadtverordnetenversammlung*) and some documents that I found in Darmstadt confirm this legal framework.<sup>12</sup> Carrying out a research project at the City Archives of Giessen, in the series *Gesuche um Staatsangehörigkeit und Heimatscheine*, I also

10. Max SAUNDERS, 'Introduction: Edwardian Ford?' *The Edwardian Ford Madox Ford*, eds Laura COLOMBINO and Max SAUNDERS (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013) 33.

11. Wolfgang KEMP, *Foreign Affairs. Die Abenteuer einiger Engländer in Deutschland 1900–1947* (Munich: Karl Hanser Verlag, 2010) 90–91.

12. Ford's case is treated in StadtA GI, *Protokolle der Stadtverordnetenversammlung* (Protocols of the City Council), 1910–1918, N. 2866, 11 May 1911. Lublinsky's precedent is included in StadtA GI, *Protokolle der Juristische Kommission* (Protocols of the Legal Commission), 1893, N. 2906 and StadtA GI, *Prot.* N. 2861 (Gießen City Council of 23 September 1893). For the legal framework see also HStDA, G 21 A, Nr. 1830/1.



discovered an authentic document of Ford's application for citizenship, which unveils a complex reality of his German period.<sup>13</sup>

The application of citizenship includes the Certificate of Naturalisation of Francis Hueffer, Ford's father, in 1882, and his baptism certificate (*Auszug*) in 1845, the Münster police report (*Bescheinigung*); copies of the lawyer's request and pleas, with marginal notes from the municipality, the commission report and the case tracking with comments; and two letters addressed to Ford by his aunt, Emma Goesen in Boppard, on August 14, 1911, and his uncle, Hermann Hüffer in Bonn, on July 6, 1903. These letters are annexed to the essay. In his application, dated April 4, 1911, Ford is presented by his lawyer Ludwig Leun as being a writer of German origin, more exactly from Westphalia, and it is mentioned that his father obtained English nationality when Ford was seven. Nonetheless, the applicant is also said to have always thought of himself as German: as a result, he offered himself for serving in the military at the German Embassy in Paris, on December 17, 1892, and he attended Bonn University.<sup>14</sup> By including his father's Certificate of Naturalisation, Ford desired to prove that British citizenship was something that was imposed upon him. It was also noted that Ford expressed the wish that the request should not include his wife Elsie or his children. He presented himself as visibly solvent and sufficiently *bourgeois* with estates and properties worth 300.000 marks in England, and an annual income of 30.000 marks.<sup>15</sup> This statement was emphasised by his Aunt Emma's letter, included in the file, that displayed his 'ancient and influential' relatives (see annex 1). On May 12, 1911, the verdict came and it was negative. In their report, the authorities mentioned that Ford's application to become German again was based on the pledge he had made to his wealthy uncle, who had been a professor of history in Bonn, and expressed some concern about his motives. In Violet's version, the promise was made to his Aunt Emma, '[to] take up the family title, now in abeyance, and recover the large entailed estates in Prussia that were his by inheritance—near the Lüneburger Heide.' (*Flurried Years* 167) Despite the lawyer's repeated appeals to the local

---

13. StadtA GI, *Gesuche um Staatsangehörigkeit und Heimatscheine* (Applications for Citizenship and Naturalisation), N. 5146, letter H, *Betreffend: die Aufnahme des Schriftsteller Hueffer aus London in der Hessischen Staatsverband, Jahr 1911* (Object: the admission of the writer Hueffer from London in the Hessian State Confederation, year 1911).

14. There are no written records regarding Ford's enrolment whether it was at Bonn University or the German Embassy in Paris.

15. StadtA GI, *Staatsangehörigkeit*, N. 5146/H, fol. 1r-2r. See annex 1.

authorities (*Kreisamt*) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ford failed in convincing them of his readiness to become a citizen of Giessen. His stay, observed the city council in its report of May 26, was not for academic purposes and he strangely didn't want to extend the citizenship to his wife and daughters.<sup>16</sup> No doubt, the ambivalent answer he gave when asked about his intention to take residence in Giessen—"it depends on circumstances"—did not help his cause.<sup>17</sup> Obtaining German citizenship proved to be more wearisome and much longer than he or Violet expected. And here is how Hunt put things in her book, 'I found out when he came to England in May, and not till then, the nature of one of the obstacles he spoke of. They wanted an undertaking from him that, when he was adopted as a citizen, he would live actually at the town of Giessen. *Jamais de la vie!*' Ford had visions 'of a villa on the Rhine and where money, that Germans adore, would be his for the asking and a little deference and kowtowing to an ancient and influential relative' (*Flurried Years* 167). Besides, the Judge to whom Ford gave English lessons and who seems to have a key role to play in examining Ford's case (he is cited three times in Hunt's story), was sceptical of Ford's desire 'to be an inhabitant of his horrid town', because 'such a thing the formal German official had never heard of in a Briton before, the reverse being so steadily the rule.' He thought, 'there must be a catch in it' (*Flurried Years* 166). In fact, the 'German plan' unveils Ford's complex understanding of Germany. The

---

16. As a matter of fact, Justus-Liebig University Archives do not refer to Ford neither as a student, nor as an English lecturer, despite the availability of a chair of English chair thanks to Professor Birth-Thirschfeld in 1877 (*Gießen Universitätsarchiv* (= UniA GI), Phil. H 40: *Akten der Grossherzoglich Hessischen Philosophischen Fakultät zu Gießen*, January 22, 1887. An English seminar review (*Mitteilungen an der Englische Seminar*) was created in 1933 (see UniA GI, Phil. H 8). On Gießen University, founded in 1607 by Louis V, the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, see Eva-Marie FELSCHOW, Carsten LIND, *Ein hoch-nutz, nötig und christlich Werck. Die Anfänge der Universität Gießen vor 400 Jahren* (Gießen: Justus-Liebig-Universität, 2007).

17. *Ibid.*, fol. 5r: 'Da der Gesuchsteller weder studienhalben hier wohnhaft ist, wir uns auch sonst den Zweck seines Hierseins nicht erklären konnten, auch die Angaben in Gesuche recht unbestimmt waren, sind uns Zweifel aufgestiegen, ob Gesuchsteller überhaupt die Absicht einer Niederlassung dahier oder im Deutschen Reiche hat. Wir hatten ihm hierüber befragt, wobei diese Zweifel jedoch nicht beseitigt werden konnten. Gesuchsteller konnte über die voraussichtliche Dauer seines Aufenthaltes in Deutschen Reiche keine bestimmte Angaben machen'. (Since the applicant is neither resident for study purposes, nor could we otherwise explain the purpose of his being there, even the information given in petitions was quite indefinite, we doubted whether the petitioner had the intention of settling here or in the German Reich. We had questioned him about this, but this doubt could not be dispelled. The applicant could not give any specific information about the probable duration of his stay in the German Reich).

German authorities wanted Ford to first become a citizen of Giessen, then of the Grand Duchy of Hesse and finally of Germany. In other words, they required a solid adhesion to the town, whereas, as we will see below, Ford's involvement went against his naturally bohemian nature.

The authorities' suspicion is easily understood as the German local newspapers (such as the *Giessener Anzeiger*) were full of stories of conspiracy and British spies in Germany (such as the case of the English spy in Emden, in the north of Germany on the border of Belgium, on August 24, 1910).<sup>18</sup> Moreover, this uneasiness highlights the ambiguous nature of the Anglo-German relations before the outbreak of the war. In one of the most influential interpretations of Anglo-German relations before the war, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914*, Paul Kennedy underlines the growing antagonism between the two nations in the late nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century.<sup>19</sup> On the one hand, the economic, cultural, religious and dynastic connections are described as having been very close. On the other hand, national rivalries had a strong influence on Anglo-German relations, particularly in the years immediately preceding 1914. Besides, Peter Chalmers Mitchell, in his essay 'A Biological View of Our Foreign Policy,' published on February 9, 1896, noted that 'In racial character, in religious and scientific thought, in sentiments and aptitudes, the Germans, by their resemblances with the English, are marked out as our natural rivals. In all parts of the earth, in every pursuit, in commerce, in manufacturing, in exploiting other races, the English and the Germans jostle each other.'<sup>20</sup> The Anglo-German antagonism was fuelled by the great Prussian victory over France at Sedan in 1871, that had revealed the alarming power of Prussia, mainly when the more or less independent German states joined with Prussia to form the German Empire in 1871. Henceforth, Germany was to be viewed as a potential enemy. British opinion vacillated between attitudes broadly characterised as 'Germanophile' and an increasing concern, even anxiety, about the extent to which the new Germany aspired to a vague but neverthe-

---

18. 'Ein Englisch Spion', in *Giessener Anzeiger* 197 (August 24, 1910). See also 'Die Verhaftung des englischen Spions', *Giessener Anzeiger* 200 (August 27, 1910).

19. Paul KENNEDY, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1980).

20. Peter CHALMERS MITCHELL, 'A Biological View of Our Foreign Policy', *Saturday Review* 82 (February 1896) 118-120.

less challenging hegemony in Europe.<sup>21</sup> The British uneasiness was expressed in invasion stories such as G. T. Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871), Erskine Childers' *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), H. G. Wells' *The War in the Air* (1908), William Le Queux's *The Invasion of 1910* (1906), etc. The pre-war invasion stories were largely a spontaneous response to increasing German naval power and the heightened awareness of British vulnerability brought about by the Boer war.<sup>22</sup>

Ford surely could not help but have been aware during the opening decade of the twentieth century of the intense commercial and military rivalry and the rising antagonism between England and Germany. Of Ford's naturalisation Douglas Goldring informs us that Ford had second thoughts even before he went through with it:

As Ford was not only 'psychic', in the sense that he had a good deal of intuition about forthcoming events, but was also well-informed and observant, it is probable that he guessed that the war between Germany and the *Entente* was inevitable. If it broke out he would be faced with the prospect of fighting against France or being put up against the wall and shot.<sup>23</sup>

The article, 'Blue Water and the Thin Red Line', which he published in *The English Review* in 1909, seems to confirm Goldring's statement. Ford expressed his conviction that a war between England and Germany would eventually not be avoided. Doubts plagued him. The 'German plan' did not stem from Ford's desire to repudiate his British background and upbringing; for him it seemed rather a means, to the end of ridding himself of his first wife, Elsie—who refused to grant him a divorce in England—and then to marry Violet Hunt. In contrast with invasion fantasies and spy scares, Ford was building bridges with Germany: for him the Germans were

just people, taking twopenny tram tickets from Ealing to the City or from *Ringstrasse* to the *Domplatz*, [. . .] thinking precious little or nothing at all about dark machinations for the flinging of troops into either East Anglia or the flat lands behind Borkum—but just people like you and me' (xii).

---

21. Keith ROBBINS, *Present and Past: British Images of Germany in the First Half of the Twentieth Century and their Historical Legacy* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1999) 20.

22. Peter EDGERLY FIRCHOW, *The Death of the German Cousin: Variations on a Literary Stereotype 1890–1920* (London: Associated UP, 1986) 36.

23. Douglas GOLDRING, *South Lodge, Reminiscences of Violet Hunt, Ford Madox Ford and the English Review Circle* (London: Constable, 1943) 98.

In the preface to Hunt's *The Desirable Alien*, Ford worried out loud about that country being encircled and 'threatened with immense Slav empires, kingdoms, and states,' which refers to the theory of encirclement the Germans believed in. Ford wished that, for the sake of peace, the French would regain the provinces lost in 1870; but in compensation Germany should receive a 'place in the sun' and Britain should 'lose nothing either' (*Desirable Alien* x-xi).

On the other hand, Ford's understanding of Germany is different and goes beyond the Hessian Confederation in this case. Ford ostensibly apprehends Germany in terms of *Heimat*, a German word impossible to translate, which means concurrently the fatherland/homeland, the native land, the soil or *terroir*, and a place where people feel more comfortable.<sup>24</sup> He shaped its borders in his preface to *The Desirable Alien*, the collection of travel essays about various aspects of German life and culture, thus making a clear distinction between Germany and Prussia. He describes Germany as 'a country that for me is partly Muenster in Westphalia, with its dark arcades and its history of blood, and that is still more the Rhine between Koblenz and Assman[n]shausen, where life lives itself so pleasantly' (*Desirable Alien* viii). In Moore's words, Ford's Germany contains a Prussian element associated with the parental home in Münster and with that city's dark legacy of religious intolerance, but still more the more pleasant principalities outside of Prussia, which included Giessen, Nauheim, Boppard, and the section of the Rhine between Koblenz and Assmannshausen where the Lorelai dwell. (Moore 152) Furthermore, if we consider the two essays on 'High Germany', published in *The Saturday Review* at the end of September and the beginning of October 1911<sup>25</sup> and then added in Hunt's *The Desirable Alien* in 1913, we notice that the title possesses not merely a geographical, but also a moral significance. The first part of 'High Germany'—'How It Feels to be Members of Subject Races'—opens with hyperbolic praise for the Duchy of Hanover and its inhabitants, among whom, in the first-person plural, Ford includes himself. He goes on to say that once he heard an 'excellent, energetic, and quite English lady' tell him that she wished 'to heaven the Prussians would conquer this country and administer it. Then there would be an end of our disgusting slackness' ('High Germany' 421). This idea of the Prussians conquering England,

24. See, for example, Peter BLICKLE, *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (New York: Camden House, 2004).

25. Ford Madox HUEFFER, 'High Germany', *The Saturday Review* 112 (7 October 1911) 421–22. Subsequently referred to in text as 'High Germany'.

even if it was placed in a far distant future, seemed 'inevitable': 'Not today, not tomorrow, not in ten years, not in twenty, not in any time into which there will survive any of the passions or bitterness of today, but in some time when the English won't care and the Prussians will. That is the real secret of it all' ('High Germany' 421). Ford concludes his meditation by asserting that: 'one of the three will rule us in the end, Prussian, Jew or hungry tradesman' ('High Germany' 422) He believed that 'for the good of the "Anglo-Saxons", the Prussians may one day consent to take over their mismanaged country'. (Firchow 90) He justifies this preference for the Prussians by adding:

And for ourselves we say as we get up and go down the hill [outside Hanover]: 'Please God that it will be the Prussians.' He at least will administer; will enrich us and will leave us somewhere some barrows in the sun amongst which to be. Possible He [sic] will even put up an *Aussichtsturm* and a tea garden. ('High Germany' 422)

A few months after the outbreak of the war, Cecil Chesterton described this teutonising process of England in a book portentously entitled *The Prussian Hath Said in His Heart* (1914). The English had over the years 'contrived a method by which in flattering the Germans we could also flatter ourselves. The Germans were "our cousins"; they were fellow "Teutons". If, therefore, they were such fine fellows, there was a presumption that we were fine fellows too'.<sup>26</sup>

At the beginning of his second essay, subtitled 'Utopia', Ford provided an exhaustive list of the various requirements, cultural, aesthetic, and social, that would be needed to make up a Utopian environment.<sup>27</sup> Although Ford admits that 'this list is fantastic and that such a town is impossible. It is unthinkable', in the very next sentence he reveals that all these elements are present in Giessen, a 'wretched little University town' according to Goldring (Goldring 96), adding that it is 'from this town we are writing [...] Once we may have lived in Arcady, now we live in Utopia' ('Utopia' 456). This idealised description of Gießen has nothing to do with Violet's own description of the town:

---

26. Cecil CHESTERTON, *The Prussian Hath Said in His Heart* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1914) 82.

27. 'The theatre is here and the university library, and the musical society and the companies, and the peasants who go to the opera, and the electric tramways, and the palace and the hospital. And there are even seven booksellers' shops of the first class, whereas in London you cannot find one bookseller of the first class in the whole of the western suburbs. So that when we come to think of it we are living in Utopia'. Ford Madox HUEFFER, 'High Germany II: Utopia', *The Saturday Review* 112 (7 October 1911) 456. Subsequently referred to in text as 'Utopia'.



Giessen is a junction, a very smart junction, decorated *art nouveau*, like the rest of Germany. The roof is frescoed with wild flowers, and electric lights, in the form of campanulas, are hung in elegant festoons on long, thin, metal cords like organ pipes. The sandwiches like dreams and the beer *like beer*—and that is saying a good deal. (*Desirable Alien* 172)

The idea of Giessen as a town of letters and arts recalls Ford's perception of Germany at that time and even during the first weeks of the war when he made a distinction between the 'good' and the 'bad' Germany; The 'good' Germans were, according to him, a harmless, industrious, peaceful people, much given to lyric poetry, music and philosophy. Besides, Firchow assumes that the two essays on 'High Germany' were written after Ford's newly gained status as Germany's newest citizen in 1911, which is why they glow with lyrical pro-Germanism; however, as we know from data provided here, this statement is no longer relevant. On the contrary, it seems that Ford, by writing these essays, intended to use his literary talents and writer's skills to plead his case after his application was dismissed in May 1911. He desired to convince the German authorities of his sincerity of purpose in becoming a German citizen. In addition, his intention was to show that Giessen, in particular, and Germany, in general, would benefit from letting the 'Prodigal Son' re-enter the Fatherland. Actually, in his appeal to the Ministry of the Interior, against the court's decision, the lawyer enclosed the two hitherto unseen letters mentioned above, one of which is indicative of Ford's uncle's high esteem for his nephew as a writer (see annex 2). Probably in order to achieve his aim, he replaced *Rechtsanwalt* Leun by a Berlin lawyer, expert in English law procedures, Victor Schneider, who seems to become his legal representative in November 1911.<sup>28</sup> The reasons for this sudden substitution are unknown, but the two documents in Ford's application confirm his criticism against the former lawyer.<sup>29</sup>

28. StadtA GI, *Staatsangehörigkeit*, N. 5146/H, fols. 13r-14r. See Otto Carl KIEP, *Mein Lebensweg 1886-1944: Aufzeichnungen während der Haft* (Berlin: Lucas Verlag, 2013) 59.

29. Most of the documents from Leun's cabinet in Gießen are unfortunately lost, maybe because of his death without progeny on November 4, 1928. Furthermore, his wife Paula, lawyer too, committed suicide on 5 November. See StadtA GI, *Personenstandskartei*, without shelfmark and *Gießener Anzeiger*, no. 261, 6 November, 1928. Their only living relative was Leun's sister, Maria Beppler Leun (1881–1941), resident in Großen-Linden, a few kilometres from Gießen. A few documents, concerning mainly Leun's health during his last years, are in Darmstadt State Archives (HStAD, G 21 B, Nr. 966).

However, Ford could not help being critical of his self-imposed residence and the sense of euphoria we feel in his essays did not last long as Utopia, in the end, was blown apart by frustration and violence:

But just at this moment our man [Ford's servant] comes in and tells us that the washing will not be home till to-morrow morning, and we become frenzied with rage. We say that we will break the neck of this excellent and long-suffering valet if he does not get all our collars back by three o'clock. Yes; we are all citizens of an earthly paradise, but—if we may be permitted the expression—we will be damned if we do not leave by the 6.9 for London. ('Utopia' 456)

Seemingly, manifestations of *homo duplex* and its accompanying ambivalences are not hard to discover in Ford's texts. The notion of the 'other' Ford emerges from these lines as well as his homesickness and his growing loneliness. Deprived of London life and of Violet's companionship because of the maddening delays in the progress of his quest for naturalisation, his letters whined loudly, 'pleading, moaning'. He loathed his two-room prison, decorated with 'about two hundred and fifty ornaments, ranging from bits of coral like human brains to gilded busts of Lohengrin' (*Desirable Alien* 147). His landlady was a deaf mute who stuffed him with heavy soups; the house reeked of onions; the bathroom was an outhouse. He bemoaned his writer's cramp: 'When I write legible the pain is bad; when I don't take trouble, and write illegible, nothing to speak of' (*Desirable Alien* 148). He grumbled frequently about his decaying teeth (Belford 178). He said children set off percussion caps outside his lodging house and climbed up to grin at him while he worked in his ground-floor room, yelling, 'Tag! Engländer!' Violet describes Ford's state of mind in Giessen:

He is hopeful and hopeless by turns. He is annoyed by the slowness of the *Rechtsanwalt* [...]. He is *triste*, *triste en vérité*, bored stiff, as we say now, going in the intervals of his desk for dull walks with the dull Johns, calling on dull professors in the college, going over now and then for gold to Jena to lecture dully on the Pre-Raphaelites, his forebears, to Dr. Schüking's eager pupils, 'talking himself in' slowly with genius—and its far-flung reputation, penetrating into this Fester Burg of Germany of which he desires to be a citizen. (*Flurried Years* 146)

His melancholy shows through his short book of verse, entitled *High Germany: Eleven Sets of Verse*, published in 1912. Ford's voice is musing, monotonous and reflective. The eleven poems in the volume describe the long, rainy days and typically reflect an autumnal and funeral mood. In 'Autumn Evening', for example, the poet is an



outsider who seeks the solitude of the high heather to observe the starlings or to commune with the spirit of the dead. According to Moore, ‘the manner in which Germany figures in these works—or rather the two contrasting Germanies of Prussia and Westphalia—suggests that Ford’s change of heart with regard to things German may have taken place a full three years before the guns of August 1914 were heard’ (Moore 148–49).

Although Ford was optimistic during the winter of 1911, assuring Violet that his naturalisation seemed certain, and confiding to her that ‘the authorities have already favourably reported me to the Grand Duke’ (*Flurried Years* 165), nevertheless, as reported by the grand-ducal district report (*Kreisamt*) on 26 May 1911, Ford was still unable to provide good reasons to be part of the Hessian Confederation, and continued to be an object of suspicion. Mary, Ford’s sister-in-law, told Violet that Ford’s lawyer

considered Joseph Leopold far too frivolous and had not liked his constant sky-larking, dashing about in motor-cars to Homburg *et céans*, just on the very days that the burgomasters of Giessen elected to go and call on him. Was he a person likely to be regular with his rates? *Ach, nein*—altogether too French for a German! (*Flurried Years* 258)

Could he be meaning the summons Ford missed on May 11, 1911, reporting to the office the following day? With war approaching, Violet realised that Ford could no longer stay in Germany. In September 1913, touring the Rhineland with Violet and the Mastermans, Ford could not ignore the foreboding sight of military reservists crowding the train stations, the barracks being erected, and the piles of the German railway that were ready to be laid all the way into Belgium. According to Judd, German nationality meant to Ford that either he was to be shot as a traitor or he would be forced to fight against France.<sup>30</sup> ‘[T]he plan,’ said Hunt, ‘was defeated by inertia—or malice—of the male protagonist’ (Goldring 129).

The notion of the ‘other’ Ford that has emerged in his poems and essays, combined with other factors, such as his relationship with Violet, the libel trial (the *Throne* case of February 1913) and the subsequent scandal (for which Ford was for the most part responsible) probably contributed to his distancing from Germany and Violet Hunt, as Violet put it: ‘The promise of the rainbow was not to be fulfilled. We could not see the blood-red ray in the spectrum, but Germany was

---

30. Alan JUDD, *Ford Madox Ford* (London: Collins, 1990) 198.

all wrong with us' (*Flurried Years* 183). Ford's German period ended abruptly, in an atmosphere of bitterness and enmity, shortly after war was declared in 1914 when he worried about his British citizenship by consulting C. F. G. Masterman who reassured him. He later admitted: 'I never became a German for legal or illegal reasons or for any reason'.<sup>31</sup> Yet that did not prevent Ford himself from becoming a victim of his colleagues' Germanophobia which alienated him from British society. These facts triggered changes in his thought and behaviour and were expressly reflected in his propaganda books. As Ford was soon to realise, not only did the war bring about a dramatic and immediate collapse of Anglo-German interactions; it also accelerated long-term developments of alienation with Ford's *Heimat*. Ford now began covering his tracks and hiding his German identity, making a clear distinction between himself and the other—the German. In *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, his ancestry is proved to be French, since the South Germans from whom he was descended were 'really and historically' the same people as the Franks.<sup>32</sup> Ford officially eliminated the middle name 'Hermann' from his certificate of baptism. He retained the Hueffer until June 'for reasons probably connected with his complicated marital affairs'.<sup>33</sup>

Ford's comments on German culture reveal his mixed feelings about Germany that the war did consolidate and justify. If, at the beginning, he was undecided in his allegiances, he saw in the violation of the Belgian territory the Prussian evil. In *Between St. Dennis and St. George*, Ford wishes that 'Germany did not exist' and hopes that 'it will not exist much longer',<sup>34</sup> seemingly oblivious of his previous reference to Germany as his 'beloved country'.<sup>35</sup> Ford denounces Germany in the section entitled 'The End of Germany':

I hope we're nearing the end of Germany, and I bitterly regret that our minds were ever burdened by the existence of that miserable Power. For our minds, for a generation past, have been burdened by the grossness, the imbecilities, and the materialisms of German minds to an

---

31. Letter to the Editor of *New York Herald Tribune Books*, Feb. 15, 1927, *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Richard LUDWIG (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965) 170.

32. Robert GREEN, *Ford Madox Ford: Prose and Politics* (Cambridge: CUP, 1981) 74.

33. Stanley KUNITZ, *Twentieth Century Authors* (New York: H. M. Wilson, 1942) 474.

34. Ford Madox FORD, *Between St. Dennis and St. George. A Sketch of Three Civilisations* (New York & London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915) 66. Henceforth referred to in text as BSDSG.

35. 'I should hate the thought that this proud people, full of free passions, should cease to bulk large in the comity of nations'; Ford also hates the idea that German regimental standards may one day fall 'into alien hands' (*Desirable Alien* x).

extent that few of us realise. We have been browbeaten by the intolerable professors; we have been hoodwinked by the perishing statesmen who represent a phase of humanity that was rotten already in the Middle Ages. (*BSDSG* 156)

In the preface to *When Blood Is Their Argument*, Ford claims that he ‘imbibed in [his] very earliest years a deep hatred of Prussianism’ together with a ‘deep love and veneration’ for France.<sup>36</sup> Of the ‘protracted period’ that he spent in Germany he now recollects that his admiration for ‘many institutions’ there was purely ‘platonic’ and merely ‘intellectual,’ while disliking ‘the idea of spending a moment longer than was absolutely necessary in that country’. With respect to his ‘High Germany’ hymns of praise, he is now struck to find himself ‘expressing in these articles the same feeling of unrest and anxiety to get away’ (170–71).

In a final attempt to bring all that linked him directly or indirectly to Germany to an end, Ford used the Selsey incident and Violet’s association with those who had denounced him as a German as a convenient excuse for his decision to enlist: ‘Violet’s course seemed to me,’ he explained to Masterman, ‘to be so radical a disloyalty to any form of joint life that I saw no other way open than to retire from the scene’ (Ford to Masterman, June 28, 1919, in Ludwig 95). Reflecting on the German period, Violet Hunt wrote in her autobiography, *The Flurried Years*:

Life is a succession of affairs, but there is always one affair for which the years, from birth, are a preparation, a hardening, a tempering, and a more or less serious erosion, possibly, of the sword of the fighter. And there comes, sooner or later, according to the sets and the entries and exits of the other actors, one’s own supreme moment. One is on. And that entry, being but human, one may so easily muff (*Flurried Years* 9).

Undoubtedly, Hunt was right, because Ford’s involvement with Germany seems to resist simple interpretation. His fluency in German, and the strong connections he had with his father’s family, the Hüffers of Münster and Boppard,<sup>37</sup> certainly offered him a special vantage point from which to observe German attitudes. ‘Viewed in

36. FORD, *When Blood Is Their Argument. An Analysis of Prussian Culture* (New York et London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915) vii. Henceforth referred to as *WBTA*.

37. We learn from *The Desirable Alien* (61) that Ford may have received some help from his well-to-do relatives for launching his journal, as well as from his Aunt Antonia Hüffer, *nee* Theissing, the childless widow of his favourite uncle Hermann Joseph Hüffer who had been a professor of history in Bonn.

the context of his long career', observes Moore, 'Ford's opinion of Germany seems to have solidified with the outbreak of the First World War, and to achieve its final, negative expression in *When Blood Is Their Argument*' (Moore 148).

In *The Good Soldier* (1915), there is a passage that could sum up Ford's idyll with Germany and Violet Hunt, and in which the narrator John Dowell observes that 'there is no man who loves a woman that does not desire to come to her for the renewal of his courage, for the cutting asunder of his difficulties. And that will be the mainspring of his desire for her. We are all so afraid, we are all so alone, we all so need from the outside the assurance of our own worthiness to exist.'<sup>38</sup> This reassurance Ford found once in Germany and with Violet Hunt; however, the war convinced him the virtues he had celebrated as German would have to be found elsewhere, with the Troubadours in the South of France and Provence (Moore 155).

---

38. Ford Madox FORD, *The Good Soldier*, ed. Martin STANNARD (1915, New York: Norton, 1995, 2012) 79–80.

## Annexes

Boyardel N. 14. 8. 1911.

Sinbar Noffa Ford.

Zu dem unübrigigen Nachweise über  
 Anna Dorothea mit der ich seit in dem  
 ancient lights habe Sie über meine Natur  
 Familie in der letzten Zeit, und möchte  
 ich mir sehr erlauben, Sie mit einigen in Ein-  
 nahme zu bringen. Ein sehr großer Name  
 also, der mich sehr sehr sehr sehr sehr sehr  
 der Union ist Göttingen und Frankfurt am  
 Osnabrück, nur der Hof der Hof. Nach Hertha,  
 Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Münster in  
 Westfalen. Von ihnen 8 Köpfe nur die  
 Natur der jüngsten, der, mein Natur und der  
 Leiter und Leiter der Aufsicht über die

FIG. 1 — Letter by Emma Goesen to Ford Madox Ford, 14.8.1911

Letter by Emma Goesen to Ford Madox Ford

[1r] Boppard d[er] 14.8.1911

Lieber Neffe Ford,

Zu den ausgiebigen Nachrichten über deine Voreltern mütterlicherseits in den *Ancient Lights* stehen die über deines Vaters Familien in dürftigem Contrast, und möchte ich mir daher erlauben, hiermit Einiges in Erinnerung zu bringen. Dein frühverstorbener Vater also, der musikalische Editor der *Times* Dr. Phil. der Universität Göttingen und Ehrendoctor von Oxford, war der Sohn der Geh. Reg[ierung] Rats Hüffer, Oberbürgermeisters der Stadt Münster in Westfalen. Von seinen 8 Söhnen war dein Vater der jüngste; er, mein Vater war der Besitzer und Leiter der Aschendorffschen Ver/ [fol. 2v] lagsbuchhandlung, die nach seinem Tode in die Hände des ältesten Sohnes überging. Der zweitälteste war Landgerichtsrat und Abgeordnete Hüffer in Paderborn, der Dritte, Wilhelm Hüffer starb 1895 in Rom als vielfacher Millionär, er hatte von seinem Reichtum so löblichen Gebrauch gemacht, besonders zu Nutzen der Städte Münster und Rom, daß bei seiner Beerdigung außer dem deutschen Botschafter und dem Sindaco von Rom, sechs römische Prinzen die Zipfel des Bahrtuches trugen. Der 4te der Brüder Hüffer, ebenfalls Millionär, verschied 1897 in Paris, der 5te, Geh. Justizrat und Universitätsprofessor Hermann Hüffer, 1905 in Bonn. Bleibt nur noch zu erwähnen der gleichfalls in Bonn verstorbene Alexander Hüffer, vormals Großkaufmann in Genua / [fol. 2r] und<sup>39</sup> der Rittergutsbesitzer in Westpreußen Emil Hüffer, gestorben 1876.<sup>40</sup>

So, lieber Neffe, nun hast du einen kurzen Überblick über die 8 Brüder. Von den 6 Schwestern, also von den 14 Geschwistern insgesamt [sic], bin ich die Letztlebende Witwe seit 1872 der in Naumburg an der Saale verstorbene Appellationsgerichtsrat Julius Goesen.

Sollten dir weitere Mitteilungen erwünscht sein, so stehe dir deren, schriftlich wie mündlich, jederzeit gern zu Verfügung, von

Deiner Tante Emma Goesen  
Geboren Hüffer.

---

39. Writen n', n.d.r.

40. According to Hermann Hüffer, he died in 1877. See STEFFENS, *Hüffer Lebenserinnerungen* XV.



*Translation:*

Boppard, August 14, 1911

Dear nephew Ford,

For the abundant information about your maternal ancestors in the Ancient Lights, those about your father's family are in poor contrast, and I would therefore like to remind you of some facts. Your father, who died too early, the musical critic of *The Times*, Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Göttingen and honorary doctor of Oxford, was the last son of the private State Councilor Hüffer, Lord Mayor of the city of Münster in Westphalia. Of his 8 sons your father was the youngest; he, my father, was the owner and director of Aschendorff's / [fol. 2v] bookstore, which passed through the hands of the eldest son after his death. The second oldest was the district court judge and deputy Hüffer in Paderborn, the third, Wilhelm Hüffer died in Rome in 1895 as a multimillionaire. He had made such a valuable use of his wealth, especially towards the inhabitants of the cities of Münster and Rome, that at his funeral in addition to the German ambassador and the mayor of Rome, six Roman princes held a corner of the funeral shroud. The fourth brother Hüffer, also a millionaire, passed away in Paris in 1897. The fifth one, the private legal councilor and University Professor Hermann Hüffer, died in 1905 in Bonn. I still have to mention Alexander Hüffer, who also died in Bonn, formerly a wholesaler in Genoa / [fol. 2r] and Emil Hüffer, the landowner in West Prussia, who died in 1876.

So, dear nephew, now you have a glimpse of the 8 brothers. Of the 6 sisters, so 14 siblings in total, I am the last survivor and widow since 1872 of the late judge of Naumburg on Saale Court of Appeal Julius Goesen.

If you would like to receive more information, I stay with pleasure at your disposal, at any time either in writing or in person

Your aunt Emma Goesen  
Born Hüffer.

2. Letter by Hermann Hüffer to Ford Madox Ford

[1r] Bonn der 6 Juli 1903

Lieber Ford,

*Es ist zu arg, daß wir Deinen lieben, freundlichen Brief so lange ohne Antwort gelassen und für wiederholte Sendungen noch nicht gedankt haben.*

*Die nächste Veranlassung darf ich kaum nennen: Wir konnten einige Worte in Deinem Briefe nicht lesen, dachten sie noch zu entziffern, der Brief wurde beiseite gelegt und so kamen wir ins aufschieben.*

*Die Photographien haben uns große Freude gemacht; man glaubt den Bewohnern des anmutigen / [1v] ländlichen Heims auf den Gesichtern zu lesen, daß sie sich wohl behaglich und glücklich fühlen. So oft wir von Deiner Hand die Bestätigung erhalten, wirst Du uns zu neuem Danke verpflichten.*

*Clemens Wilde, der vorgestern mit seiner Frau für einige Zeit nach Bonn gekommen ist, erzählte mir, daß Oliver eine ehrenvolle und lohnende Stellung als Correspondent des Manchester Guardian und Privat Secretär eines Parlamentsmitgliedes erhalten habe. Wir bitten Oliver und seine uns sehr wert Frau herzlich zu grüßen. Schreibe mir doch von Deinen Arbeiten, historischen oder literarischen. Ich bin noch mit der Revolutions Geschichte / [fol. 2r] beschäftigt und infolge dessen auch mit der berufenen Kapitulation der napolitanischen Republikaner welche von Nelson im Juni 1799 gebrochen wurde. Der amerikanische Kapitän Mahan und ein Herr Batham haben darüber zahlreiche Streitschriften in englischen Journalen gewechselt, freilich ohne daß so viel dabei gewonnen wäre, als der Umfang ihren Erörterungen erwarten läßt. Meine Abhandlung wird im Herbst in der Revue historique erscheinen und wie ich hoffe, die zweifelhaften Punkte einigermassen ins Klare bringen.*

*In der letzten Jahren wurde ich von den Akademien in Paris, München und Wien zum korrespondierenden Mitglied ernannt. / [fol. 2v] Darin liegt vermutlich der Grund, warum ich vor einigen Monaten von einer amerikanischen Akademie und vor kurzem von dem 'Royal Societies Club' in London eingeladen wurde, als Mitglied beizutreten. Man muß aber die Ehre dieser Mitgliedschaft durch einen ziemlich hohen Jahresbeitrag erkaufen. Ist Dir etwas über diese Gesellschaft bekannt?*

*Als Vorstand werden Leute mit sehr hohen Titeln Lord High Chancellor Erzbischöfe<sup>41</sup> und Herzöge aufgeführt.*

---

41. Crossed out: und.



*Hätte ich bessere Augen damit ich alle Feinheiten Deiner Kunstwerke nach Verdienst bewundern könnte! Antonie sagt mir, daß die Nationaltracht Deine Frau vortrefflich kleide.*

*Euch allen groß und klein drücken wir herzlich die Hand. Könnten wir doch sagen: Auf baldiges Wiedersehen!*

*Euer teuer Onkel  
Hermann Hüffer.*

*Daß das Befinden meiner Schwester Laura sich allmählich bessert, wirst Du aus Münster erfahren haben.<sup>42</sup>*

*Translation:*

Bonn, July 6, 1903

Dear Ford,

It is too bad from me to leave your kind and friendly letter without an answer for such a long time and that I have not yet thanked you for your repeated letters.

The next reason that I hardly dare mention: We could not read a few words in your letter, we thought to decipher them later, the letter was put aside and so the answer was postponed.

The photographs have made us very happy; one could believe the inhabitants of a graceful rural home that we read about on their faces that they feel comfortable and happy. As often as we receive confirmation from your hand, we will newly be obliged to you.

Clemens Wilde, who came to Bonn with his wife for some time the previous day, told me that Oliver had received an honourable and rewarded position as correspondent for the Manchester Guardian and private secretary of a Parliament member. We ask you to greet warmly Oliver and his very dear wife. Please, do write to me about your work, either historical or literary. I am still busy with the history of the Revolution / [fol. 2r], and consequently with the well-known capitulation of the Neapolitan Republicans, which was broken by Nelson in June 1799. The American Captain Mahan and a Mr. Batham have exchanged a lot of pamphlets in English journals about it, of course, without taking so much as the scope would be expected to be

---

42. *Phrase added on the left margin.*

discussed. My essay will appear in the *Revue historique* in the autumn and, as I hope, it will somewhat clear up the doubtful points.

In recent years, I have been appointed by the academies in Paris, Munich and Vienna as a corresponding member. / [fol. 2v] That is probably the reason why I was invited to be a member of an American academy a few months ago, and recently of the 'Royal Societies Club' in London. But for the honour of this membership one must pay a rather high annual contribution. Do you know something about this society?

As board, are listed people with very high titles as Lord High Chancellor, Archbishops and Dukes.

I wish I had better eyes to admire all the subtleties of your art according to merit! Antonie tells me that your wife wears the national dress admirably.

We warmly greet you all, young and old alike. I wish we could say: See you soon!

Your dear uncle  
Hermann Hüffer.

you will have learned from Münster that the condition of my sister Laura is gradually improving.



# 'My Friend the Enemy': Ford's Construction of the German Other in Wartime

Lucinda BORKETT-JONES

Open University

The first year of the First World War was a critical time in Ford's relationship with Germany, during which he negotiated his cosmopolitan identity while participating in the nationalistic creation of the enemy Other in his propaganda. Focusing on Ford's wartime journalism in the *Outlook*, this chapter sets Ford's wartime writing about Germany in biographical and historical context, and argues that Ford does not reject his German heritage so much as reframes it, highlighting the ambivalence of his earlier attitudes.

## From Hueffer to Ford

It has frequently been suggested that the First World War marked the end of Hueffer and began the process leading to the emergence of 'Ford' in 1919.<sup>1</sup> It is true that Ford shifted from displaying what might be termed a more Germanic identity before the war, to a more Francophile one in the post-war period. Before 1914, Ford had travelled extensively in Germany and referred to it frequently in both fiction and non-fiction. Peter Firchow describes 1903-14 as 'Ford's German Period', by which he means a time when Ford primarily writes positively about Germany.<sup>2</sup> He argues that this period ends 'abruptly and ignominiously' within days of the outbreak of war (Firchow 92).

---

1. Max SAUNDERS, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life, Volume I: The World Before War* (2nd edition, OUP, 2012) 474; Gene M. MOORE, 'Ford and Germany: The Question of Cultural Allegiance', *Modernism and the Individual Talent: Recanonizing Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Jorg W. RADEMACHER (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2002) 148-55 (148).

2. Peter EDGERLY FIRCHOW, *The Death of the German Cousin: Variations on a Literary Stereotype, 1890-1920* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1986) 90.

While I suggest a longer ‘German period’, the term remains a useful one to consider a time when Ford’s Germanic influences were more prominent than after the war. But the notion that Ford’s connection with Germany was positive before the war, and became negative almost by default at the declaration of conflict, is a limited description of the complex relationship Ford had with his father’s homeland.

I begin this chapter by considering Ford’s early German influences and the experiences that shaped his attitudes towards German culture before the war. I then consider how this affected his writing about Germany in 1914–15, particularly focusing on his wartime journalism in the *Outlook*. I demonstrate that Ford’s ‘German period’ includes the entire pre-war period, from Ford’s childhood, up to 1915, the year in which he probably published more about Germany than any other. In the first year of the conflict Ford certainly had to renegotiate his relationship with his German heritage, but he displays an ambivalent attitude towards Germany long before the outbreak of war. In wartime, however, Ford must use his own Germanness to construct a German Other, a distinct German enemy. The identity of the personal German enemy he constructs in that first year is particularly clear in the abbreviated form of the articles.

## Ford and Germany before the war

Ford’s father, Franz Hüffer, left Germany in 1869 and came to London, where he anglicised his name to Francis Hueffer. In London, Hueffer worked as a journalist and music critic, and eventually became music editor at *The Times* in 1878. Despite his willing assimilation into English life, he continued to champion German culture, and was a leading advocate for the music of Richard Wagner and the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer. Hueffer wrote the first English-language work on Wagner, *Richard Wagner and the Music of the Future* in 1874, contributing to the growing interest in Wagner’s music in Britain.<sup>3</sup> Ford’s relationship with his father has been much discussed by critics; particularly his description of Ford as a ‘stupid donkey’ whom he advised not to write.<sup>4</sup> From the evidence Ford left and from the

---

3. Anne DZAMBA SESSA, *Richard Wagner and the English* (London: Associated University Presses, 1979) 27–28; Rupert CHRISTIANSEN, *The Visitors: Culture Shock in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000) 42–79.

4. FORD, *Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1911) 42; Thomas C. MOSER, *The Life in the Fiction of Ford Madox Ford* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980) 133–49; SAUNDERS I 17–20.

critical analysis of this issue, we can deduce that Ford had a complex relationship with his father, and, perhaps even more so, with his father's memory.

Ford's juvenilia—his early musical compositions and criticism as well as the fiction—demonstrate a strong Germanic influence. His early published fairy tales show his admiration for the Brothers Grimm, and archival excerpts from his reading journal in 1893 include his notes on the thirteenth-century German writer Walther von der Vogelweide as well as Schopenhauer.<sup>5</sup> In the mid-1890s Ford wrote 'A Romance of the Times Before Us', a satirical short story describing a German invasion of Britain, which remained unpublished, but demonstrates his appreciation for the political tensions between his two parental cultures.<sup>6</sup> A fragment of a manuscript on Richard Wagner, dated 1891, suggests Ford also considered continuing his father's legacy. 'Wagner Educationally Considered' is full of hyperbolic enthusiasm for Wagner's 'genius', and is signed with the pseudonym 'Hermann Ritter, Royal Proffessor [sic] and Granducal [sic] Kammervirtuoso at Würzburg'.<sup>7</sup> The pseudonym suggests that it was written at least partially in jest. Ford was either mocking his father's work or affectionately imitating the work of the seasoned academic. Sondra Stang and Carl Smith read this work as 'an act of filial piety', though they acknowledge some tonal ambiguity.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the tone makes it difficult to make serious comparisons with Ford's later criticism of Wagner in his wartime propaganda, but even in 1915 he acknowledges that Wagner was 'a very great artist'.<sup>9</sup>

Following Francis Hueffer's early death, Ford's mother, Catherine Madox Hueffer, looked to their wealthy German relatives for support. Although the support was not immediate, Ford did receive several instalments of financial help from the Hüffers. In 1897, he and his siblings received an inheritance of £3,000 on the death of their Uncle Leopold.<sup>10</sup> When Ford was in Germany in 1904, his aunt, Laura

5. FORD, 'Notes as to Thoughts', 1893. Carl A. Kroch Library, Ithaca, Ford Madox Ford Collection, MS 4605/15.011.

6. FORD, 'A Romance of the Times Before Us' [1896-98?], Kroch Library, Ithaca, MS 4605/20.008a-c.

7. FORD, 'Wagner Educationally Considered' [1891], Kroch Library, Ithaca, MS 4605/26.006.

8. Sondra J. STANG and Carl SMITH, "'Music for a While": Ford's Compositions for Voice and Piano', *Contemporary Literature* 30 (1989) 183-223 (187).

9. FORD, *When Blood is Their Argument: An Analysis of Prussian Culture* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915) 142. Henceforth referred to as *WBTA*.

10. Arthur MIZENER, *The Saddest Story: A Biography of Ford Madox Ford* (1971, New York: Carroll & Graf, 1985) 35.

Schmedding, was concerned about his health and offered to pay him the equivalent of an advance so that he would not have to work.<sup>11</sup> In 1908, he also received £500 from his Uncle Friedrich and Aunt Antonia, to support the establishment of the *English Review* (Moore, 149-50). Wolfgang Kemp suggests that their financial help fundamentally shaped Ford's view of Germany before the war; giving the impression of a country where money came without the struggles associated with his early writing career in England.<sup>12</sup> While this support was significant, his British relatives also rallied to help him at various times. Ford, his mother and his siblings lived with Ford Madox Brown after his father's death, and in the winter of 1904-5 William and Lucy Rossetti, Ford's uncle and aunt, gave him the use of their London home. In later years, there *were* conditions attached to the money from Germany, especially the much-anticipated inheritance from his Aunt Laura, which she made subject to Ford's 'good behaviour' shortly before her death in 1910, and which he never received (Mizener 199-200). The financial assistance that Ford received from the Hüffers was one aspect among many that shaped his views of Germany.

In the decade before the war, Ford spent two extended periods in Germany, in 1904, and again in 1910-11. During his visit in 1904, he intended to research his book on Holbein, although the trip was instigated at his doctor's recommendation. Ford had struggled with agoraphobia and depression for some time, and was advised to take two years abroad (Moser 56; 137). Instead, he spent five months in Germany and Switzerland, some of which was with his relatives in Boppard, Telgte, near Münster, and Bonn. In October 1904, he travelled to Basel for his research, but while he was there he suffered a severe mental breakdown. He was treated at a sanatorium in Mammern, by Lake Constance in Switzerland, and later at the spa in Marienberg, Boppard. Ford's impressions of Germany during this period were undoubtedly affected by his emotional state. At times Ford felt that the German attitude to nervous breakdown helped him, as Saunders observes, 'feel at home' (Saunders I 176). But he also wrote in a letter to his wife Elsie that the spa at Marienberg was 'rather like being buried alive beneath an immense whitened mausoleum', adding that he hoped to be 'out of gaol' by Christmas.<sup>13</sup>

---

11. Judging by a later comment by Ford, this probably amounted to 600M. Ford, Letter to Elsie Hueffer. 10 Sept 1904. Kroch Library, Ithaca, MS 4605/35.007.

12. Wolfgang KEMP, *Foreign Affairs: die Abenteuer einiger Engländer in Deutschland, 1900-1947* (Munich: Hanser, 2010) 39.

13. FORD, Letter to Elsie Hueffer. 10 November 1904. Kroch Library, Ithaca, MS 4605/35.034.

Some critics have seen Ford's experience of German spas as evidence for a strong association with Germany as a place of rest and wellbeing, which does not seem to correspond with Ford's experience. Gene Moore suggests that before the war Ford saw Germany as 'primarily a place to go to be cured of one's physical ailments or legal problems' (Moore 152). Kemp also describes Ford's pre-war experience of Germany as 'Das Land der Wiedergeburt, der Heilung und des Überflusses [. . .]. Also das ideale Mutterland' ("The land of rebirth, of healing, and of abundance [. . .] therefore the ideal motherland"; my trans., Kemp 38-39). A more ambivalent impression emerges from Ford's descriptions of his treatment, as well as his account of living in Giessen.

Ford spent more than a year based in Giessen in 1910-11, attempting to gain German citizenship, in the hope that he could acquire a German divorce from Elsie and marry Violet Hunt (Saunders I 314-15).<sup>14</sup> *The Desirable Alien at Home in Germany*, published in 1913, but mostly written in 1911-12, is primarily Hunt's book, documenting their time together in Germany, but it includes a preface and two chapters by Ford. Poised between visitor and guide, Hunt narrates their travels around Germany, including details of German history and social customs. In Ford's preface, he calls Germany 'my beloved country', a phrase that has fuelled the perception of Ford's positive pre-war relationship with Germany.<sup>15</sup> His other contributions to this book have sometimes been interpreted as displaying an unreserved affection for Germany. Firchow describes Ford's chapters as 'fairly glowing with optimism and pro-Germanism' (Firchow 90). Similarly, Kemp considers *The Desirable Alien* to be '*das positivste Zeugnis der englischen Deutschlandliteratur*' ("the most positive testimony of English literature about Germany"; my trans., Kemp 52). Another interpretation is possible, particularly considering the tone of the book.

Ford's chapters sit awkwardly within Hunt's narrative. They were first published in the *Saturday Review* in 1911 under the collective title 'High Germany'. The first included in the book concerns 'Utopia'. Ford details the requisite attributes of a utopian town, including a university, ample sources of cultural diversion associated with the university, and an old town centre, situated in a rural valley. At the end of the chapter he reveals:

---

14. Although it seems Ford never acquired German citizenship, it is possible that Ford and Hunt had a form of marriage ceremony in Paris in the autumn of 1911 (Saunders I 356).

15. Violet HUNT and FORD, *The Desirable Alien at Home in Germany* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1913) x.



It is odd, we are living in Utopia; we are living in an earthly paradise. There can't be any doubt about it. But just at this moment our man comes in and tells us that the washing will not be home till to-morrow morning, and we become frenzied with rage. [. . .] Yes; we are all citizens of an earthly paradise, but—if we may be permitted the expression—we will be damned if we do not leave by the 6.9 for London. (Hunt and Ford 51)

Despite Ford's assertion that he is living in paradise, we are not meant to believe him. His thoughts about the perfection of his location are interrupted by a practical frustration, and he longs to take the next train to England. The actual location is not named in the original article;<sup>16</sup> in the book version, Ford rather cryptically refers to 'the town alluded to in the previous chapter as H—' (Hunt and Ford 45). This would be Homberg, which lacks a university, particularly one built in the seventeenth century, as Ford specifies (45). Fittingly, for this notoriously difficult word, it is 'no place' that Ford was living in.

Giessen was far from utopian in Ford's mind. While he was there he was dogged by the legal struggle with the German authorities to become a citizen and acquire a divorce. He also disliked the food and his accommodation. He felt isolated, and found Giessen society limited, commenting more than once that the town was full of professors.<sup>17</sup> He kept finding reasons to leave, despite the requirement to remain (Saunders I 316-17). At the same time, his relationship with the Hüffers had been adversely affected by his relationship with Hunt. Letters between Ford and his cousin Mimi Goesen in 1910 show that his aunt, Emma Goesen, was unwilling to receive Ford with Hunt before they were married.<sup>18</sup> Douglas Goldring concludes that '[h]is exile in Giessen must have been a nightmare of misery'.<sup>19</sup> In 1915, Ford anticipates criticism about the apparent change in his views towards Germany. In *When Blood is Their Argument*, he writes: 'I find myself expressing in those articles exactly the same feeling of unrest and of anxiety to get away that I have just re-expressed'—and he quotes the above passage from 'Utopia' (WBTA 171). His writing

16. FORD, 'High Germany II: Utopia', *Saturday Review* (7 October 1911) 454-56.

17. FORD, Typed letter to Violet Hunt [1911?], Kroch Library, Cornell, Ithaca, Violet Hunt Papers, 4607/24/12. Hunt made typed copies of Ford's letters in preparation for her autobiography, but did not include the dates on the letters.

18. MIMI GOESEN, Letter to Ford Madox Ford, 23 August 1910. Kroch Library, Ithaca, Violet Hunt Papers, MS 4607/9/23b.

19. DOUGLAS GOLDRING, *South Lodge: Reminiscences of Violet Hunt, Ford Madox Ford and the English Review Circle* (London: Constable, 1943) 96.

in 1915 is not as revisionist as it may seem, he only highlights the ambivalence that was there all along.

Ford's final visit to Germany before the war was a holiday on the Rhine in September 1913 with Hunt, and his friends, the Liberal MP Charles Masterman, and his wife, Lucy. It is not surprising, then, that in June 1914 he described Germany as 'very disagreeable to live in, though it is lovely enough to visit'.<sup>20</sup> At the outbreak of war, Ford was deeply aware of his mixed loyalties. In August 1914, he wrote that '[w]hichever side wins in the end—my own heart is certain to be mangled in either case'.<sup>21</sup> But Ford had to pick a side, and when he did, it meant a final breach in his relationship with his father's family and his German friends. Ford describes this decision in a letter to his publisher in August 1915, just after he enlisted: 'I have had to give up literature and offer myself for service to George Five; so shortly you may expect to see me pantingly popping cartridges into garrison guns directed against my uncles, cousins and aunts advancing in *Pickelhaubes*'.<sup>22</sup> Ford's alliterative humour is a front for the complexity of his decision. Although there appears to be no evidence of an ongoing relationship with his father's family after the war, there are indications of continued ambivalence towards Germany. Ford's estrangement from his German relatives probably began before August 1914, but his friendship with the German scholar of English literature, Levin Ludwig Schücking, did end abruptly at the outbreak of war, and both Schücking and Ford joined the propaganda campaigns in their home nations.<sup>23</sup> In this sense, Ford enlisted in the British cause before he went to fight. Over the course of the first year of the war there are shifts in Ford's attitudes to Germany, but he draws on the impressions of German culture and history that he had developed over the preceding decades. Thomas Moser sees Ford's anti-German writing as part of a wholesale rejection of his Huefferian identity, which he partially

---

20. FORD, 'Literary Portraits—XL: Vernon Lee and *Louis Norbert*', *Outlook* 33 (13 June 1914) 815–16 (815).

21. FORD, 'Literary Portraits—XLVIII: M. Charles-Louis Philippe and *Le Père Perdrix*', *Outlook* 34 (8 August 1914) 174–75 (174).

22. FORD to John Lane, 12 August 1915, *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Richard M. LUDWIG (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965) 61. The date of this letter is contested: see Saunders, note 11, 608–9.

23. There are different accounts of when Ford and Schücking first became friends—Schücking dates it from 1902, when he visited London, Ford recalls it being 1904. Jörg W. RADEMACHER, 'Tracing a Biographical Habit: Notes on the Lives of Franz Hüffer and Ford Hermann Hüffer', *Modernism and the Individual Talent* (LIT, 2002) 120–34 (128).

attributes to 'self-loathing' (Moser 196).<sup>24</sup> Emily Hayman considers it an act of 'self-preservation' at a time of extreme Germanophobia in Britain.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, what shifts more than anything, is the context; Ford adapts himself to the environment of war.

### Ford's writing about Germany in the *Outlook* in 1914–15

Throughout the first year of the war, Ford wrote weekly articles in the *Outlook*, an imperialist review of literature, politics, and the arts. In the early 1900s, it featured occasional reviews and comment from writers such as Joseph Conrad, Arthur Conan Doyle, and E.V. Lucas. In the absence of diaries or many surviving letters from this period of Ford's life, these articles are a valuable record of Ford's experience of the war before he enlisted. Ford wrote extensively about German culture, particularly during the first six months of the war. He had been writing 'Literary Portraits' for the *Outlook* consistently since September 1913. The typical structure included an introductory section in which Ford gave an account of the author and the contemporary literary scene, followed by a review of a recent work. After the outbreak of war, this structure changed considerably. Ford maintained the 'Literary Portraits' series until January 1915, though this was largely in name only. Between August 1914 and August 1915, the articles include a range of reviews, personal reflections on the progress of the war and its cultural impact, and some are virtually the same as sections of his propaganda books; in *Return to Yesterday* (1931), Ford describes these articles as 'Government propaganda' (272). In total, about half of the forty-nine articles he wrote over the course of the year are included in the propaganda books in some form.

Ford was invited to join the British propaganda campaign by Charles Masterman, who was a member of Cabinet and director of the War Propaganda Bureau based at Wellington House. Ford was not invited to the meeting of notable British authors on 2 September 1914, but joined the campaign shortly afterwards. The resulting books, *When Blood is Their Argument* and *Between St Dennis and St George* (both pub-

---

24. Moser does also acknowledge that 'political prudence' contributed to Ford's identity change (196–97).

25. Emily HAYMAN, "'Under Four Eyes' (*Unter Vier Augen*): Ford Madox Ford, Propaganda, and the Politics of Translation', *Modern Fiction Studies* 62 (2016) 25–52 (28). *Project Muse*, muse.jhu.edu/article/613611.

lished in 1915), reflect the cultural analysis that was popular with the American intellectuals that Ford was targeting.<sup>26</sup>

Ford's articulation of the German enemy in his journalism and propaganda is deeply personal.<sup>27</sup> But his arguments against Germany also engage with some of the principal concerns of the cultural sphere at the time: Ford tackles the image of Germany as the source of musical excellence, as the model for British education, and as an advanced nation threatening British commerce and imperial security. In 1911, Ford describes Germany as 'my own amiable country', and in 1915 he writes that 'I wish Germany did not exist'.<sup>28</sup> Ford nonetheless makes consistent arguments about Germany across this period, and so the tone of his writing is an important consideration. Moore suggests that the war 'did not perhaps change his mixed feelings about Germany so much as solidify and justify them' (Moore 154). Ford's wartime writing should not be seen entirely as a rejection of his past, a break, or a rupture, but instead as an opportunistic reframing.

Ford's first article after the outbreak of war expresses his dilemma: 'I am a cosmopolitan, and also, I suppose, a poet so apt to identify myself with anyone's sufferings as to be unable to take sides very violently' ('Literary Portraits—XLVIII' 174). Even so, from the outset he argues that 'the war is, in its outlines, [. . .] absolutely correct' ('Literary Portraits—XLVIII' 175). Given the acute sense of divided loyalties in this article, Ford likely wanted to protect himself against speculation about his lack of commitment to the British cause. Such speculation was almost inevitable; anti-German feeling was widespread at the outbreak of war, and only intensified in 1915.<sup>29</sup> By mid-September 1914, Ford claims that 'if I walk down the village street I am apt to be insulted every two minutes—because of my German descent'.<sup>30</sup> In January 1915, he again mentions the anti-German

---

26. Moshik TEMKIN, 'Culture vs. *Kultur*, or A Clash of Civilizations: Public Intellectuals in the United States and the Great War, 1917–1918', *The Historical Journal* 58 (2015) 157–82. *Cambridge Core*, doi:10.1017/S0018246X14000594.

27. Moser notes that Ford makes fewer personal references in *When Blood is Their Argument* (197).

28. FORD, 'The Critical Attitude Applied to the Affairs of the World in General: The Music-Halls of Europe: England's Easy Lead', *Bystander* 32 (27 December 1911) 703–04 (703); FORD, *Between St Dennis and St George: A Sketch of Three Civilisations* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1915) 66.

29. Panikos PANAYI, 'The Destruction of the German Communities in Britain during the First World War', *Germans in Britain since 1500*, ed. Panikos PANAYI (London: Hambleton Press, 1996) 113–30 (115).

30. FORD, 'Literary Portraits—LIII: The Muse of War', *Outlook* 34 (12 September 1914) 334–45 (335).

hatred he experienced, while musing on the nature of enmity.<sup>31</sup> A few months earlier, Ford had described himself in the pages of the *Outlook* as ‘a German’ (‘Literary Portraits—XL’ 815). In wartime, he feels compelled to assure his readers, that ‘his Britannic Majesty has no more loyal servant than myself’.<sup>32</sup>

Ford’s criticism of German culture and history is the focus of the articles between mid-September 1914 and February 1915, with an interlude at the turn of the year. His first propagandist article appears in the same week as the ‘Authors’ Declaration’, a public letter supporting the war, signed by more than fifty prominent British authors, published in *The Times* and the *New York Times*.<sup>33</sup> Ford did not sign this, nor any of the subsequent joint public letters by authors. Ford’s article is instead his form of agreement, beginning his own campaign against Germany. His subject is the deficiencies of German language and culture, a core theme of his propaganda, particularly in the articles. Ford writes: ‘there are few people that more dislike or have more unceasingly preached against the language of Luther, Goethe, and the editorial writers of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. (The language of Heine is another matter.)’<sup>34</sup> This statement is representative of Ford’s broader arguments in wartime, both in content and structure. He had regularly condemned the German language; he complained about the ‘awful Germanic language’ in a letter to Elsie in 1904, and in an article on European literature in 1913, he commented that ‘Germany never did and never will—until its barbaric language is regenerated—produce anything in prose that non-Germans could want to read.’<sup>35</sup> As well as this continuity with his earlier views, Ford’s criticism of the German language is an attack on the cultural heart of Germany.

The language was a crucial aspect of a unified German identity, both during the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and with renewed significance in the nineteenth century. Luther’s translation of the Bible played an essential role in bringing together a nation

---

31. FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—LXXI: Enemies,’ *Outlook* 35 (16 January 1915) 79–80 (79).

32. FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—LI: The Face of Janus,’ *Outlook* 34 (29 August 1914) 270–71 (270).

33. ‘Britain’s Destiny and Duty: Declaration by Authors,’ *The Times* (18 September 1914) 3.

34. FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—LIV: The Classic Muse’ *Outlook* 34 (19 September 1914) 367–68 (367).

35. FORD, Letter to Elsie Hueffer (14 August 1904), Kroch Library, Ithaca, MS 4605/34.035; FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—VII: Percival Gibbon and *The Second Class Passenger*’, *Outlook* 32 (25 October 1913) 571–72 (571).

divided into principalities that spoke vastly different dialects. As Neil MacGregor writes, Luther, 'more than any other single person, created the modern German language'.<sup>36</sup> Ford's renunciation of 'the language of Luther' is a rejection of this unity, and of Luther's Protestant influence in preference for his own German Catholic roots. During the nineteenth century, the language was again seen as a way to foster common national identity between rather disparate states, especially after German unification in 1871.<sup>37</sup> There were attempts throughout the nineteenth century to cleanse the German language from foreign influences, including the formation of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Sprachverein* (German Language Association) in 1885.<sup>38</sup> Ford denounces the *Sprachverein* movement in *When Blood is Their Argument* (67-70), and, as Hayman notes, he calls for a linguistic cleansing to rid the world of the German tongue (Hayman 29). In order to counter claims about the superiority of German culture, Ford attacks the very thing which makes their culture 'German'. And yet, his parenthetical statement about 'the language of Heine' is also typical of Ford's wartime writing; he finds ways to make exception for the elements of German culture that he admires.

In October 1914, Ford comments that his articles have become 'a frontal attack not so much upon German as upon Prussian culture'.<sup>39</sup> The distinction between south Germany and Prussia is a common trait in Ford's writing before, during, and after the war. One iteration of this is his claim that there are no poets or men of culture born north of the River Elbe. In 1913, he writes: 'For centuries—throughout all recorded time—all the poets of Germany have been South Germans.'<sup>40</sup> He also distinguishes between the cultural value of the south and north in *The Desirable Alien* (Hunt and Ford, xii). He repeats it in his wartime propaganda (*WBTA* 20), and again after the war, in *The March of Literature* (1938).<sup>41</sup> As with Heine's exceptional use of

---

36. Neil MACGREGOR, *Germany: Memories of a Nation* (2014, London: Penguin, 2016) 96.

37. Florian COULMAS, 'Germanness: Language and Nation', *The German Language and the Real World*, ed. Patrick STEVENSON (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997) 55-68 (57).

38. Roger CHICKERING, 'Language and the Social Foundations of Radical Nationalism in the Wilhelmine era', *1870/71-1989/90: German Unifications and the Change of Literary Discourse*, ed. Walter Pape (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter: 1993) 61-78 (70).

39. FORD, 'Literary Portraits—LVII: Goethe as Superman', *Outlook*. 34 (17 October 1914) 494-94 (493).

40. FORD, 'Literary Portraits—XII: Herr Arthur Schnitzler and Bertha Gerlan', *Outlook* 32 (29 November 1913) 753-54 (753).

41. FORD, *The March of Literature: From Confucius to Modern Times* (The Dial Press, 1938) 792.



language, this permits Ford to appreciate southern German culture while rejecting Prussia and questioning German territorial integrity.

Ford was not alone in separating the culture of southern Germany from the north. It is one formulation of the notion of ‘two Germanys’—perhaps more familiarly designated as the difference between the Prussian military class and the rest of the German people. In August 1914, MP Josiah Wedgwood said in Parliament: ‘We are fighting the Junkers and the Hohenzollerns, and I pray that this war may end by smashing them [. . .]. But there is another Germany—a lovable, peaceful Germany. We all know the people, and it was among them I was brought up.’<sup>42</sup> As aspects of the Anglo-German relationship became more antagonistic after the Franco-Prussian war, this was one among many ways of dividing between what the British liked about German culture and what they did not. Richard Scully observes that at the end of the nineteenth century when German culture was mentioned in English literature, it usually referred to the traditions of southern Germany while Prussia ‘had become [. . .] associated with the recent wars’.<sup>43</sup> Though the notion of ‘two Germanys’ became more popular among cosmopolitans during the First World War, the distinction between two strains of Germans—good and bad—is a trope that has been traced back to the sixteenth century.<sup>44</sup>

In his wartime writing about Prussia, Ford’s concern is not principally Prussian belligerence: ‘Prussia is the enemy—but not the Prussia of militarism. For militarism has, or implies, many high qualities’, and he goes on to list qualities such as discipline and collectivism (Ford, 19 September 1914, 368). Ford claims his antipathy to Prussia is inherited from both sides of the family—from his father, whose familial home in Münster came under Prussian control during the Napoleonic Wars, and from Ford Madox Brown (*WBTA* vii). Despite his explicit hatred, a sense of ambivalence remains. Ford speaks of his ‘race-hatred’ of Prussia at the same time as calling for the Germans to be called the ‘gallant enemy’ (Ford, 29 August 1914, 270). He then lists Prussian offences including ‘her efficiency’, ‘commercial spirit’ and ‘growing socialism’ (‘Literary Portraits—LI’ 271). As L.L. Farrar

---

42. J. C. WEDGWOOD, ‘Statement on Vote of Credit £100,000,000’, *Hansard*, HC Deb., 65, col. 2093 (6 August 1914). <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1914/aug/06/vote-of-credit-lb100000000>.

43. Richard SCULLY, *British Images of Germany: Admiration, Antagonism and Ambivalence, 1860–1914* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) 99–100.

44. Panikos PANAYI, *German Immigrants in Britain during the Nineteenth Century, 1815–1914* (New York: Berg, 1995) 28.

observes, some of the changes in German life over the course of the nineteenth century which Ford attributes to 'Prussianisation' are the result of industrialisation, and therefore true of other industrialised nations.<sup>45</sup> In subsequent articles Ford issues a sustained attack on the Hohenzollern monarchy, in which he describes them gaining territory 'by marriage, by purchase, by force, or by fraud'.<sup>46</sup> They are, he says, the 'beggars who were put on horseback by Bismarck' in contrast to the congenial, hardworking south Germans ('Hohenzollerns' 176).

The major shifts we see in Ford's writing about Germany in his journalism occur in September 1914, when he begins his propagandist articles, and in January 1915, when, after a reflective pause over Christmas, he resumes his anti-German campaign. By mid-1915, Ford writes less of the distinction between Prussia and Germany, a pattern that is replicated in his second propaganda book, *Between St Dennis and St George*. Ford either developed a more settled notion of a unified German enemy as the war progressed, or he recognised that his distinction between southern Germany and Prussia did not make effective propaganda.

Alongside his propagandist role, Ford used his articles to consider the purpose of literature in the war. In one article from the beginning of September 1914 he describes his attempts to write a poem in *vers libre*. Concluding a meandering passage, he writes: 'I did not want to abandon the frame of mind of my friend the enemy'.<sup>47</sup> He is perhaps referring to his earlier notion of the 'gallant enemy'—a chivalrous aspiration to acknowledge the humanity of the opposing side, countering the trend of the nationalist rhetoric of the press. But in this sense he uses it not only as concept, but as a 'frame of mind', an organising principle. Two weeks later, his first propaganda article is published, which begins addressing the problem of the friend who becomes the enemy.

## 'My friend the enemy'

Even more explicitly than in the propaganda books, Ford constructs in his *Outlook* articles the identity of his principal German enemy.

---

45. L. L. FARRAR, Jr, 'The Artist as Propagandist', *The Presence of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Sondra J. STANG (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981) 145–60 (154).

46. FORD, 'Hohenzollerns', *Outlook* 35 (6 February 1915) 175–76 (175).

47. FORD, 'Literary Portraits—LII: "Cedant Togae . . ."', *Outlook* 34 (5 September 1914) 303–4 (303).



On 19 September he writes: ‘The last words of Gambetta were “L’ennemi, c’est le Prussien”’; and although I do not know exactly in what sense Gambetta used the words, no one could more heartily than I subscribe to the doctrine. For the Prussian language is the enemy of the European humanities’ (‘Literary Portraits—LIV’ 368). When stating so clearly that the Prussians are his enemy, he immediately makes clear that his primary objection is the Prussian language and its education system. His attack on the Prussian language can helpfully be situated within cultural debates about Prussian influence on High German, traditionally the language of the south. Ruth Sanders observes that ‘[t]he new German nation followed the lead of other European languages and put its linguistic centre into its political centre. Not just High German, but High German with a Prussian accent became the prestige language of the new state’.<sup>48</sup> Ford’s denigration of the language is also a response to the Prussian emphasis on philological training. A fortnight later, Ford returns to Gambetta’s phrase, and adds an additional statement: ‘L’ennemi, c’est le professeur!’<sup>49</sup> He accuses Germany of being the ‘death of learning with its substitution of philology for scholarship’, and claims that the professorial class were the ones clamouring for war (‘Literary Portraits—LVI’ 431). Over the first six months of the war, the Prussian professor emerges from Ford’s articles as *his* German enemy.

Ford’s hatred towards German academics, and philologists in particular, strikes rather close to home. His father studied for his doctorate in philology at Berlin and Göttingen, before moving to England. And his uncle, Hermann Hueffer, was a professor of History and Law at Bonn. Although Ford tempers his comments about Bismarck and Wilhelm II, of all Germans the Prussian philologist receives some of Ford’s most severe criticism. Ironically, Ford begins one article on this subject by writing: ‘I am not giving real names or dates, since I do not wish possibly to inconvenience people in Germany from whom I have received hospitality’.<sup>50</sup> This verifies the personal aspect of his impressions but establishes a paradoxical position: Ford will not inconvenience those against whom he advocates making war.

Although this connection invites a Freudian reading of his attack on the philologist, Ford does address the uncomfortable proxim-

48. Ruth H. SANDERS, *German: Biography of a Language* (OUP, 2010) 163–64.

49. FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—LVI: Germania’, *Outlook* 34 (3 October 1914) 430–31 (431).

50. FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—LVII: Persecution of German Professors’, *Outlook* 34 (10 October 1914) 463–64 (463).

ity between friend and enemy by attempting to rescue his father's reputation. He explains his father's dislike for the enforced 'Must-be-Prussian professorial life' ('Literary Portraits—LVII' 464). He stresses both his father's 'Englishness' and his South Germanness. Ford writes:

It was Schopenhauer's ardent admiration for England that sent my father, a very erudite, but very spirited and unprofessorial, South German to this country [. . .]. He became the most preposterously English person I have ever met. I once heard him ask, in Bonn, 'What is the German for "poached egg"?' He wished to persuade us that he had forgotten German or had never known it.

I mention this not so much to emphasise my English and inherited patriotism, which must take care of itself, as to let my reader more fully into the psychology of the South German learned or 'cultured' person when he is regarded historically. ('Literary Portraits—LVII' 464)

It is clear from the number of times Ford mentions the insults he endured, that his patriotism did not 'take care of itself'. It is an attempt to reframe his German heritage into an Anglophile line. In characteristically Fordian style, he does this by admitting the reader 'into the psychology' of his father through an anecdote. The person we see in this anecdote is as much Ford's creation, and a reflection of his own psychology, as it is an insight into his father. But unlike this portrait of his father, Ford does not pretend to forget German or his knowledge of Germany, instead he uses it in the development of his own new identity. From Ford's tenuous assertions about national character, it seems that being south German or English is merely a state of mind. Francis Hueffer is described not only as learned in the sense of instruction, but also cultured. In doing so, Ford responds to a much broader propagandist effort to distinguish German *Kultur* from Anglo-French 'culture'. This wartime clash of cultures drew on nineteenth century intellectual debates about French civilisation versus German barbarism.<sup>51</sup>

Propaganda swiftly placed education at the centre of debates about national culture, partly because of the interaction among the academic community before the war. It was one aspect of cultural transfer between Germany and Britain which was noticeably one-sided. From at least the middle of the nineteenth century, the German education

---

51. John HORNE and Alan KRAMER, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2001) 214–217; Anne RASMUSSEN, 'Mobilising Minds', *The Cambridge History of the First World War, Volume III: Civil Society*, ed. Jay WINTER (Cambridge: CUP, 2013) 390–417 (396). *Cambridge Core*, doi.org/10.1017/CHO9780511675683.022.

system had been seen as a model for the British. German education was more universal, leading to better training for the lower classes.<sup>52</sup> Its universities were more forward-thinking, particularly in the development of scientific research and the provision of laboratories.<sup>53</sup> As a result, there were considerably more British students at German universities than Germans attending British universities in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>54</sup> The Victorian Royal Commissions on education took extensive evidence from German schools, particularly drawing on research gathered from Matthew Arnold. One report claimed that the Prussian schooling system ‘appears to be at once the most complete and the most perfectly adapted to its people of all that now exist’.<sup>55</sup> Writing in December 1914, Ford tries to undermine Arnold’s praise of the German system. He comments that Arnold’s research was conducted largely during the school holidays, and before the Austro-Prussian war ‘when Prussian Germany was temperamentally a very much milder and gentler State than it is at present’.<sup>56</sup>

Like his hatred of the German language, Ford’s concerns about German education also pre-date the war. In *The Desirable Alien*, he writes: ‘It has always seemed to me that the whole machinery of German education is extraordinarily wrong-headed, and must prove fatal in the end to the German race’ (Hunt and Ford 113n.). In 1911, Ford lectured briefly at the University of Jena, while visiting Levin Schücking (Saunders I 317). He draws on this experience repeatedly in his wartime writing, usually commenting that the students were only interested in the facts of the lives of poets, not the literature itself—again attacking the philological method (‘Literary Portraits—LIV’ 368). He writes that Germany has ‘destroyed in the world the spirit of scholarship’ and ‘substituted for it philological pedantry’ (‘Literary Portraits—LVII’ 493). He divides the world into two theories of education—the German model seeking to equip students for vocations, and the English model, focused on creating ‘all-round qualities’.<sup>57</sup> In this he echoes concerns voiced during the Victorian reform of higher

52. John R. DAVIS, *The Victorians and Germany* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007) 292–93.

53. John R. DAVIS, ‘Higher Education Reform and the German Model: A Victorian Discourse’, *Anglo-German Scholarly Networks in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ulrike KIRCHBERGER and Heather ELLIS (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2014) 39–62 (56–58).

54. Stuart WALLACE, *War and the Image of Germany: British Academics 1914–1918* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988) 6.

55. ‘Schools Inquiry Commission: Report of the Commissioners’, 1870. Quoted in DAVIS, *The Victorians and Germany* (2007) 294.

56. FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—LXVI: Professors and Universities in Modern Germany (continued)’, *Outlook* 34 (12 December 1914) 767–68.

57. FORD, ‘Literary Portraits—LXX: The Face of the Future’, *Outlook* 35 (9 January 1915) 46–47 (47).

education. John Davis notes, for example, that some were concerned that introducing scientific subjects for undergraduates would not aid their character formation (Davis 2014 48). Ford's argument against Prussian education also extends his long-standing critique of specialisation.<sup>58</sup>

The prominence of education as a theme in propaganda was also affected by the involvement of academics in the propaganda campaigns. Ford went to war against the Prussian professor in September 1914, almost as soon as the academic debate began. Henri Bergson was the first academic to launch a verbal attack on Germany, declaring in a speech on 8 August: 'The fight against Germany is the fight of civilisation against barbarism'.<sup>59</sup> Among the first German academic defences of the war, were letters from two professors from the University of Jena, Rudolf Eucken and Ernst Haeckel, printed in the *New York Times* in September 1914, defending the superiority of German culture.<sup>60</sup> This was followed by the 'Aufruf an die Kulturwelt', initially signed by ninety-three German professors in October, but eventually signed by the vast majority of the German academic community (Wallace 34). It precipitated a series of counter-manifestos from academics throughout Europe which derided German scholarship. This involvement of the academic community had an enormous impact on the way intellectuals and writers, including Ford, engaged with the war.

## Conclusion

By 1915, Germany is not Ford's 'beloved country', if indeed it ever was. But the German enemy that emerges from his wartime writing is a familiar construction—both in the sense that he draws on prevalent themes and stereotypes, and that Ford re-states or reshapes pre-existing concerns. It is familiar, too, in that it draws heavily on his experience among family and friends in Germany. Unlike Ford's portrait of his father, who allegedly forgot German vocabulary, Ford does not

---

58. See John ATTRIDGE, "'We Will Listen to None but Specialists": Ford, the Rise of Specialization, and the English Review', *Ford Madox Ford Literary Networks and Cultural Transformations*, eds Andrzej GASIOREK and Daniel MOORE (Rodopi, 2008) 29–41.

59. Christophe PROCHASSON, 'Intellectuals and Writers', trans. Heather JONES, *A Companion to World War I*, ed. John HORNE (Blackwell, 2010) 323–37 (333). *Wiley Online Library*, DOI:10.1002/9781444323634.

60. The letters were published on 10 and 25 September 1914. Charlotte A. LERG, 'Off Campus: German Propaganda Professors in America 1914-1917', *The Academic World in the Era of the Great War*, eds Marie-Eve CHAGNON and Tomás IRISH (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) 21–41 (24).

pretend to forget German or his knowledge of Germany, instead he uses it in the development of his own new identity. Ford reframes his views on German culture in an argument that both fits what the times require, and is rooted in his personal convictions. He does so in a way that targets critical elements of German history and British cultural anxiety. Rather than disregarding Ford's wartime writing from his German period, as Firchow does, we should instead consider his work in 1914-15 as an important part of Ford's engagement with his German heritage that illuminates the ambivalence of his earlier attitudes. More broadly, it is a valuable example of one cultured cosmopolitan's attempt to respond to the heightened nationalism of wartime.

Part Three

**The War as Ford's Radical  
Experience of Alterity**



# Touch and Intimacy in Ford Madox Ford's novels

Robert HAMPSON

*Royal Holloway and Institute for English Studies, University of London*

In his fine essay 'Sexuality, Sado-masochism and Suppression in *Parade's End*', Max Saunders offers a subtle and nuanced reading of the scene just after the car accident in *Some Do Not . . .*, when Tietjens uses Valentine's petticoat to bandage the wound of the injured horse.<sup>1</sup> Saunders argues that 'It's because Tietjens and Valentine are freethinkers, and can speak directly about sex without the repression of euphemism, that they can also ignore it when the situation requires' (21). Thus, for Tietjens, when he asks her for her petticoat, 'the petticoat is just a petticoat, and her removing it will not have any suggestion of intimacy or impropriety' (21). The request for the petticoat, Saunders claims, is indicative of Tietjens's 'unsentimental resourcefulness', although, he admits, it might also suggest that Tietjens has been 'thinking about her undergarments already' (21). (He had, after all, been thinking about petticoats earlier, when they had walked together through the fields.) Nevertheless, as Saunders observes: 'All they have done is talk, yet he can order her to take off her petticoat as unembarrassedly as if he were asking her to post a letter, as if they both understand that the needs of the injured horse must override any proprieties' (20). However, as Saunders also notes, if Tietjens and Valentine can be matter-of-fact about the petticoat, it is very likely that this use of the petticoat serves to inflame the argument between Tietjens and Campion, by confirming Campion's

---

1. Max SAUNDERS, "'Sex ferocity" and "the sadic lusts of certain novelists": Sexuality, Sado-masochism and Suppression in *Parade's End*', *War and the Mind: Ford Madox Ford's 'Parade's End', Modernism and Psychology*, eds Ashley CHANTLER and Rob HAWKES (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2015) 17–34.



reading of Tietjens's relationship with Valentine precisely in terms of intimacy and impropriety.

Saunders's argument raises the question of what is meant by intimacy—and the relationship between intimacy and impropriety. One sense of 'intimacy' is associated with sexuality—and this is the sense in which Saunders uses it in the statement quoted above. However, other senses are also available—and that is one of the things I want to explore in this essay. From one perspective, the night-long conversation between Tietjens and Valentine has been very intimate without involving anything improper—that is, explicitly sexual ('All they have done is talk'). From Champion's perspective, however, for a married man to spend a night with a young woman is, in itself, extremely improper—whatever they might have done or not done. In the essay that follows, rather than explore propriety and impropriety, I want to approach the topic of intimacy through a consideration of the relations between talking, touching and intimacy in *The Good Soldier*, before returning to touching and intimacy in *Parade's End*. According to Jean-Luc Nancy, touching, as distinct from contact, is 'a commitment to or evocation of intimacy'.<sup>2</sup> The following essay uses touch to explore multiple forms of intimacy in these two novels (erotic, familial, homosocial), ranging from the tender to the abject.

Mark Paterson begins *The Senses of Touch* by noting the uniqueness of touch compared with sight, sound or smell: where each of these relates to a single organ, touch, physiologically, 'is a modality resulting from the combined information of innumerable receptors and nerve endings'.<sup>3</sup> And, according to Paterson, humans have 'the most fully discriminating powers of touch in the animal kingdom' (2). More importantly for my present purposes, touch is both receptive and expressive. As Richard Kearney observes, with touch, 'we are both touching and touched at the same time'.<sup>4</sup> In his monograph, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature*, Santanu Das says, touch is 'working at the threshold between the self and the world'.<sup>5</sup> He goes on, 'touch, of all the senses, is the most acute bearer of private knowledge

---

2. Jean-Luc NANCY, 'Rethinking Corpus' in Richard KEARNEY and Brian TREANOR (eds), *Carnal Hermeneutics* (New York: Fordham UP, 2015) 77–91 (81).

3. Mark PATERSON, *The Senses of Touch: Haptics, Affects and Technologies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007) 1.

4. Richard KEARNEY, 'The Wager of Carnal Hermeneutics', *Carnal Hermeneutics* 15–56, 19.

5. Santanu DAS, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005) 6.

and emotion' (28). However, that communication operates both ways. As Kearney puts it, touch is 'forever moving and messaging between inside and outside, self and other' (21). As we will see in the next section, touch articulates a 'rich, complex world' that includes, among other things, various forms of 'non-verbal social communication' and miscommunication (Paterson 2). There is a semantics and a hermeneutics of touch.

## Touch and intimacy in *The Good Soldier*

*The Good Soldier* begins with Dowell's observation:

We had known the Ashburnhams for nine seasons of the town of Nauheim with an extreme intimacy—or rather with an acquaintanceship as loose and easy and yet as close as a good glove's with your hand.<sup>6</sup>

Clearly, what this foregrounds is the question: what is the precise nature of the relationship between the Dowells and the Ashburnhams—is it intimacy or acquaintanceship, is it loose or is it close? This presses on that larger question of what is meant by 'intimacy'. And that image of the hand in a glove—a very close and intimate relationship—also raises from the start the question of the relationship between intimacy and touch. The only instances of touch in the opening chapter do not take us very far. First, Dowell famously compares the relationship between the couples to 'stepping a minuet': 'our intimacy was like a minuet, simply because on every possible occasion and in every possible circumstance we knew where to go, where to sit, which table we unanimously should choose' (GS 11). This offers one definition of 'intimacy', but, as 'stepping a minuet' suggests, this preferred model has more to do with coordinated actions and a shared understanding of formalities. I will come back to the choosing of tables in a moment. As we soon realise, this notion of 'intimacy' is undermined by Dowell's failure to understand what was really going on within and between the two couples. The observation of formalities served to mask a completely improper set of relations. Thus, from Dowell's perspective, at least, the observation of the formalities, which allowed the couples to share certain social activities, precluded more intimate understanding. As Dowell says later, these nine years were characterised 'by an extraordinary want of communicativeness'

---

6. Ford Madox FORD, *The Good Soldier*, ed. Martin STANNARD (1915, New York: Norton, 1995, 2012) 9. Henceforth referred to in text as GS.

(GS 29). However, the lack here (as so often) seems to be Dowell's: the other three seemed to have a pretty good working understanding of each other even if this wasn't voiced.

The second instance of touch in the opening chapter occurs in Leonora's account of her attempt to take a lover: where she exclaims that she was 'actually in a man's arms', determined to 'really have a good time for once in my life'—even if she is 'hissing' this between clenched teeth (13). This is an interestingly ambiguous passage. Is Leonora's surprise that she, a good Catholic, should find herself in the arms of a man not her husband—or that she is in the arms of any man? Similarly, does the idea of having a good time 'for once in my life' refer to having sex outside marriage—or to having sex at all? Interestingly, these two instances of touch actually exclude intimacy: the formal dance, the minuet, includes minimal touching but excludes intimacy in the form of close personal communication; Leonora's attempt to take a lover ends in her crying for the whole of an eleven-mile journey in a carriage, but no sexual intimacy (and perhaps no emotional intimacy) takes place.

I want, now, to consider Dowell further in relation to the idea of touch and intimacy. At the start of Chapter 3, Dowell compares his experience of Nauheim with the experience of home. At Nauheim, he says, he feels 'a sense almost of nakedness': 'I had no attachments, no accumulations' (GS 21). By contrast, at home, he claims, 'little, innate sympathies draw one to particular chairs that seem to enfold one in an embrace' (21). This apparent nostalgia for 'innate sympathies' and an enfolding 'embrace' is, however, problematic. First, as Dowell admits, he has long been 'a wanderer upon the face of public resorts' (21). And even before his marriage to Florence, when he was courting her, he 'simply camped down there in Stamford, in a vile hotel' (57). There is little sense in his narrative of attachment to a home in Philadelphia. Secondly, Dowell's experience of human embraces seems very limited. As he says of his courtship, this took place on Connecticut July afternoons, when, he claims, 'any sort of proximity is an almost appalling thought' (58). He implies this is why he 'never so much as kissed Florence' (58). Meanwhile, for her part, he records, she 'faintly hinted' that 'she did not want much physical passion in the affair' (58). However, when he enters her bedroom at night to elope with her, he mentions how 'she received me with an embrace of a warmth. . .'—and then he runs out of words to describe this experience. Then he adds by way of explanation: 'Well, it was the first time I had ever been embraced by a woman—and it was the last when a

woman's embrace has had in it any warmth for me' (61). What is at stake, in this instance, is his lack of responsiveness. He describes how Florence lay 'for some moments' in his arms, and how he 'received her advances with a certain amount of absence of mind' (61). This lack of responsiveness seems to have given Florence cause for reflection (judging by her lengthy delay in joining him) and to have determined her subsequent course of action. Interestingly, when he is later given his 'directions how to behave' towards his wife—and told to refrain from what the ship's doctor euphemistically terms 'manifestations of affection'—he professes himself 'ready enough' (63). As he suggests, what he calls 'the sex instinct' (28) is low in him. This explains, perhaps, his odd statement that, from his first meeting with Florence in New York, he determined 'if not to make her mine, at least to marry her' (57).

This lack in Dowell's relationship with Florence stands in contrast to the picture of 'judgement' that appears to him sometimes at nights: of 'three figures, two of them clasped close in an intense embrace' (53). This same sense of intense physical and emotional intimacy is also invoked negatively in the reference to Mrs Maidan's inability to withstand 'anything like an impassioned embrace' (43). But it is not just that Dowell seems to lack 'the sex instinct' and to be outside of this form of intimacy; he also seems curiously lacking in tactile experience more generally, despite his description of himself as undertaking 'the part of a male nurse' (61). He does, however, record a couple of fantasies of erotic experience. When he narrates how he received the instructions to 'refrain from manifestations of affection', he indulges in the thought of his in-laws' difficulty in suggesting that 'a husband must not kiss the back of his wife's neck' (63). It remains, unclear, however, whether this is simply Dowell mocking his in-laws' prudishness or, in the process, revealing his own erotic limitations. His most intense erotic fantasy relates to Leonora. After asserting that he 'loved Leonora always', he qualifies this assertion by adding that his love for her was without 'the beginnings of a trace of what is called the sex instinct toward her' (28). However, perhaps he is protesting too much at this point: there is clearly some 'trace', because he goes on to think again of her 'white shoulders' and to entertain the thought 'that, if ever I should press my lips upon them, they would be slightly cold' (28). In this context, where the only trace of the 'sex instinct' is in these fantasies of kissing necks or pressing his lips upon cold shoulders, it is, perhaps, unsurprising, that Dowell's model of intimacy should be talking in a low voice, while 'sitting at one side of

the fireplace of a country cottage, with a sympathetic soul opposite me' (15)—with 'just the touch of a sigh because we are not in that Provence where even the saddest stories are gay' (15).

This reported lack of tactility in Dowell's intimate relationships stands in contrast to the striking tactility, reported later, in his treatment of his black valet, Julius. When Julius drops the leather grip, which Dowell believes contains Florence's 'drugs against heart attacks', he gets into a rage and flies at Julius: 'I filled up one of his eyes; I threatened to strangle him' (66).<sup>7</sup> This unexpected display of violent rage at the outset of their marriage also had an understandable impact on Florence's decisions about how to behave in relation to her new husband. It would certainly encourage what we might call a degree of circumspection. The other moment of intense and intimate tactility narrated in these early chapters is Leonora's violent attack on Mrs Maidan: 'she hit her, in an uncontrollable access of rage, a hard blow on the side of the cheek, in the corridor of the hotel, outside Edward's room' (42). As Leonora realises almost immediately, she has misread the situation—Edward was not in the room at the time. As Dowell puts it, 'in boxing Mrs Maidan's ears, Leonora was just striking the face of an intolerable universe' (43)—finding an outlet for pent-up frustrations and humiliations. However, as she recognises, in this release, she has also given herself away. As Dowell observes, it was this blow that 'accounted for the sudden, odd intimacy that sprang up between Florence and Mrs Ashburnham' (42). When she sees Leonora with the gold key that hung from her wrist caught in Mrs Maidan's hair and Mrs Maidan with 'a red mark down her left cheek' (42), Florence is given her own gold key to the private life of the Ashburnhams. Dowell's apparent surprise that Leonora, 'who is the proudest creature on God's earth, would have struck up an acquaintanceship with two casual Yankees' (42), seems *faux naïf* in this context. Just as Edward Ashburnham is paying off various blackmailers to conceal his affairs with women and Florence is blackmailed by her former lover, Jimmy, Leonora is effectively blackmailed by Florence. The origins of the 'odd intimacy' between the Dowells and the Ashburnhams is Florence's chance glimpse into the true state of affairs between Edward and Leonora. This also provides the reader with the key to the earlier

---

7. We might compare this treatment of servants to Sylvia Tietjens's statement to her mother about how she might have treated her mother's maid: 'I'd probably beat that Marie of yours' arms to pieces with a hair-brush if she came near me'. Ford Madox FORD, *Some Do Not . . .*, ed. Max SAUNDERS (1924, Manchester: Carcanet, 2010) 46. Subsequent references to this edition are included in the text as SDN.

scene in the hotel dining-room, when Florence and Leonora appeared together, and Leonora proposed that the Ashburnhams should join the Dowells at their table. Dowell said then: 'Mrs Ashburnham exhibited at that moment more gaiety than I have ever since known her to show' (27). The reader knows in retrospect precisely what weight to give to 'exhibited' and 'show'—and how to read this exhibition of 'gaiety'. We also recognise how Dowell's earlier narration had misdirected us by focussing on Edward's sexual appraisal of Florence in this encounter.

Two other moments of touch in the early part of the novel gain in resonance in this context. These both occur during the outing to 'the ancient city of M—' (32). The first is when Florence 'laid one finger upon Captain Ashburnham's wrist' (37). This small gesture, which stands out in the general absence of reported touch, is a deliberate display of intimacy and a provocative sign of appropriation.<sup>8</sup> (The specific context, Florence's attack on Irish Catholics when she knows that Edward's wife is an Irish Catholic, adds further weight.) The second moment of touch is Leonora's immediate response and Dowell's accompanying realisation that 'the pain in my left wrist was caused by Leonora's clutching it' (37). Florence's light touch on Edward's wrist contrasts to Leonora's desperate clutching of Dowell's wrist. In the first case, Florence, Edward and Leonora all understand the significance of the gesture. Dowell understands that it is significant—'I was aware of something treacherous, something frightful, something evil in the day' (37)—but doesn't understand what is signified. In the second case, the focus is entirely on the failed communication between Dowell and Leonora. His first thought is that she was 'madly jealous . . . of Florence and Captain Ashburnham, of all people in the world!' (37). In his complacency, Dowell feels superior to her jealousy. When she then challenges him, 'don't you see what's going on?', this points us towards how much he fails to see: not only the affair between his wife and the captain, but also the root problem of the Ashburnham marriage, 'the cause of the whole miserable affair' (38) as Leonora puts it, namely the religious difference between herself and her husband and their parents' failure to establish in advance the religion of any children produced in the marriage, which has led to the non-consummation of the marriage (a marriage in which there is

---

8. However, as Sara Haslam points out, it is the subsequent look that Ashburnham gives Florence that fully informs Florence. See Sara HASLAM, *Fragmenting Modernism: Ford Madox Ford, the Novel and the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002) 45.



no ‘intense embrace’)—and everything that follows: the infidelities, the absence of conversation between husband and wife in private.

## Intimacy

At this point, I want to consider further the term ‘intimacy’. In her 2011 monograph, *Bloomsbury, Modernism and the Reinvention of Intimacy*, Jesse Wolfe explores what she sees as an early-twentieth-century reinvention of intimacy, which involved new kinds of intimacies: ‘sexually frank ones with spouses and lovers of the same or opposite sex, emotionally honest ones with friends’.<sup>9</sup> This, of course, is a common understanding of the cultural agenda of the Bloomsbury group, what Raymond Williams called its ‘civilised individualism’.<sup>10</sup> As her definition suggests, Wolfe’s approach rests on the same ideology, the assumption that ‘the burden of a meaningfully lived life falls largely on its romantic and sexual partnerships’, and her focus is accordingly on ‘marriage and monogamy’(2) within the context of various demographic and domestic changes (including reduced family sizes through contraception), legal changes (including the ‘democratisation of divorce’)—and the influence of Freudianism and contemporary developments in sexology. According to Wolfe, ‘the reinvention of intimacy had numerous interrelated components, from increases in the frequency of marriage and divorce to redefinitions of sexuality to anxieties about women’s proper marital and social roles’ (146). In this context, she sets herself to explore how ‘literary Bloomsbury made intimacy central to its work, interrogating its meaning and imagining models—both positive and negative of intimate relations’ (3). Wolfe’s approach takes off from the sociological work of Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*, in which early-twentieth-century redefinitions of intimacy are situated within a post-Enlightenment project of increasing equality and freedom, and presents these Bloomsbury redefinitions of intimacy as contributing to ‘evolutionary changes in the history of gender’ (6).<sup>11</sup> One instance of this new intimacy is the ‘companion-

---

9. Jesse WOLFE, *Bloomsbury, Modernism and the Reinvention of Intimacy* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011) 1. Ford is nowhere mentioned in Wolfe’s book.

10. Raymond WILLIAMS, ‘The Bloomsbury Fraction’, *Problems of Materialism and Culture* (London: Verso, 1980) 148–69.

11. Anthony GIDDENS, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1992).

ate marriage', with its emphasis on intellectual sharing and spousal equality, as a model of domestic democracy (19). Another is the Cambridge Apostles' concern for 'fine shades and nice feelings' among or between men and the problematics of embodied affection more generally.<sup>12</sup> As Wolfe shows, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* opens up 'mandatory marriage' to question by exploding 'any notion of female desire being monogamous and heterosexual' (144), while *Women in Love*, by Ford's protégé D.H. Lawrence, examines 'the idea and practice of intimacy from multiple angles simultaneously' and depicts its 'ongoing process—dynamic, sometimes violent, and never fully resolved' (117).<sup>13</sup> The same can be said of Ford in *Parade's End*.

The starting point for much of the post-millennial interest in 'intimacy' is the special issue of *Critical Inquiry* on 'Intimacy', edited by Lauren Berlant in 1998.<sup>14</sup> In her Introduction, Berlant provides a usefully detailed analysis of intimacy.<sup>15</sup> She begins by observing that 'To intimate is to communicate with the sparest of signs and gestures', from which she deduces that 'at its roots intimacy has the quality of eloquence and brevity' (281)—as we saw with Florence's finger on Ashburnham's wrist. However, she goes on, 'intimacy also involves an aspiration for a narrative about something shared, a story about both oneself and others that will turn out in a particular way' (281). This, she says, is a story set within 'zones of familiarity and comfort: friendship, the couple, and the family form, animated by expressive and emancipated kinds of love' (281). These 'zones of familiarity and comfort' are represented by the private spaces of friendship, coupledom, family, but, as Berlant observes, these are also 'institutions of intimacy', in which 'the inwardness of the intimate is met by a corresponding publicness' (281). The idea of a private life unfolding 'intact within the intimate sphere' (which Jesse Wolfe assumes) represses another fact: 'the unavoidable troubles, the distractions and disrup-

---

12. This phrase occurs in Bertrand Russell's critique of Lytton Strachey and Maynard Keynes as advocating retirement into a self-admiring clique in his autobiography, *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967–9); cited by WOLFE 41.

13. The phrase 'mandatory marriage' is from John GILLIS, *For Better, For Worse: British Marriages: 1600 to the Present* (Oxford: OUP, 1985) 229–304; cited by WOLFE 144.

14. *Critical Inquiry* 24.2 (Winter 1998): *Intimacy: A Special Issue*. For further reading, see Muriel DIMEN, *Sexuality, Intimacy, Power* (Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, 2003); Eva ILOUZ, *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007); Leo BERSANI and Adam PHILLIPS, *Intimacies* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2008); and Jennifer COOKE (ed.), *Scenes of Intimacy: Reading, Writing and Theorizing Contemporary Literature* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013). I am grateful to Dr Georgina Colby for drawing Berlant's and Cooke's work to my attention.

15. Lauren BERLANT, 'Introduction', *Critical Inquiry* 24.2 (1998) 281–88.



tions that make things turn out in unexpected scenarios' (281). Berlant also puts this less abstractly: 'Romance and friendship inevitably meets the instabilities of sexuality, money, expectation, and exhaustion, producing, at the extreme, moral dramas of estrangement and betrayal, along with terrible spectacles of neglect and violence even where desire, perhaps, endures' (282). With this account of intimacy, we are clearly close to the world of *Parade's End*, where the unfolding of the private life questions various 'institutions of intimacy' and is in constant negotiation with the public realm.

### **Touch and Intimacy in *Some Do Not . . .***

*Some Do Not . . .* is, from the outset, very much a novel of the turn-of-the-century sex wars. This is epitomised by the incident on the golf course when the suffragettes Valentine Wannop and Gertie Wilson interrupt the Liberal minister's play and are threatened with manhandling by the other golfers. One shoulder is ripped off Gertie's blouse and the 'city man' wants to 'strip the bitch naked' (SDN 86). When Tietjens stops him, 'It was as if the bottom of his assured world, where all men in their hearts desire to bash women, had fallen out' (SDN 87). He would have been reassured by events later that day, when Sandbach, the local Tory MP, 'and rather more than half-a-dozen of the young bloods . . . had gone scouring the country lanes, mounted on motor bicycles and armed with loaded canes . . . for suffragettes' (SDN 109). A more benign version of male sociality is represented by Tietjens and his father: 'They were like two men in the club—the only club; thinking so alike that there was no need to talk' (SDN 9). Macmaster's equivalent is his ambitious fantasy of spectacular male sociality: 'He wanted to walk down Pall Mall on the arm, precisely, of a largely-lettered Senior Wrangler; to return eastward on the arm of the youngest Lord Chancellor England had ever seen' (SDN 63). Another version of this male homosociality is evidenced in Chapter IV, after the incident on the golf course, when Tietjens needs to contact the people of influence locally to prevent the incident being followed up: in the bar of the local hostelry, 'the mayor, the town-clerk, the local head of the police, the doctors and solicitors would be found drinking together' (SDN 99).

As Macmaster's fantasy suggests this is a homosociality that gets played out through various forms of non-erotic touching. Thus Macmaster is delighted when General Campion 'patted' him 'on the shoul-

der; held his upper arm and spoke in a low voice into his ear' (*SDN* 66). An important part of his pleasure is that these signs of approbation (and perhaps even intimacy) have been observed by the two secretaries of the Cabinet Minister. As with the fantasy mentioned earlier, this fantasy is grounded in Macmaster's ambition. In both cases the emphasis on witnesses might be compared to Jimmy Doyle's experience in Joyce's 'After the Race', where Doyle's pleasure seems largely derived from the fact that 'He had been seen by many of his friends that day in the company of these Continentals' and, when he returns to 'the profane world of spectators', his return is met with 'nudges and significant looks'.<sup>16</sup> This is not so much pleasure in the experience of intimacy (of whatever kind) as an alienated pleasure in the awareness of other's appreciation of the spectacle of intimacy produced. Thus it is significant that, just moments before receiving this pat of approbation, MacMaster had been silently execrating the general as 'a pig-headed old fool: a meddlesome ass' (*SDN* 65). As this suggests, the apparent intimacy of this homosocial world need not include what we might think of as true intimacy. We see this again, later, in the golf-house, when the Cabinet Minister is seen 'slapping Mr Sandbach on the back' (*SDN* 78): again, given that Sandbach is his political opponent, this physical gesture of camaraderie is no index of his real thoughts and feelings. Similarly, when Campion 'put his arm around Tietjens' shoulders' (*SDN* 96), this quasi-paternal gesture of affection follows an exchange between the two from which it is clear that Campion has no understanding of Tietjens.

A counterpart to this world of male sociality created through touch can be seen in Mrs Duchemin's relations with Valentine. The first instance of this occurs in Chapter V, when Valentine describes her experiences as a 'tweeny': after catching her 'by both hands', Mrs Duchemin 'kissed her first on the left and then on the right cheek' (*SDN* 104); then, as their conversation comes to an end, 'Mrs Duchemin stroked the girl's fair hair and tucked a loose strand behind her ear' (*SDN* 105). This quasi-maternal gesture suggests an intimacy of concern and tenderness between the two women. Where Tietjens invokes a 'male solidarity', which he thinks Sandbach has betrayed by telling his wife stories about Tietjens's infidelities, here we see a performance of female solidarity. However, this is not how their relationship plays out, although there is an extended period of emotional and social

---

16. James JOYCE, 'After the Race', *The Essential James Joyce*, ed. Harry LEVIN (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967) 379.

intimacy between the two women. Thus this initial touch is answered by another moment of contact between the two women, at the end of *Some Do Not . . .*, at one of the MacMasters' Friday parties: 'Edith Ethel had come to the tea-table and, with her velvet kindness, had placed her right hand on Valentine's left' (*SDN* 309). The degree of intimacy between the two women, in terms of social, emotional and intellectual understanding, is conveyed by Valentine's immediate response to this touch: 'Admiring the gesture with a deep fervour, Valentine knew that that was the end' (*SDN* 309). This delicate touch gives the *coup de grâce* to their relationship: it is an expression of intimacy (in various senses) that is also, very precisely, the termination of intimacy.

The Duchemins' breakfast party counterpoints two strikingly contrasting instances of touch. The first involves Duchemin. In the lead up to this particular moment, we have two minor instances of touch which conform to the pattern I have been tracing. In one case, 'Mr Duchemin put his thin hand courteously on Macmaster's arm' in order to interrupt him (*SDN* 122), a polite, formal gesture of male homosociality. This contrasts with his treatment of his wife, as he begins to declaim Pretonius, 'holding her wrist with the painful force of the maniac' (*SDN* 119), which takes us back to the golf-course instantiations of misogyny, madness, and male violence towards women. The first striking instance of touch, however, is not actually described but powerfully evoked by its prelude and aftermath: this is the punch in the kidneys that Duchemin receives from Parry. The context for this moment of violence is Macmaster's gradual assertion of control over the situation, and his realisation that taking control 'quietly and efficiently' might 'even lead to an intimacy' with Mrs Duchemin (*SDN* 122). The black comedy of this part of the chapter contrasts with the other touching that is represented. This is initiated by Mrs Duchemin, in her distress at what Macmaster might be making of her marital situation: 'In her pain she stretched out her hand and touched his arm' (*SDN* 122). This gesture is not part of social formalities, but rather a genuine, spontaneous expression of her feelings and concerns. It is followed up, subsequently, after Duchemin has been quelled, by a response from Macmaster: 'Upon her left palm she felt cool fingers beneath the cloth . . . Upon the fingers, cool, like spikenard and ambrosia, her fingers closed themselves' (*SDN* 126). This contact, concealed beneath the tablecloth, is the first sign of rapprochement in the novel's atmosphere of sex war. It is a rare moment of physical intimacy, and this touch of hands is just the prelude to (and promise of) more intimate contact. Before they part, their lips meet 'in a pas-

sion of pity and tears' while she 'pressed her body fiercely into his' (*SDN* 129). Then, after they have agreed to meet that evening, she imagines 'their interview of passion and mournfulness' to be followed by his formal call at the house, with them walking 'side by side on the lawn, publicly . . . but with what currents electrifying and passing between their flesh' (*SDN* 136).

## Other forms of intimacy

If Dowell's conception of intimacy is conversation with a sympathetic soul across the fireside from him, this is not the form of intimacy we find in the Tietjens marriage. One of the earliest accounts of Sylvia reports her expressed detestation for her husband: 'He bored her, she said, by his silences; when he did speak she hated him for the immorality of his views' (*SDN* 27). Similarly, in conversation with Father Consett, she asserts: 'To know everything about a person is to be bored . . . bored . . . bored' (*SDN* 43). And when she is pushed to explain why she hates her husband, she affirms: 'Every speech he utters about everything makes me . . . want to stick a knife into him' (*SDN* 51). However, as Sylvia asserts, one consolation of her deep knowledge of her husband is that she knows how to 'make him wince' (*SDN* 50). This dysfunctional domestic intimacy between them is manifested, for example, in her decision to delay responding to his telegram—and in his precise, reciprocal understanding that 'Sylvia won't send it till the last minute, to bother me' (*SDN* 59).

In contrast to this glimpse into the Tietjens marriage, the first part of *Some Do Not . . .* also shows the first stages of Tietjens's relationship with Valentine. The tone for this is set by the familial atmosphere of the Wannop household: 'the affection of mother and daughter; the affection, indeed, that they both had for himself' (*SDN* 147). This affection from Mrs Wannop is conveyed, among other things, by touch: Mrs Wannop leans over the high-backed chair on which Tietjens is sitting 'and stroked the hair on his right temple' (*SDN* 148). As a result, Tietjens is overcome and moved to tears by 'too much tenderness' (*SDN* 149). However, the nature of this affectionate touching is shown to be quite complicated. Mrs Wannop's intonation, before she strokes Tietjens's temple, is 'precisely that of her daughter' (*SDN* 148), while her gaze is fixed on a portrait of her husband, as she carries on stroking 'with a subliminal tenderness' (*SDN* 149). What might seem a maternal gesture is complicated from Tietjens's perspective by this

link with Valentine's voice, and it is complicated from Mrs Wannop's perspective by the association with her husband. This familial affection (with all its complexities) also has its down side. After Valentine has spoken to him passionately about the position of women, votes for women and changing the divorce laws, Tietjens reflects: 'Her emotion vexed him, for it seemed to establish a sort of fraternal intimacy that he didn't at the moment want' (*SDN* 144). Whether it is intimacy that he doesn't want (because of his preoccupation with the problem of Sylvia) or specifically fraternal intimacy is left unclear. Perhaps different parts of his mind would take different positions on this.

Certainly during their night journey together, Tietjens's attitude towards Valentine becomes less ambiguous. After he has reflected on their conversation that Valentine was 'the only intelligent living soul' he had met for years' (*SDN* 160) and considers taking 'a holiday from himself' (*SDN* 162), there are a series of touches that chart their developing feelings for each other. First, Valentine 'touched him suddenly on the arm' in her happiness (*SDN* 170), but, after his experiences with Sylvia, Tietjens's response is distinctly wary: 'All feminine claws, he said to himself, are sheathed in velvet; but they can hurt a good deal if they touch you on the sore places of the defects of your qualities' (*SDN* 170). Secondly, just before the collision with Campion's car, she 'placed her hand on his gloved driving hand' (*SDN* 174). This gesture of intimacy is decisively qualified by that reference to his 'gloved hand'. The passage goes on: 'Had it been his flesh she wouldn't have done it'. So far, then, we have had the velvet claws of women and the gloved hands of men. Tietjens's sense of vulnerability is followed by a different kind of hesitation on Valentine's part: but is this reluctance to touch his 'flesh' an expression of modesty or desire? At the end of the episode, as Tietjens sits sobbing on the bank at the side of the road at the thought that Sylvia's child was not his and that he had let down the horse, Valentine comforts him by putting 'her arm over his shoulder' (*SDN* 179). However, the intimacy implied by this gesture and her use of 'my dear' is again qualified by her accurate verbal description of their relationship as 'short acquaintance' (*SDN* 179).

## Intimacy: Talking, Looking, Touching

In the first part of *Some Do Not . . .*, Ford sets up various forms of intimacy. There is, to begin with, the homosocial intimacy, which is initially established by Tietjens and Macmaster, where Tietjens's gen-

erosity is matched by Macmaster's 'deep affection and concern' (*SDN* 18). This is shadowed later by Mark Tietjens and Ruggles. Theirs is the physical intimacy of flatmates, of shared accommodation: 'They were accustomed to converse while shaving in a joint toilet room . . . Whilst they shaved Ruggles gave out the scandal of the day' (*SDN* 250). Apart from this physical proximity and the exchange of gossip, they have little to do with each other. In addition, as I have shown, there are three further forms of intimacy: the improper but circumspect intimacy of the Duchemins with its mask of restraint and renunciation; the destructive, dysfunctional intimacy of the Tietjens marriage; and the unconventional intimacy of Tietjens's relationship with Valentine Wannop. As this suggests, Ford, like Jesse Wolfe's Bloomsbury writers, was engaged in exploring new kinds of intimacies, and touch (or the absence of touch) is used by Ford in this exploration.

Part II of *Some Do Not . . .* explores these different forms of intimacy in more depth through a series of interviews. The first of these interviews is between Tietjens and Sylvia. The chapter begins, however, by foregrounding a form of female intimacy. More precisely, it presents being 'man-mad' as 'the condition of the intimacy' of Sylvia and her 'intimates—all the Elizabeths, Alixs and Lady Moiras' of the 'be-photographed weekly journals' (*SDN* 183).<sup>17</sup> Within this evocation of London Society life in August 1917 and its flaunting of female desire, Ford provides more details about Sylvia's earlier relationship with Drake: how she was 'taken advantage of, after champagne, by a married man' (*SDN* 185), and how memories of that night still have the power to stop her 'dead' and make her 'drive her nails into her palms and groan slightly' (*SDN* 186). However, this 'groan' is not expressing the anguish of a painful memory, but, more surprisingly, the 'longing merely to experience again that dreadful feeling' (*SDN* 186).

Enough has been written about Sylvia and sado-masochism, what I want to focus on, instead, is how this chapter gradually reveals another side to her relationship with Tietjens—or, more precisely, a development in her relationship since her return from Lobscheid. First, there is her recognition 'gradually and dimly' that Tietjens had 'a consistency of character and a rather unusual knowledge of life' (*SDN* 191). Then there is the kind of limited domestic intimacy they have established while living in the same house: 'So they would talk:

---

17. This can be seen in the light of Cate Haste's suggestion that 'the war had demolished the myth of female sexual apathy'. See Cate HASTE, *Rules of Desire: Sex in Britain World War I to the Present* (London: Pimlico, 1992) 56.



sometimes talking at great length and with politeness, each thinking his or her thoughts till they drifted into silence' (*SDN* 203). In one of these conversations, Tietjens refers to Christina Rossetti's 'Somewhere or Other', and his inability to remember more than the opening lines prompts Sylvia's unexpectedly violent response 'Don't!'. This violent response reveals this other dimension to her relationship with her husband, which becomes clearer during this second part. The first stanza of the poem concludes with the lines 'The heart that has not yet -never yet—ah me!/ Made answer to my word'. In short, the unspoken, unremembered lines intimate Sylvia's unsatisfied longing for a deeper kind of intimacy with her husband, and Rossetti's poem runs as a counter-motif to the poem 'only hands may meet', which becomes linked to Tietjens's relationship with Valentine. At the end of the second chapter, Tietjens recalls the rest of the stanza of Rossetti's poem, and we see more clearly Sylvia's agonised response: these words represent, for her, 'something terrible and alluring, like a knife she would some day take out and with which she would stab herself' (*SDN* 246). Meantime, the present conditions of their relationship, with its regime of polite conversation, is described by her in similarly violent terms: 'You know what it is to ride a horse for miles with too tight a curb chain and its tongue cut almost in half. . . . You've ridden me like that for seven years' (*SDN* 213).

This change in her feelings towards Tietjens is explored further in these chapters. Thus, when she overhears Tietjens's telephone conversation with Mrs Wannop about war-babies and his comment that 'a decent Tommie thinks twice about leaving his girl in trouble', she had 'known at once from the suddenly changed inflection' both that Tietjens wanted to sleep with Valentine and also that he too had 'thought twice' (*SDN* 206). This sensitivity to the inflections of his voice is further evidence of the kind of intimate understanding that exists between them. Her response, however, is again unexpected: 'She felt a real sharp pain at her heart', and she thought 'why shouldn't he give himself a little pleasure with his girl before going to almost certain death' (*SDN* 206). This empathetic feeling for Tietjens is manifested again when, during their subsequent conversation, she shows concern that a wounded nurse was carried past Tietjens's bed—after his own sister, Caroline, who had been a nurse, had been killed shortly before. A different Sylvia emerges in this part of the novel.

Chapter 3 is given over to Tietjens's interview with his brother Mark and depicts a new intimacy between the two men. As the heir speaking to the head of the family, Tietjens engages in open and frank

conversation with his brother about his finances, his sexual history (*SDN* 250), and his agreement to have his son brought up a Catholic (*SDN* 267). However, what is more interesting in the present context, is a motif that recurs through Chapters 3 and 4. At the start of the interview, Mark presents himself for inspection by his brother: he stood still 'to be looked at' (*SDN* 248). After this ocular appraisal, Tietjens concludes that 'This man has the right to ask these questions' (*SDN* 249). After they pass into Holborn, the action is reciprocated: 'Christopher stood still to be inspected, looking into his brother's eyes' (*SDN* 249). (This mutual inspection, with its implications of commitment and trust, stands in contrast to Tietjens's final meeting with Macmaster, when he 'hadn't been able to look Macmaster again in the face' [*SDN* 348].) Through the frank conversation which follows, a degree of intimacy develops between the brothers. This is seen in their growing emotional understanding of each other. Thus, when they reach the War Office, we are told of Tietjens: 'He was aware that his brother desired to stay with him as long as possible. He desired it himself' (*SDN* 268). It is also seen in the insight Tietjens is given into Sylvia's feelings for him through his brother; 'Mark had said that Sylvia was in love with him. It had been underneath his thoughts all the while' (*SDN* 273). Mark puts into words what Tietjens realises he had dimly felt. Nevertheless, despite this articulated understanding of Sylvia's feelings, Tietjens is determined to 'have his night with the girl' (*SDN* 273). It is now that he recalls the lines of poetry he couldn't remember earlier ('The voice that never yet . . . / Made answer to my word . . .') and understands their significance: 'That was what Sylvia wanted' (*SDN* 273). But he appropriates them for his own relationship with Valentine: 'I've got that much!' (*SDN* 273). The true intimacy that Sylvia desires with Tietjens is embodied and enacted in his relationship with Valentine—even though the two have scarcely seen each other or spoken since the night of their journey.

The following chapter, Chapter 4, presents another version of intimacy in Mark's interview with Valentine. The chapter begins with Mark's sense of 'warm satisfaction' at 'having achieved an intimacy with her and his brother' (*SDN* 276). His intimacy with Valentine is initially expressed through reciprocal touching: 'he gripped her awkwardly but irresistibly by the upper arm', and he then 'felt her arm press his arm against her warm side' (*SDN* 276). It is then explored through the kind of mutual gaze already exchanged between Mark and his brother. Thus Valentine 'drew her arm from his hand in order to look him in the face' (*SDN* 277), while Mark in turn inspects her: 'a



good neck: good shoulders: good breasts: clean hips: small hand' (*SDN* 277). Like Tietjens earlier, Valentine consciously subjects herself to this gaze, 'for what she knew to be his critical inspection' (*SDN* 277). This appraisal has something of the countryman assessing an animal—it is not surprising that he concludes 'A real good filly' (*SDN* 277). Nevertheless, this exchange of gazes is the basis for a deeper intimacy. The distance necessary for the gaze is now replaced by a return to the proximity of touch. First, 'she put her hand in turn, precipitately, under his arm' (*SDN* 277); then she and Mark engage in a similarly open conversation to the one he has just had with his brother—about finances, family relations, and future financial arrangements. As Valentine realises later, after this process of touching, looking and talking, this exchange effectively recognises her as a member of the family.

In Chapter 4, Valentine also explores her own relationship with Tietjens through a re-appraisal of that of the Macmasters. Like Port Scatho, she had originally been taken in by their circumspection. She knew of their passion for each other, but, for her, this passion was rendered ideal as 'They seemed to swim in a sea of renunciation' (*SDN* 280). However, with Mrs Duchemin's return from Scotland, she sees another side to her friend and receives 'a great sexual shock' (*SDN* 282). On the basis of her earlier reading of Edith Ethel's relationship with Macmaster, Valentine had 'presupposed a society of beautiful intellects centring in London round her friends' (*SDN* 281) in contrast to her earlier sordid experiences in Ealing. This illusion had helped her to sustain her own 'beautiful inclination' towards Tietjens (*SDN* 281). Her disillusionment with Mrs Duchemin causes her to re-evaluate her idealisation of her feelings for Tietjens—more precisely, to question 'renunciation' as an ideal. The war has also played its part: 'the war had turned Tietjens into far more of a man and far less of an inclination' (*SDN* 283). Like Tietjens, Valentine knows that her love is reciprocated (*SDN* 285). She now thinks: 'he must take me in his arms', as 'the deepest of her instincts came to the surface' (*SDN* 285). From this point onwards, the intimacy that she feels with Tietjens seeks embodied expression and is manifested through various fantasies and imaginings of physical contact. Thus, as she recalls the conversation she had with Tietjens 'one Friday afternoon at Macmaster's' (*SDN* 283), intimacy is expressed through the imagined senses of touch and smell: 'she could feel his arms round her: she had in her nostrils the peculiar scent of his hair' (*SDN* 286). Indeed, when she then recalls the memory of their drive together, she has a full-body, proprioceptive awareness of Tietjens: 'she had felt the impulse of his

whole body towards her and the impulse of her whole body towards him' (*SDN* 286). Earlier we knew only that 'Tietjens almost kissed her' in response to 'An all but irresistible impulse' (*SDN* 172). Now we revisit that moment from her side: we are told of her bodily reaction to him in that moment and of her awareness of his bodily reaction to her.

In that conversation at Macmaster's, Tietjens had asserted to Valentine that 'we've always been—or we've seemed always to me—so alike in our thoughts' (*SDN* 290). And he had summed up the experience of their conversation in terms that recall Dowell's model of intimacy: 'a quiet room and a fire and . . . you' (*SDN* 291). However, while Tietjens had focussed on their 'similarities' (*SDN* 291) and the opportunity to 'think in front of' someone (*SDN* 291), Valentine had experienced 'deep waves of emotion' so intense that 'she stretched out her arms . . . she thought she stretched out her arms' (*SDN* 291)—though, in fact, she had both hands holding her handkerchief to her eyes. These powerful physical and emotional responses to Tietjens continue to shape her feeling of intimacy with him. Thus, later, when Tietjens visits another Macmaster's soiree, Valentine 'imagined the arms of his mind stretching out to enfold her' (*SDN* 306)—a formulation of this new model of intimacy where intellectual companionship is combined with the embodiment of physical desire. Nevertheless, Valentine and Tietjens still haven't touched since the night of the journey. Instead, this moment, which is 'her great love scene' (*SDN* 322) is characterised purely by the mutual gaze: 'They were gazing into each other's eyes, he from above, she from below. She had no doubt of his love: he, she knew, could have no doubt of hers' (*SDN* 307). This exchanged gaze stands in contrast to the actual touching which follows: Mrs Duchemin placing 'her right hand on Valentine's left' (*SDN* 309) in a velvet dismissal; Macmaster holding 'her hand for an eternity' (*SDN* 317). In the first case, the contact of hands is followed by an open argument between Valentine and Edith Ethel. In the second, as he talks, she 'tried to draw her hand from his', but quite a while passes before Macmaster 'let go her hand' (*SDN* 317). As we have seen, in both cases, though with different inflections, the touch of hands actually marks a disengagement from intimacy.

Through this process of remembering we are prepared for the decision Valentine has made: 'she had surrendered herself to what she thought to be the pure physical desire for him' (*SDN* 321). Now her consciousness is dominated by that desire. First, there is her bodily sense of desire as 'little currents passing along her skin' (*SDN* 322).

But now: ‘much greater convulsions had overwhelmed her’: ‘It sufficed for Tietjens to approach her to make her feel as if her whole body was drawn towards him’ (SDN 322). In her exploration of ‘how love worked upon the body’ she recalls how she felt during that night journey: now the ‘impulsion’ that she had felt then ‘for a fraction of a second’ she was to know ‘all the time, waking or half-waking’. Nor is this a fully pleasurable experience: ‘it could convulse her with joy; it could shake her with sobs and cut through her breast like a knife’ (SDN 322). Through this process of bodily experience and the analysis of the workings of desire on the body, Valentine arrives at a definition of the ‘new intimacy’ that her relationship with Tietjens represents: ‘it passed without any mention of the word “love”; it passed in impulses; warmth; rigors of the skin’ (SDN 322). In passages like these, we have a Ford who is in dialogue with the D. H. Lawrence of the *Rainbow* and *Women in Love* in the exploration of intimacy. As Sara Haslam has suggested, this is a Ford who uses language to explore the limits of language; who ‘like D. H. Lawrence, engages in the exploration of different existential levels and their interaction’ (Haslam 51) and, by finding the narrative and formal means to do this, takes the novel to a new place (Haslam 59).

## An intolerable intimacy

I began by mentioning Saunders’s essay on *Parade’s End*. The other starting point for this essay was Holly Furneaux’s book on *Military Men of Feeling: Emotion, Touch and Masculinity in the Crimean War*.<sup>18</sup> Furneaux approaches masculinity in a military context through a focus on acts of care and displays of emotional tenderness between men. She notes that mid-nineteenth-century military conduct books placed a duty of care for his men on the British Army officer.<sup>19</sup> To illustrate this, she quotes from J.H. Stocqueler: ‘It is the officer’s duty to comfort the soldier in sickness and suffering, to console him in sorrow and affliction, to cheer him in toil and in the severe trials to which military life is exposed’ (Stocqueler 2). As Furneaux observes, warfare produces a homosocial environment in which intimacies are ‘imbri-cated in experiences of survival, peril, loss and mourning’ (132). This

---

18. Holly FURNEAUX, *Military Men of Feeling: Emotion, Touch and Masculinity in the Crimean War* (Oxford: OUP, 2016).

19. She cites, as an example, J.J. STOCQUELER’s *The British Officer: His Positions, Duties, Emoluments and Privileges* (London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1851).

is a 'community of feeling' requiring complex emotional negotiations and a high degree of emotional literacy (133). On the one hand, there is a tactile and affective bodily intimacy that is part of everyday life; on the other, there is the 'emotional labour' as soldiers in the conflict zone deal with the immediate experience of loss and mourning while also endeavouring 'to forge continuities between home and campaign life that could sustain them, others in their regiment, and their families' (90). Furneaux also argues that this mid-nineteenth-century emphasis on care produced narratives that 'reroute wounding into stories of nurturing, preserving and remaking the body' (22) as part of a larger 'cultural discomfort about war' (23). The resulting focus on 'manly tenderness' also has implications for the construction of masculinity.<sup>20</sup>

So far *Parade's End* has presented various kinds of ruling-class homosociality: the collegial homosociality of the Civil Service, Parliament, the legal system; the intimacy of shared accommodation. In the military sections of *No More Parades*, Ford explores a reconfiguring of masculinity through the tactile and affective bodily intimacy of warfare. *No More Parades* begins with the claustrophobic closeness of a hut under enemy attack. Here, 'An enormous crashing sound said things of an intolerable intimacy to each of those men, and to all of them as a body'.<sup>21</sup> It is not the hut, however—the conditions of physical proximity—that constitutes 'an intolerable intimacy'; it is, rather, the threat to the integrity of each individual body—and the awareness of the same threat to each body in that space. Ford's phrase 'to all of them as a body' evokes not just a sense of solidarity as a military unit, but, more specifically, a sense of solidarity based in the consciousness of the shared vulnerability of the body.

In this context, Ford foregrounds the caring role of Sergeant Major Cowley: his 'motherly heart' yearned 'over his two thousand nine hundred and thirty-four nurslings' (*NMP* 12). This care is enacted when he gives instructions to the runners, and he places 'a hand kindly on each of their shoulders' (*NMP* 22). In addition, 'the motherliness of his functions' also extends to the officers (*NMP* 12). This care for officers and other ranks is expressed here explicitly as 'feminising'—indeed, Tietjens responds to it later as 'feminine solicitude' (*NMP* 36). However, it is also described, in terms appropriate to Tiet-

20. For a discussion of 'manly tenderness', see James Fitzjames STEPHENS, 'Sentimentalism', *Cornhill Magazine* (July 1864) 65–75.

21. Ford Madox FORD, *No More Parades*, ed. Joseph WIESENFARTH (Manchester: Carcanet, 2011) 11; subsequently referred to in the text as *NMP*.

jens's class position, as the behaviour and voice of 'a tender and masculine butler' (*NMP* 22). Through this shift from the mother to the butler—and through the explicit (and redundant) phrase 'masculine butler'—we can feel that negotiation of masculinity and tenderness that is explored elsewhere through Tietjens. Thus the soldiers are described as 'men he and Sergeant-Major Cowley had looked after with a great deal of tenderness' (*NMP* 15). Where these men are just 'toys' for the politicians and those running the war, they have a different significance for Tietjens: 'Each man a man with a backbone, knees, breeches, braces, a rifle, a home, passions, fornications, drunks, pals, some scheme of the universe, corns, inherited diseases . . . brats, a slut of a wife . . .' (*NMP* 16). These are embodied individuals, with all the vulnerabilities of embodied individuals, who need to be catered for at the Front, but also bring with them their own tangle of private concerns. Ford is engaging directly here with the problem Conrad raised in his journalism: how to convey the immense suffering of modern warfare—where the number of deaths and casualties is immense, but where simply producing the numbers is inadequate to convey the immensity of the suffering.<sup>22</sup> Ford evokes 'all these wet millions in mud brown' prepared as 'meat for the shambles' (*NMP* 16), but he also suggests the specificity of each individual case through the will-writing and last letters home, and through Tietjens's knowledge of individual cases. Thus, Tietjens has an understanding of his duty of care towards Captain Mackenzie: 'it was a military duty to bother himself about the mental equilibrium of this member of the lower classes' (*NMP* 26). However, his concern for those under this duty of care is epitomised by the case of O Nine Morgan, who haunts Tietjens the way the spirit of the dead Nostromo haunts the Golfo Placido. Tietjens worries about Morgan's safety, if he were to be granted leave to go home. Then, when Morgan is killed, Tietjens raises and lowers the body to release the runner trapped beneath it: 'He was more gentle than if the man had been alive' (*NMP* 29). This incident, which provides a subject rhyme to the injuring of the horse in *Some Do Not . . .*, expresses a different kind of intimacy, and this intimacy expands to include the solicitous Cowley, the other Welsh runner and the other men with whom he had been discussing Morgan's case (*NMP* 32-33).

---

22. See Robert HAMPSON, 'Conrad, the "Polish Problem" and Transnational Activism', *Conradiana* 46: 1-2 (Spring/Summer, 2014) 21-38.

The other major incident in *Parade's End* is the burial and rescue of Aranjuez at the end of *A Man Could Stand Up*—<sup>23</sup>. Das observes that World War I 'ravaged the male body on an unprecedented scale but also restored tenderness to touch in male relationships' (4). He notes how writings of the war are 'obsessed with tactile experiences' from the horrors of the 'sucking mud' to the ordeal of the bandaging of wounds. Towards the end of *A Man Could Stand Up*—, Tietjens is blown up by high explosives and then caught in a mud-slide which also entraps Lance-Corporal Duckett and Aranjuez. Tietjens is caught in the mud, which 'sucked slowly and composedly at his feet', 'assimilated his calves, his thighs', and 'imprisoned him above the waist' (*MCSU* 175). He is pulled out by a soldier and then turns to release Aranjuez: 'His hands were under the slime, and his forearms. He battled his hands down greasy cloth: under greasy cloth. *Slimy*, not greasy!' (*MCSU* 176). After Aranjuez is pulled out of the mud and laid on the mound, Tietjens feels 'tender, like a mother' (*MCSU* 176). Haslam and Das have both written about this rescue as a birth. Das suggests that, 'following the logic of the scene, the earth is giving birth', and Tietjens is playing the role of midwife (Das 47).

I want to focus on the tactile elements in these two episodes, but to do this I need to shift from the phenomenological frame of reference I have used so far to a psychological one. In the first case, what I omitted from my earlier account of Morgan's death is the emphasis on blood. Tietjens is 'astonished . . . to see that a human body could be so lavish of blood' (*NMP* 28-29). Subsequently, the narrative of this episode repeatedly returns to the stickiness of blood, ending with Tietjens 'standing with his greasy, sticky hands held out from the flaps of his tunic' while 'his very thick soles moved gluily and came up after suction' (*NMP* 30). In the second case, trench mud is foregrounded. As Das points out, trench mud was earth pulverised by heavy weaponry and compounded with organic waste and rotten flesh (Das 39). The tactile elements of these two episodes include blood, slime, excrement: this is not an encounter with the human other, but rather with the abject and fundamental elements of birth and death. For most of this essay, I have focussed on various forms of intimacy and the role of touch in relation to inter-subjective feelings and behaviour. With the abject, however, we encounter that which is excluded in the process of constituting the subject, but always hovers at the borders of

---

23. Ford Madox FORD, *A Man Could Stand Up*—, ed. Sara HASLAM (Manchester: Carcanet, 2011). Subsequently referred to in the text as *MCSU*.



the human condition.<sup>24</sup> Das argues that the soldiers' experience of trench mud was an encounter with 'the stubborn materiality of the object' (Das 50), that the repeated accounts of trench warfare in terms of the nightmare of 'sucking mud' was prompted by this threat of 'dissolution into formless matter' (Das 37), this 'revenge of matter over the human subject' (Das 51). When Tietjens had stopped the city man from attacking Gertie further, the city man had felt 'as if the bottom of his assured world . . . had fallen out' (*SDN* 87). In this engagement with the realities of modern trench warfare, Tietjens confronts for himself the 'place where meaning collapses': 'what disturbs identity, system order' (Kristeva 2, 4). Tietjens's private ambition before the war had been 'to touch pitch and not be defiled' (*SDN* 230). The war brings him in contact with experiences which question the entire system of values on which that earlier ambition was based and threaten the collapse of his own subjectivity.

In this essay, I have examined Ford's exploration of various forms of intimacy—heterosocial and homosocial; erotic, familial, tender, violent—and I have attended to the role of touch in this exploration. As Paterson shows, touch opens onto the other: it 'engages with alterity by entering into a relation with another affective, empathic body' (164). Ford's narratives in these novels similarly engage with touch as a medium of interpersonal communication, both expressive and receptive—as the vehicle of intentionality and as the object of interpretation for both characters and readers. In the course of the essay, I have attempted to trace a semiotics of touch and the choreography of bodies as elements in the novels' narrative patterns. In this final section, with the transition from the sex war to warfare, however, I have suggested that the tactile experience of the 'mud' of the battlefield involves an experience of otherness of quite a different order. The overwhelming encounter with 'mud' is a very different experience from that represented by the careful annotation of inter-corporeal and inter-subjective relations. In his account of the conditions at the Front, not only is masculinity interrogated but the subject itself is threatened with dissolution: subject and object, self and other, break down in this encounter with the materiality of death.

---

24. Julia KRISTEVA, *The Powers of Horror: An Essay in Abjection* (New York: Columbia UP, 1982).

# The Great War and Othering the Self: Siegfried Sassoon and Ford Madox Ford

Harry RICKETTS

Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

*Tēnā koutou katoa. Ko Malvern Hills te maunga. Ko Severn te awa. No London ahau. Ko Harry Ricketts toku ingoa. Kia ora.* Hello to you all, my mountain is the Malvern Hills, my river the Severn, my birthplace London, my name Harry Ricketts.

I have lived now for many years in New Zealand, and what I have just given you is one of the versions of a *mihimihi*, a ceremonial form of Māori address through which we are now encouraged to introduce ourselves on occasions such as this. It gives my name, where I come from, and where and how I identify myself (still as English). It occurs to me that this is also a not entirely inappropriate way of beginning an essay which explores some of the connections and contrasts between two autobiographically-inflected novel-sequences about the First World War, Siegfried Sassoon's *The Complete Memoirs of George Sherston* (1928–1936) and Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End* (1924–1928). Although rarely, if ever, discussed together, both sequences constantly obscure and reveal, rearrange and redeploy, aspects of identity, origin and self-definition. Both sequences might be described as ones in which the author 'others' himself in order to create a central character through whom versions of his First World War experience and versions of Englishness can be mediated, refracted, and re-presented.

Of the two, Sassoon in *The Complete Memoirs* predictably adopts the more straightforward approach. His 'self-othering' is principally achieved by a process of deliberate simplification and concentration. While the pre-war Sassoon himself led a double-life (foxhunting man by day, closet homosexual lyric poet by night), his narrator and fictional stand-in, Sherston, is reduced to just a foxhunting man. Or, as Sassoon's best biographer Max Egremont puts it:



George Sherston . . . is Siegfried Sassoon with almost all the unusual, some might say the most interesting, bits left out. We get the diffidence, the self-deprecating humour, the love of country life, the sporting courage and the sensibility, without the sexual torment, the Jewishness, the poetry or Robert Graves.<sup>1</sup>

This neat summary—though surely Egremont must mean ‘without Wilfred Owen’ rather than ‘without Robert Graves’—would not have surprised Sassoon, who admitted that Sherston was ‘only a fifth of myself’.<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man*, which became the first instalment of the trilogy, had begun as a much more modest stand-alone project. Sassoon simply set out to write up some of the pre-war hunting stories with which he used to entertain friends like Osbert Sitwell and Robert Nichols. It was only in the course of turning these Surtees-like sketches into a lightly fictionalised account of his late Victorian and Edwardian childhood and youth that Sassoon decided to extend the narrative beyond the outbreak of war and to follow his own and Sherston’s military experiences up to the brink of the Somme. The novel concluded with Sherston-Sassoon, knobkerrie in hand, standing in the ‘dismal ditch’ of a front-line trench on Easter Sunday 1916, finding ‘no consolation in the thought that Christ was risen’, and ‘splosh[ing] back to the dug-out to call the others to ‘stand-to’’.<sup>3</sup>

*Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man* first appeared anonymously. This may partly have been diffidence and partly to test the waters—Sassoon had previously published no fiction—but the anonymity, like the fictional Sherston, became a screen which allowed Sassoon, now at a literary loose end, to refashion the England of his youth into a site of pastoral nostalgia: charming, poignant, elegiac. It also allowed him to revisit the major event of his life, the war, and reflect in a more unified way on the great divide, the sense of paradise lost, that the war had created for himself and his generation. As Sherston remarks on his way to the Front: ‘Everything I had known before the War seemed to be withering away and falling to pieces’ (*Sherston* 265).

1. Max EGREMONT, *Siegfried Sassoon: A Life*, (London: Picador, 2005) 334.

2. Quoted in Jean MOORCROFT WILSON, *Siegfried Sassoon: The Journey from the Trenches: A Biography (1918–1967)* (London: Duckworth, 2003) 191.

3. Siegfried SASSOON, *The Complete Memoirs of George Sherston* (London: Faber and Faber, 1937) 282. Henceforth *Sherston*. There is no evidence that Sassoon originally thought of a trilogy. The success of *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man* (1928) encouraged him to continue his and Sherston’s story in *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930) and *Sherston’s Progress* (1936) before the three volumes were republished as *The Complete Memoirs of George Sherston* in 1937.

In fact, Sassoon's authorship was soon unmasked by his frenemy Robert Graves in the *Daily News*. This disclosure, however, far from being a drawback only opened up new possibilities for what Sassoon was beginning to see as a sequence of novels.<sup>4</sup> With his name on the cover, he could now, as it were, write as both Sherston and himself, knowing that at least some of his readers would take the unfolding war narrative not so much as fiction as pared-back autobiography. So, for instance, while still presenting himself as Sherston, he could include the whole text of his famous statement against the prolongation of the war, which in July 1917 had been read out in the House of Commons and been widely reprinted and reported in newspapers. Less dramatically, he could slip in prose descriptions of the experiences which alert readers would recognise as lying behind such debunking, finger-pointing, class-renegade poems as 'Base Details', 'The Rear-Guard' and 'Lamentations'.

By calling his novel 'memoirs', Sassoon had already implicitly been gesturing towards this authorial blurring. But, in the two succeeding volumes, *Memoirs of An Infantry Officer* and *Sherston's Progress*, he began, quite calculatedly, to collapse the gap, the no-man's-land, between fiction and non-fiction, indeed forty pages or so of *Sherston's Progress* are simply an edited transcript of Sassoon's own diaries. Now, ninety years later, such a fiction/non-fiction gap has, for many writers, long ceased to exist in any meaningful way. But, back in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Sassoon seems to have found this act of genre-flouting as liberating and exhilarating, as, at the Front, he had once found making daring sorties between the Allied and German lines.

Here are a couple of obvious examples of such flouting. In part one of *Sherston's Progress*, for instance, soon after the narrator is sent to Slateford shell-shock hospital outside Edinburgh (ie Craiglockhart), he refers to two famous novelists, one attacking, one defending his anti-war protest:

[A] celebrated novelist (for whose opinion I had asked) wrote: 'Your position cannot be argumentively defended. What is the matter with you is spiritual pride. The overwhelming majority of your fellow-citizens are against you'. Anyhow a fellow-citizen (who was an equally

---

4. At the time and especially when soon after Robert Graves published *Goodbye to All That*, Sassoon did not choose to acknowledge these 'new possibilities'. In a letter to Graves in February 1930, he told his now estranged friend that the latter's autobiography had 'landed on my little edifice [*Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*, the sequel to *Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man*] like a Zeppelin bomb'. Quoted in WILSON 238.

famous novelist wrote that it was a 'very striking act', and I was grateful for the phrase.

He then teasingly observes in brackets: '(How tantalizing of me to omit their names! But somehow I feel that if I were to put them on the page my neatly contrived little narrative would come sprawling out of its frame)' (*Sherston* 519). The two novelists were Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells, but the more telling point here is the mention of the 'neatly contrived little narrative', a phrase that self-referentially nods to the contrived, half-revealing, half-concealing nature of the whole *Sherston* narrative.

This section of the third novel is called 'Rivers', after W.H.R. Rivers, Sassoon's doctor and mentor at Craiglockhart, and also *Sherston's* at Slateford, and the central figure in *Sherston's Progress*. A few pages further on, the narrator claims that, were Rivers still alive, he 'could not be writing so freely about him. I might even be obliged to call him by some made-up name' (*Sherston* 534). This disclosure not very subtly reminds readers that this is a *roman à clef* and encourages them to try to decode the names of other characters—for instance, that David Cromlech, who "fairly got on people's nerves with his hot air about the Battle of Loos, and his brain-waves about who really wrote the Bible" is a thinly disguised portrait of Robert Graves: a 'cromlech' meaning a 'dolmen or megalithic chamber-tomb' or grave (*Sherston* 356).

The name George *Sherston* is a more complicated disguise. Part-English, part Sephardic Jew, with a Christian name taken from Wagner's *Ring* cycle, it is no coincidence that Sassoon gave his fictional surrogate two such quintessentially *English* names: George, after the patron saint of England, and *Sherston*, after two old English villages with personal associations. In becoming *Sherston*, Sassoon was plainly trying to make himself and his experiences more conventionally representative of his generation and class. Being *Sherston* also made it easier to turn both his own pre-war past and pre-war England into myth, into a 'candle and oil lamp lit, telephoneless, unmotorised Arcadia', as he later described it in a still unpublished volume of autobiography (quoted in Wilson 176). George *Sherston* was an uncomplicated product of, and credit to, the English world he enlists to defend and by which he eventually comes to feel betrayed. It is thus a nice irony that, in the post-war years, T.E. Lawrence should have told a mutual friend that, were he 'trying to export the ideal Englishman to an international exhibition', Sassoon would be his 'chief exhibit'

(quoted in Wilson 188). Perhaps in trying to ‘other’ himself into the more-English-than English Sherston, Sassoon was merely transcribing a more accurate self-reflection. Or that, for others at least, the ‘Sherstoning’ had already taken place.

Names offer one of several meeting-points between Sassoon’s trilogy and Ford’s tetralogy. (At the very simplest level, horses, golf and serving in a Welch regiment offer others.) Of course, no one would argue that Christopher Tietjens was a version of Ford with ‘the most interesting bits left out’; but you could argue that, among other things, Tietjens is a version of Ford with some of ‘the most interesting bits’ left in. Or, as C.H. Sisson more bracingly phrased it a 1977 essay in *PN Review*, Tietjens is ‘the virtuous, excessively English figure Ford had some subjective need of’.<sup>5</sup>

First, though, names and Englishness. If Sassoon simply gave himself a fictional and ultra-English-sounding alias in his novels, Ford, typically, approached the matter more elliptically. His hero, Christopher Tietjens, it is constantly affirmed, is from centuries-old Yorkshire landed gentry stock (‘Tietjens of Groby’). And yet, his two names just as constantly unsettle these apparent certainties. St Christopher was, after all, the patron saint of *travellers*. And Tietjens, like Hueffer, is clearly a *German* name by origin. These jostling, complicating associations are characteristic of Ford, and admirably so. Tietjens, a nice paradox, is both the last embodiment of an otherwise defunct public school English code of conduct or ‘parade’, as the novels sometimes call it, and someone who does not sound English at all—nor one might say, risking a somewhat seismic generalisation, does Tietjens *think* like an English person, or at least like any of the other English characters in the four novels. One example of this use of ‘parade’ occurs in the following ellipsis-pitted exchange between Tietjens and General Campion in the second volume of the tetralogy, appropriately titled *No More Parades*:<sup>6</sup>

‘Still, sir . . . there are . . . there used to be . . . in families of . . . position . . . a certain . . .’ He stopped.

The general said:

‘Well . . .’

5. C. H. SISSON, ‘Ford Madox Ford: Saltavit Et Placuit’, *The Avoidance of Literature: Collected Essays*, Michael SCHMIDT, ed. (Manchester: Carcanet, 1978) 332.

6. Ford Madox FORD, *No More Parades*, ed. Joseph WIESENFARTH (1925, Manchester: Carcanet, 2011); subsequently referred to in the text as *NMP*.

'Tietjens said:

'On the part of the man . . . a certain . . . parade!'

The general said:

'Then there had better be no more parades . . . ' (*NMP* 238)

Indeed, Daniel Defoe's adhesive couplet about the mixed identity, origins and ethnicity of the English would have made one of several imaginary epigraphs for *Parade's End*: 'A true-born Englishman's a contradiction, / In speech an irony, in fact a fiction'.<sup>7</sup>

At the heart of both *The Complete Memoirs* and *Parade's End*, there is an idea of a mythic, immemorial England, an 'England of the mind' (to borrow the title of a Seamus Heaney essay), which the heroes represent and are defending.<sup>8</sup> For Sherston, this Albionism is symbolised by the hunting, cricketing pastoral landscape of the Weald. For Tietjens, more concretely, it is symbolised by the old cedar tree at Groby and the deep well with its 'whispering roar' when a pebble is dropped in.<sup>9</sup> Both heroes lose their Albions and have to adjust to a new life with new conditions. At the very end of Sassoon's trilogy, Sherston even explicitly refers to the 'new life' he has discovered in recent years, though the phrase's Dantean connotations are left hanging (*Sherston* 656). By contrast, *The Last Post* shows Tietjens and Valentine in the post-war world, weighed down in fraught, semi-pastoral domesticity, but still together, free finally of Sylvia and with a baby on the way.

As Ford himself revealed, Tietjens is based to a considerable degree on his Yorkshire squirearchy friend Arthur Marwood. But, as Max Saunders reminds us: 'like all Ford's characters [Tietjens] is compounded from many acquaintances, and also Ford himself' (Saunders II 201). One small, transferred feature in this compounding are Tietjens's eyes. These are initially seen by Valentine as 'bulging' (*SDN* 105), and by Mrs Duchemin as 'large fishish' (*SDN* 115), exactly the way Ford's own eyes tended to be described by others and as photographs of him affirm. Another link might be that one of Sylvia's derogatory nicknames for her large, bulky husband is 'the Ox', perhaps a flicking

7. Daniel DEFOE, 'The True Born Englishman', *Poetry Foundation*, [www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44081](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44081), accessed 5 July, 2019.

8. Seamus HEANEY, 'Englands of the Mind', *Preoccupations* (London: Faber and Faber, 1980) 150–169. This famous essay, originally a lecture, discusses the different 'Englands' embodied in the poetry of Ted Hughes, Geoffrey Hill and Philip Larkin.

9. Ford Madox FORD, *Some Do Not . . .*, ed. Max SAUNDERS (1924, Manchester: Carcanet, 2010) 178–9. Subsequent references to this edition are included in the text as *SDN*.

glance to Ford's second name, Madox (*SDN* 39). (Tietjens is also often thought by others and himself to be 'mad', though the reader never thinks so.)

If that is pushing self-referentially rather too far, as it might be, Ford certainly gives Tietjens a version of his own Toryism. For instance, the reason he gave his mother for enlisting sounds almost like a rehearsal for being Tietjens: "If one has enjoyed the privileges of the ruling class of a country all one's life, there seems to be no alternative to fighting for that country if necessary".<sup>10</sup>

More importantly, Ford gives his hero his own gift—or is it a curse?—of being able to hold, with equal probity, two or more contradictory points of view at the same time. So, Tietjens can, without incongruity or hypocrisy, tell Macmaster that "[a] certain discredit has always attached to cuckolds. Very properly. A man ought to be able to keep his wife" (*NMP* 14), and can later tell Sylvia that she had every right to 'bitch[]' him (*SDN* 20): "I have always held that a woman who has been let down by one man has the right—has the duty for the sake of her child—to let down a man . . . you were within your rights. I will never go back on that. Nothing will make me, ever!" (*SDN* 215). It is of course part of the novels' irony that such largeness of mind, imaginative sympathy, while held up as entirely admirable, is part of what leaves Tietjens so particularly vulnerable to the myriad human, social and other forces lined up against him. These naturally include the vividly evoked horrors of the war, but, just as pressingly, the power of scandal, gossip and intrigue, the credulity of family and supporters, and Sylvia's endlessly ingenious machinations.

There is also Tietjens's own passivity. Yeats famously complained in the introduction to his *Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892–1935* that 'passive suffering is not a theme for poetry', and, true or not, novelists have tended to resist making it a theme for fiction.<sup>11</sup> Change, inner transformation, these are attributes that the novel has often promoted and dramatised, and been praised for so doing. This is not, however, how either *The Complete Memoirs* or *Parade's End* behaves. Sherston may come to see the war differently, but, in effect, he does not change within the sequence: he simply moves from one form of heroism to another: from heroically engaging in the war to heroically resisting it to heroically resisting it while re-engaging with it. Tietjens, too,

10. Quoted in Alan JUDD, *Ford Madox Ford* (London: Flamingo, 1991) 252.

11. W.B. YEATS, 'Introduction', *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892–1935*, W.B. Yeats, ed. (Oxford: OUP, 1936) xxxiv.

does not really change. At the very beginning, bedevilled by Sylvia, he claims to a disbelieving Macmaster: “‘I stand for monogamy and chastity. And for no talking about it. Of course if a man who’s a man wants to have a woman he has her. And again, no talking about it. He’d no doubt be in the end better, and better off, if he didn’t”” (*SDN* 24). From one point of view, this anticipates his entire love life in a nutshell: he does indeed spend the first three novels monogamous and chaste and not talking about it, and passively surviving the emotional torture this puts him through. The brief, harassed glimpse we catch of Tietjens in *The Last Post*<sup>12</sup> equally shows him in a version of exactly the same situation—though, we assume, now a much more benevolent and rewarding one; but, still, passively surviving:

‘You left the prints for Lady Robinson in a jar you gave to Hudnut the dealer. How could you? Oh, how could you? How are we going to feed and clothe a child if you do such things?’

He lifted his bicycle wearily round. You could see he was dreadfully weary, the poor devil. Mark almost said:

‘Let him off, the poor devil’s worn out!’

Heavily, like a dejected bulldog, Christopher made for the gate. As he went up the green path beyond the hedge, Valentine began to sob. (*LP* 203)

To read Sassoon’s *Complete Memoirs of George Sherston* alongside *Parade’s End* is to highlight aspects of Sassoon’s trilogy less often observed, not least such a comparison brings out how heavily its claims on the reader’s trust (and its literary charm) depend on a first-person narrative voice very close to the confessional ‘I’ of the lyric poet, the ‘I’ of Sassoon’s most enduring war poems. It is also to be reminded of the greater subtlety and prismatic complexity of Ford’s tetralogy, and to be made more aware of where that subtlety and complexity lies.

---

12. Ford Madox FORD, *Last Post*, ed. Paul SKINNER (1928, Manchester: Carcanet, 2011). Henceforth referred to in text as *LP*.

Part Four

**Aesthetics of Alterity  
in *The Good Soldier***





# Spa Modernism: Freud's *Dora* and Ford's *The Good Soldier*

Seamus O'MALLEY

*Stern College for Women, Yeshiva University*

Sigmund Freud's *Dora: A Case History* (1905) and Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier* (1915) share the same capsule summary. In both, a love quartet begins at a German spa and has disastrous consequences for both couples and a younger woman who gets caught up in their affair. Besides the synonymous plot, the two texts share many plot devices as well. Locked doors, secret *rendez-vous* down hallway passages, fake health symptoms, country day trips that provoke crises: these are the narrative hinges that make these formally experimental texts so compelling.

We keep returning to these two volumes, however, not for their 'story' in the broad sense, but rather for their meta-plots, their self-consciousness, their narrative twists and ambiguities. Both Freud's and Ford's narrators are trying to make sense of a jumble of symptoms, impressions, and unreliable memories. Ford's narrator is named John Dowell, mild-mannered American Anglophile from Philadelphia. Freud's narrator is named Sigmund Freud, intense, path-breaking Jewish psychoanalyst from Vienna. If part of the thrill of *The Good Soldier* is observing Dowell's fraught efforts at narration, *Dora*, by contrast, provides us now—in the wake of Freud's dislodgement from the scientific pantheon—with a narrator whose unreliability rivals that of Dowell.

## The making of *Dora*

Hostile critics of Freud like Frederick Crews insist that Freud made up as much of his work as did any novelist, and is thus a fiction-writer

in the negative sense.<sup>1</sup> Yet Dorrit Cohn persuasively proves that we still must categorise *Dora* as a work of nonfiction, as 'he never lost sight of the categorical impossibility of looking inside another mind'.<sup>2</sup> The character of Dora was based on a young Viennese girl named Ida Bauer. Her father, Filipp Bauer, contracted tuberculosis when Ida was six, and he most likely had syphilis as well. Bauer consulted Freud about his illnesses in 1898, and when Ida, aged eighteen, started showing signs of coughing and migraines the following year (which their usual medical doctors had no success in treating), he brought her to see Freud. Ida received eleven weeks of treatment, after which she cut off contact with Freud due to a lack of improvement in her health (Crews 592).

Freud worked on his narrative of the case for a year, but *Dora* was rejected by several scientific publishers, eventually appearing in 1905.<sup>3</sup> James and Alix Strachey's translation appeared in 1923 through the Hogarth Press (one of its many modernist *bona fides*).

Freud's narrative begins with his presentation of Dora's self-narrative. After her parents had taken fourteen-year-old Dora to the country for her health, they met a charming couple, Herr and Frau K. Both the K.'s and Dora's parents were unhappy in their marriages, and Dora's father began an affair with Frau K. Herr K. meanwhile, set his amorous sites first on Dora's mother, and then on Dora herself, forcibly kissing her by a lake. She rejected his advances and told her mother about what he had done. Her father refused to believe her account; she soon threatened suicide. The cough appeared soon after.

Such is the first narrative of *Dora*, or, to say the same thing, such is Dora's narrative of herself. (Whether it was Ida's, we will never know.) Freud, however, has many more pages to fill, and offers interpretations as various as Dowell has for Florence's suicide in *The Good Soldier*. Freud held that the key to Dora's persistent cough lay in her past, especially in the tangled sexual relationships surrounding her. The central interpretation Freud offers is hysteria, that complex, gendered, and imposing diagnosis that had confined many women to

---

1. The publication of Frederick CREWS's biography *Freud: The Making of an Illusion* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2017) set off a firestorm within the psychoanalytic community. Crews was once a dedicated Freudian, but soured on his subject over time, and now leads the charge against Freud's scientific standing. Crews is so hostile that many of his attacks on Freud should be handled critically, although he does amass a damning body of evidence against Freud's methods and interpretations.

2. Dorrit COHN, *The Distinction of Fiction* (Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1999) 51.

3. It was published as 'Bruchstück einer Hysterie-Analyse' in the journal *Monatsschrift für Psychiatrie und Neurologie* 18 (1906) 285–310.

punitive treatment throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Freud reads all of *Dora's* symptoms as symbolic attempts at reliving some of her trauma, and he detects it in her supposed repressed homosexuality, her attractions to her father, and her amorous feelings for Freud himself (a common issue the analyst seemed to encounter with many of his female patients).

In *Dora's* case, hysteria might have been a reasonable conclusion for Freud to draw, given her manic and repeated behaviour that most likely stemmed from some traumatic experience. However, what Freud judged traumatic might strike contemporary readers as odd: he saw no problem with what we would now consider a sexual assault on a minor, and after describing Herr K.'s attempts to kiss her, Freud writes, 'the behaviour of this child of fourteen was already entirely and completely hysterical. I should without question consider a person hysterical in whom an occasion for sexual excitement elicited feelings that were preponderantly or exclusively unpleasurable'.<sup>5</sup> For Freud, sexual arousal is the only healthy response to Herr K.'s advances, and any other reaction he dubs abnormal. Upon this judgment he builds a system of generalisations. Crews is aghast at such treatment of *Dora*: 'For years he had been theorising about sexual trauma as a prompt for the outbreak of neuroses; but when presented with an actual sexual assault on a terrified child, he declared the victim's *unpleasure* to be an infallible sign of hysteria' (Crews 598). Crews here speaks for legions of Freud critics, especially feminist ones, who see in *Dora's* treatment the germs of psychoanalysis's major flaws. *Dora*, more than any other work of Freud, is the text most exposed to twenty-first-century censure. Despite such glaring problems, however, *Dora* continues to fascinate, possibly due to Freud's storytelling abilities, his command and control over narrative.

## Modernism and the methodologies of psychoanalysis

Years after *Dora* Freud would write, 'Consecutive presentation is not a very adequate means of describing complicated mental processes going on in different layers of the mind'.<sup>6</sup> Such a modernist

---

4. See Elizabeth SHOWALTER's classic study, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830–1980* (London: Virago, 1985).

5. Sigmund FREUD, *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, trans. by James Strachey (New York: Collier Books, 1963) 22. Henceforth referred to in the text as *Dora*.

6. Sigmund FREUD, 'The Psychogenesis of a Case of Female Homosexuality', *The International Journal of Psych-Analysis*, Vol I (1920) 138.

sentiment could easily fit into Ford's theorisations of writing, like 'On Impressionism' (1914) or *Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance* (1924), and partly explains why English departments are reluctant to part with Freud while their colleagues in Psychology see him as of historical interest at best, an embarrassing charlatan at worst. Freud's appeal had, from the outset of his career, stemmed from his narrative abilities, and famous references to Oedipus, Elektra, or Hamlet evidence the ease by which he entwines literary and scientific discourses.

Freud has always attracted literary readings, but Steven Marcus, in his essay 'Freud and Dora: Story, History, Case History' (1974), was the first to note the affinities between *Dora* and modernism specifically, arguing that the case study could be read like the experimental novels of the early decades of the century. Note how easily his description of *Dora* can apply to *The Good Soldier*:

Its narrative and expository course, for example, is neither linear nor rectilinear; instead, its organisation is plastic, involuted, and heterogeneous, and follows spontaneously an inner logic that seems frequently to be at odds with itself; it often loops back around itself and is multidimensional in its representation of both its material and itself. Its continuous innovations in formal structure seem unavoidably to be dictated by its substance, by the dangerous, audacious, disreputable, and problematical character of the experiences being represented and dealt with, and by the equally scandalous intentions of the author and the outrageous character of the role he has had the presumption to assume.<sup>7</sup>

Marcus goes on to mention the affinities with Woolf or Proust, but isn't *The Good Soldier* the closest relative of *Dora*?<sup>8</sup> One way to read the circularity of Ford's novel is to see it as a therapeutic text, organised around the basic 'talking cure' model of emergent psychology. Dowell is alone by the end of the 'story' (as we discover at the novel's opening) but may be in a kind of shock, at the very least is in need of some sort of counseling, so conjures one up: the reader.

---

7. Steven MARCUS, 'Freud and Dora: Story, History, Case History', *Representations: Essays on Literature and Society* (London: Random House, 1976) 263.

8. Peter BROOKS offers a competing interpretation in his response to Marcus: '*Dora*, it seems to me, reads like a flawed Victorian novel, one with a ramifying cast of characters and relations that never can be brought into satisfactory form. With the case history of the Wolf Man, Freud has advanced to a more sophisticated presentation of complex narrative plots and more a subtle understanding of what the "healthy" narrative of life may be.' *Reading for the Plot* (Harvard: Harvard UP, 1984) 282. See COHN's chapter in *Distinction of Fiction* for a riposte to both readings, in which she insists on the non-fictionality (at least generically speaking) of Freud's case histories.

I don't know how it is best to put this thing down—whether it would be better to try and tell the story from the beginning, as if it were a story; or whether to tell it from this distance of time, as it reached me from the lips of Leonora or from those of Edward himself.

So I shall just imagine myself for a fortnight or so at one side of the fire-place of a country cottage, with a sympathetic soul opposite me. And I shall go on talking, in a low voice while the sea sounds in the distance and overhead the great black flood of wind polishes the bright stars.<sup>9</sup>

Talk-based therapy in the English world was rare in 1915 (although real enough that Ford included a therapist in his novel *A Call* (1910)). These sentences from Freud could easily be confused for Dowell's self-therapy: 'I shall present the material produced during the analysis of this dream in the somewhat haphazard order in which it recurs to my mind' (*GS* 87); 'time and dates, as we know, were never without significance to her' (111); 'on this plan everything that has to do with the clearing-up of a particular symptom emerges piecemeal, woven into various contexts, and distributed over widely separated periods of time'(6). Like Florence as historical lecturer, 'clearing up one of the dark places of the earth, leaving the world a little lighter than she had found it' (35), Freud as analyst must ever be 'clearing-up' the dark places of the unconscious, bringing them to light by embedding them in a reconstructing narrative, the 'case history'. Most strikingly, note the Fordian tone of *Dora's* statement of methodology:

I begin the treatment, indeed, by asking the patient to give me the whole story of his life and illness, but even so the information I receive is never enough to let me see my way about the case. The first account may be compared to an unnavigable river whose stream is at one moment choked by masses of rock and at another divided and lost among shallows and sandbanks. . . As a matter of fact the patients are incapable of giving such reports about themselves. They can, indeed, give the physician plenty of coherent information about this or that period of their lives; but it is sure to be followed by another period in which their communications run dry, leaving gaps unfilled, and riddles unanswered; and then again will come yet another period which will remain totally obscure and unilluminated by even a single piece of serviceable information. The connections—even the ostensible ones—are for the most part incoherent, and the sequence of different events is uncertain. (*Dora* 10)

---

9. Ford Madox FORD, *The Good Soldier*, ed. Martin STANNARD (1915, New York: Norton, 1995, 2012) 15. Henceforth referred to in text as *GS*.

First we encounter the narrator's interest in, and scepticism of, the subject's self-narrative. As in the works of Conrad or Proust, narrative is both necessary and unreliable, Freud's 'unnavigable river' akin to Conrad's unnamed Congo from *Heart of Darkness* (1899). Furthermore, the lacunae of memory, like the one that frustrates Proust's narrator in the opening pages of *À la recherche du temps perdu*, result in 'incoheren[cy]' and 'uncertain[ty]', a state only redressed for Proust's Marcel through the hard labour of post-*madeleine* narration. (Dora's treatment proved more expensive and less successful than that of Proust's hero.)

Not surprisingly, the full title of Freud's work, *Dora: Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, also broadcasts one of the central formal features of modernism, and indeed its narrative is as fragmented as the poetry of T.S. Eliot or Guillaume Apollinaire, or of course *The Good Soldier*, where Dowell admits, 'I have, I am aware, told this story in a very rambling way so that it may be difficult for anyone to find their path through what may be a sort of maze. I cannot help it' (GS 124). But the fragmented narrative of both texts are not just expressions of some sort of *Zeitgeist*. The forces that fragment the two narratives are also shared: fragile memory, trauma, incomplete knowledge, limited perspectives, narrative ellipses, time-shifts, revisions, transgressive desire, possible sublimated homosexuality. These are the features of the human subject that fascinated both Freud and Ford, and that compelled them to reject the reigning discourses of their respective field and set out to find new forms.

## Ford and German medicine

Given these connections, was Ford influenced by *Dora* when he wrote *The Good Soldier*? I see three possibilities. The first is that Ford read *Dora* in German. There is no evidence at all for this. However, Ford was a German-speaking, voracious reader, and was in Germany for medical and mental treatment several times during the Edwardian decade. It is possible that Freud appeared, in some form, on his cultural radar. Ford later wrote in *Return to Yesterday* (1931): 'From 1903 to 1906 illness removed me from most activities. The illness was purely imaginary; that made it none the better. It was enhanced by

wickedly unskilful doctoring'.<sup>10</sup> Max Saunders provides context for this period: 'When he rejected the diagnosis of agoraphobia, he was rejecting the entire institution of spa nerve-cures. The experiences of this year left him woundedly cynical about mental specialists, and liable to equate the dismaying physiological treatment he endured with the radically different ideas of psychoanalysis. (There is no evidence that he read Freud)'.<sup>11</sup> What further casts doubt on Ford's encounter with Freud was that German psychology at this period had not yet fallen under Freud's sway, as the Viennese doctor was still seen as proposing theories too radical for the health care establishment. So Ford's animus toward his German treatment did not likely take aim at one medical thinker.<sup>12</sup>

The second possibility, harder to verify or dispute, is that Ford somehow absorbed *Dora* second-hand, in the way so many of his coevals somehow evince Bergsonian theories without having read a word of Henri Bergson. This second theory assumes, first, that Ford would have overcome his distaste for German psychology and been open to the arguments of *Dora*. But more damning to this theory is the question of form. *The Good Soldier* shares so much with *Dora* at the level of formal narrative, aspects of a text that do not float through culture as adeptly as plot or theme. That someone would have summarised the narratological aspects of *Dora* for Ford, and that he would ten years later deploy them in a novel, is not credible.<sup>13</sup> And as Rob Hawkes, in *Ford Madox Ford and the Misfit Moderns* (2012), writes,

Both [Sara] Haslam and [Sondra] Stang highlight the fact that Ford was writing at a time when psychology, psychoanalysis, and

---

10. Ford Madox FORD, *Return to Yesterday*, ed. Bill HUTCHINGS (1931, Manchester: Carcanet, 1999) 202.

11. Max SAUNDERS, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life* (Oxford: OUP, 1996) I 186. Saunders does continue, 'Nevertheless, the influence of Freud's ideas about the Oedipus complex is probable' (I 425). The two-volume biography is a wealth of psychoanalytic insight into Ford and his works.

12. Helen CHAMBERS is currently completing an extensive project on Ford's reading history, and reports no trace of psychoanalysis, Freud or otherwise. See 'Ford's Reading', *Last Post* 1.1 (Autumn 2018) 30–36, and future installations in that journal.

13. By the 1920s it is clear that Ford had been exposed to Freud, as in his 1922 article 'Ulysses and the Handling of Indecencies' for the *English Review*, where he sardonically references 'a volume of dream-interpretations by a writer called Freud.' In comparison to Joyce's achievement, 'Mr Freud has all the want of balance of a scientist on the track of a new theory.' *Critical Essays*, ed. Max SAUNDERS (Manchester: Carcanet, 2002) 223, 225. For more on psychoanalysis and Ford during that period, see the essays in *War and the Mind: Ford Madox Ford's Parade's End, Modernism, and Psychology*, eds Rob HAWKES and Ashley CHANTLER (Edinburgh UP, 2015).



psychotherapy played an increasingly influential role in contemporary thinking about the self. However, despite the suggestion here that Ford somehow anticipated theories that Freud was yet to express, it is important to acknowledge that Ford was clearly influenced by what Peter Childs describes as 'the general increased level of inquiry at the turn of the century into the workings of the mind and its relation to society'.<sup>14</sup>

We can only surmise that Ford had an exposure to Freud, and psychoanalysis more broadly, typical of an intellectual of the prewar years.

We are then left with the third, and unexciting theory that the similarities are just a coincidence, or, to say the same thing, they are both products of the *Zeitgeist*. This theory, however, does not have to be as bland as noting the similarities between random modernist artefacts. What may account for so many of the formalist overlaps in our two texts is not modernism at large, but rather the settings of *Dora* and *The Good Soldier*. They both occur at spas.

## Spas and modernism

Spas and similar health centers functioned as sites of transition from nineteenth-century physical medicine to the new century's theories of the psyche. David Clay Large writes in *The Spas of Central Europe* (2015) that increasingly, spas became places to go for *mental* health—a new sub-field of medicine—and that 'growing numbers of spa doctors made the psychological diseases of the modern era their specialty'.<sup>15</sup> Both Ford and Freud were direct witnesses of this crucial hinge in the history of medicine. Ford was in Germany in 1904 and checked in to the sanatoria at Mammern and then Marienberg Heilanstalt. On the way, he wrote to his wife Elsie his account of seeing the shrine at Telgte (a sort of German Lourdes) that promised miraculous healing powers. Saunders notes the 'preoccupation with the faith of Telgte's pilgrims' which 'suggests that he too felt his mental illness religiously' (I.174). Ford's Germany itinerary, then, reenacts the his-

---

14. *Ford Madox Ford and the Misfit Moderns: Edwardian Fiction and the First World War*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 45. See Sara HASLAM, *Fragmenting Modernism: Ford Madox Ford, the Novel, and the Great War*, (Manchester UP, 2002) 66; and Peter CHILDS, *Modernism* (London: Routledge, 2000) 48.

15. David CLAY LARGE, *The Spas of Central Europe: A History of Intrigue, Politics, Art, and Healing* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015) 244.

torical shift from miracle cures to spas, a journey that proceeds from the soul to the body to the mind.

Spas in the late nineteenth century functioned much as Freudian psychoanalysis would later do. While spas did not get everything right, their practitioners did perceive that some problems need slow care. Admirably, spas adapted themselves to the rise of strong health science (Louis Pasteur, etc.), modernising their facilities to keep up with the latest research (Lodge 238). Thus Baden-Baden, first known for its waters, also became an early center of radiology (1892), one that is still in use today. Wiesbaden was the most prominent health spa of the time; Freud's favorite, though, was Bad Gastein, where he used to sit in their radon box, hoping it would ward off cancer from his six-a-day cigar habit. (It did not, and he died in London soon after meeting Virginia and Leonard Woolf.)

*Dora* takes place in a health town called 'B-----' (*Dora* 12). This was really Meran, now Merano, in Italy, but then still under Austrian control. *The Good Soldier's* spa is 'N-----', based on Bad Nauheim, where Ford and Violet Hunt spent some time in 1910. If spas were important sites for the transition from the practice and discourse of physical health morphing into mental health, then the similarities between these two spa texts might stem from their functions as modulations from Victorian to modern forms of therapy and writing. While Florence and Edward are ostensibly at N----- for their 'hearts', Leonora at one point 'looked at me as if I were an invalid' (*GS* 30) and readers might concur with her judgment, seeing Dowell as the true patient—but a mental, not a physical one. The somatic problems of Florence and Edward are revealed as fake, every body in the novel is healthy. The real complications occur in Dowell's psyche, his own 'heart'.

These two texts place sexuality as central to the modern condition, which could stem from the function of spas as sites of sexual adventure.<sup>16</sup> *The Good Soldier* suggests that 'the sex-instinct' (*GS* 82) plays a more important role in decision-making than previous English novelists had acknowledged. In Ford's novel, the 'good' Edward and Florence throw away their 'good' life as they follow their passions and libidos. Freud would build an intellectual empire on the notion of sexual determinacy, and the interpretation of a repeated cough as

---

16. A spa is also the setting for one section of Ford's *Parade's End*: in *Some Do Not . . .* (ed. Max SAUNDERS, Manchester: Carcanet, 2010), Sylvia Tietjens is writing to Christopher from 'Lobscheid, an unknown and little-frequented air resort amongst the pinewoods of the Taunus' (31). Her French maid is meanwhile 'getting up a tremendous love affair' (32). Father Consett, Sylvia's spiritual advisor, judges it 'an evil place' (39).

heavily erotic in origin would be the template for countless sexualised diagnoses.

Philip Rieff once contended that 'psychological man' replaced such earlier notions as political, religious, or economic man as the twentieth century's dominant self-image.<sup>17</sup> (A quick comparison of Robinson Crusoe and Dowell demonstrates such a shift.) The accompanying revolution in aesthetics, and the fragmented forms it engendered, were not simply for their own sake, but were partly produced by the shift to new conceptualisations of the mind. After Freud, our psyches came to be seen as more complicated, or 'overdetermined':

I must now turn to consider a further complication to which I should certainly give no space if I were a man of letters engaged upon the creation of a mental state like this for a short story, instead of being a medical man engaged upon its dissection. The element to which I must now allude can only serve to obscure and efface the outlines of the fine poetic conflict which we have been able to ascribe to Dora. This element would rightly fall a sacrifice to the censorship of a writer, for he, after all, simplifies and abstracts when he appears in the character of a psychologist. But in the world of reality, which I am trying to depict here, a complication of motives, an accumulation and conjunction of mental activities—in a word, overdetermination—is the rule. (*Dora* 52)

The mind is not a blank slate that accumulates, as in the Victorian *Bildungsroman* tradition of Dickens or Thackeray. Instead, we can only look at psyches backwards. Leopold Bloom and Clarissa Dalloway note what they see in 1904 Dublin and 1923 London; meanwhile their thoughts drift more meaningfully through their pasts. Dowell hardly even has a present, as he exists only as he writes his history: 'I know nothing—nothing in the world—of the hearts of men. I only know that I am alone—horribly alone' (*GS* 12). Thus when Freud states that 'I cannot help wondering how it is that the authorities can produce such smooth and exact histories in cases of hysteria' (*Dora* 10), he could be penning a modernist manifesto for fiction as well, where overdetermination would come to 'rule', and the 'smooth and exact' realist narratives feel forced or artificial.<sup>18</sup> As Dowell states, 'who

17. Philip RIEFF, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith after Freud* (University of Chicago Press, 1987).

18. Stephen KERN argues that a study of murder novels 'revealed that from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century understanding of the causes of murder in them shifted [. . .]. [C]ausal understanding moved in the direction of increasing specificity, multiplicity, complexity, probability, and uncertainty.' Modernist texts 'complicated and

in this world can give anyone a character? Who in the world knows anything of any other heart—or of his own?' (GS 108).

If the psyche is too fractured for coherent narratives, what are the heuristic ramifications, or, to put it another way, what are writers or doctors supposed to do with a contradictory jumble of causations? In *Dora* Freud writes, 'In the further course of the treatment the patient supplies the facts which, though he had known them all along, had been kept back by him or had not occurred to his mind. The paramesias prove untenable, and the gaps in his memory are filled in. It is only towards the end of the treatment that we have before us all intelligible, consistent, and unbroken case history' (*Dora* 11). When a patient like *Dora* comes to see Freud, her 'story' has already happened. But the 'story' for the text is the modernist one, as we watch how the story must be told, and the analyst guides the patient towards some form of completion. The fictional techniques of *The Good Soldier* are also 'ruled' by overdetermination and result in two parallel stories. Character and motivation, for example, are continually revised. Why does every significant event of Florence's life happen on August 4th? 'There is the curious coincidence of dates, but I do not know whether that is one of those sinister, as if half-jocular and altogether merciless proceedings on the part of a cruel Providence that we call coincidence. Because it may just as well have been the superstitious mind of Florence that forced her to certain acts, as if she had been hypnotised' (GS 59). Likewise, why does Leonora strike Maisie Maidan? Perhaps, Dowell writes, 'in boxing Mrs Maidan's ears, Leonora was just striking the face of an intolerable universe' (GS 44). But later: 'And that attitude of Leonora's towards Mrs Maidan no doubt partly accounted for the smack in the face. She was hitting a naughty child who had been stealing chocolates at an inopportune moment' (GS 51). The motivation has shifted, but which is the real one? Does Ford want us to judge, to choose one interpretation? Ford's textual effect is the same process that Freud formulates more explicitly, as, for example, in his various theories as to why *Dora* rejects Herr K.'s advances and gives him her own slap:

Nor do I know whether Herr K. would have done any better if it had been revealed to him that the slap *Dora* gave him by no means signified

---

subverted' previous models of determination, and as Freudian ideas spread, the twentieth century murder novel offered more ambiguous motivations for the crime. *A Cultural History of Causality: Science, Murder Novels, and Systems of Thought* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004) 6, 5.

a final 'No' on her part, but that it expressed the jealousy which had lately been roused in her, while her strongest feelings were still on his side. If he had disregarded that first 'No', and had continued to press his suit with a passion which left room for no doubts, the result might very well have been a triumph of the girl's affection for him over all her internal difficulties. But I think she might just as well have been merely provoked into satisfying her craving for revenge upon him all the more thoroughly. It is never possible to calculate towards which side the decision will incline in such a conflict of motives: whether towards the removal of the repression or towards its reinforcement. (*Dora* 101)

Both Fordian and Freudian slaps defy easy causation, and Dowell-as-narrator can only conclude, 'it is all a darkness' (*GS* 15). Freud-as-analyst, however, must offer both a diagnosis and a plan for a cure. Ford-as-author is under no such imperative, and the genius of *The Good Soldier* lies in its resistance to the Victorian urge towards narrative closure.

We are at a curious place in our culture where *The Good Soldier* feels more secure in the cultural pantheon than *Dora*. The feminist critiques of Freud—inspired by early work by Karen Horney and Simone de Beauvoir—see *Dora's* case as the template for the male analyst who supposedly has more knowledge of the female patient than the patient herself.<sup>19</sup> Reading *Dora* critically allows us to appreciate the possible agency *Dora* showcases, knowingly resisting Freud's diagnoses, and ultimately taking charge of her own health by breaking off treatment. But Freud himself wants to present *Dora* as entirely lacking in self-knowledge to further demonstrate the power of his new methods. Ford, by contrast, creates female characters who have a full range of access to knowledge, both of self and others. While we might read *The Good Soldier* as evidence of a crisis of epistemology—'I don't know; I don't know. . . . Who knows?' (*GS* 13)—it is a male crisis only: Dowell and Edward fumble through the narrative, while Leonora and Florence hold all the secrets.

Additionally, I would argue, the shift in status of Freud and Ford results from the critical distance between Ford and Dowell, as opposed to the closure of Freud the writer and Freud the analyst. By trying

---

19. See, for example, Maria RAMAS in her essay 'Freud's *Dora*, *Dora's* Hysteria': 'Freud's analysis is only partly true—intriguing fiction and flawed analysis—because it is structured around a fantasy of femininity and female sexuality that remains misunderstood' (150). In *Dora's Case: Freud—Hysteria—Feminism*, eds Charles BERNHEIMER and Claire KAHANE (New York: Columbia UP, 1985).

to 'shed light' on Dora's unconscious Freud inadvertently puts the spotlight on his own methods and techniques, and the twenty-first century reading of Freud, no longer convinced of his scientific value, can focus on him as a major, and involved, character in his narratives, one that is not just unreliable but deeply flawed. Dowell, however, is not the therapist. He conjures the 'silent listener' (124) as the final interpreter, but such an entity is either non-existent—the imaginary construct of a fictional character—or is the reader, if she accepts the onus. The striking openness of Ford's text partly stems from the power invested in us as readers to render a verdict on events and characters. By contrast, Freud insists on the scientific basis of his own theories. He does not want to be read as a poet or philosopher of the mind, as Cohn has demonstrated. But the very factual authority which made his case histories persuasive now invites harsh critique. The endurance of *The Good Soldier*, by contrast, is partly due to its bracing self-doubt. Not only does Ford's book seem to 'know' that it is fiction—'the saddest story'—but it even suggests that even fictional truths, let alone scientific ones, are difficult to fathom.



# 'I am so near to all these people': Narrative Alterity in Ford's *The Good Soldier* and Sinclair's *Tasker Jevons*

Leslie DE BONT  
Université de Nantes

Ford and Sinclair were close friends. Their relationship was documented by many, including Ford himself, who notably mentions that Sinclair introduced Ezra Pound to him around 1909.<sup>1</sup> Ford mentioned their lasting relationship on several occasions: 'I am glad too that May Sinclair has put me into a book', he wrote in a 1910 letter to Edgar Jepson.<sup>2</sup> The book is not 1916 *Tasker Jevons: The Real Story*, but *The Creators: A Comedy*, in which George Tanqueray, a novelist, does indeed bear some striking resemblance with Ford, and is even referred to as 'our disguised friend' by Pound.<sup>3</sup> Biographers and critics have also noticed Fordian traits in Tanqueray (Raitt, 122)<sup>4</sup> and Ford himself ironically alluded to the resemblance in *Return to Yesterday*.<sup>5</sup> Other Sinclairian characters might also remind us of Ford and his writing. For instance Christopher Vivart, the author-protagonist of

---

1. Ford Madox FORD, *Return to Yesterday* (1931; Manchester: Carcanet, 1999) 291. See also Theophilus BOLL, *Miss May Sinclair: Novelist* (Cranbury: Associated UP, 1973) 84; Charlotte JONES, 'Impressions of Modernity' in *Beyond the Victorian/Modernist Divide*, eds Anne-Florence GILLARD-ESTRADA and Anne BESNAULT-LEVITA (New York: Routledge, 2018) 73; Brita LINDBERG, *Pound/Ford: The Story of a Literary Friendship* (New York: New Direction Publishing, 1982) 4; James WILHELM, *Ezra Pound in London and Paris 1908–1925* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 2010) 20; Suzanne RAITT, *May Sinclair: A Modern Victorian* (Oxford: OUP, 2000) 147 and 192.

2. Ford Madox FORD, 'Letter to Edgar Jepson', in *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, ed. Richard LUDWIG (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965) 45.

3. 'Mind you I can't or haven't been able to read as an outsider. Nos amis déguisés, despite your valliant [sic] and courteous efforts!', Ezra POUND, 'Letter to Sinclair' (1911), Kislak Center. Box 3. Folder 74.

4. See also Hrisey ZEGGER, *May Sinclair* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1976) 155.

5. 'She [. . .] wrote a book whose villain was a striking likeness of myself' (*Return to Yesterday* 278).



Sinclair's *Far End* (1926), whose first name might also bear witness to Sinclair's reading of *Parade's End*, defines his approach to fiction writing as 'presentation, not representation all the time', directly echoing Ford's impressionist programme: 'by presentation and by presentation, and again by presentation'.<sup>6</sup>

However, Ford and Sinclair's relationship extends the scope of her presumed *romans à clef*. If neither John Tasker Jevons, Sinclair's eponymous protagonist, nor Walter Furnival, the narrator, remotely resemble Ford, their relation is strangely symmetrical to that of Edward Ashburnham and John Dowell in *The Good Soldier*. The general architecture of *Tasker Jevons*<sup>7</sup> could indeed suggest that the book was written as a partial response to Ford's novel. Indeed, except for a later collection of short stories entitled *Tales Told by Simpsons* (1930), *Tasker Jevons* is Sinclair's only first-person narrative. This use of internal focalisation seems out-of-character, especially since all the other novels that Sinclair wrote around the same time rely on a careful interplay between pronouns, points of view and unidentified narrative voices. Given the publication date of *Tasker Jevons*, I wish to argue that this choice could be read as a direct sign of Ford's influence.

In addition, despite major differences, both texts have a lot of structural and thematic common points. They are the accounts of two unreliable narrators who tell us about the lives of two mysterious 'others'—two seemingly idealised, eponymous male protagonists, John Tasker Jevons and Edward Ashburnham, who hold resembling positions in both novels' actantial narrative schemas.<sup>8</sup> Following Greimas's terminology, Jevons and Ashburnham are neither helpers nor opponents and cannot really be considered as actual alter-egos or *Doppelgänger*s. Instead, the narrators alternately depict them as desirable doubles, as literary *repoussoirs* and as open-ended sources of questioning and mystery. Interestingly, both novels also offer symmetrical accounts of the troubled relationships fostered by two central couples. They both rely on irony and double-edged descriptions, as well as on a questionable confrontation of points of view; they are built on multi-layered pretence, contradictions, and clandestine jealousy, as well

---

6. May SINCLAIR, *Far End* (London: Hutchinson, 1926) 108; Ford Madox FORD, 'On Impressionism', *Poetry and Drama* 2.6 (December 1914) 323.

7. May SINCLAIR, *Tasker Jevons: The Real Story* (London: Hutchinson, 1916). Henceforth referred to in text as *TJ*.

8. Algirdas Julien GREIMAS, 'Actants, Actors, and Figures', *On Meaning: Selected Writings in Semiotic Theory*, trans. Paul PERRON (1973; Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1987) 106–120.

as on mirroring portraits and dishonest comparisons, conveying the narrators' complex relations to both selfhood and otherness. Yet, the most striking common point is the wide range and variation of the relationships that both narrators develop, and fail to develop, with the other characters.

However differently, both novels engage with a very particular version of Ricœur's concept of 'narrative identity'<sup>9</sup> as they posit fiction, hesitations and unreliable storytelling as central mediators between the narrating selves and the narrated others. Ricœur defines narrative identity as 'the sort of identity to which a human being has access thanks to the mediation of the narrative function'.<sup>10</sup> His concept is particularly useful to understand Dowell's and Furnival's ambiguous experiences of alterity and narration. Narrative identity 'is realised in three successive movements': prefiguration (i.e., 'the individual's experience of being-in-the-world that is semantically construed but without clear form or figure'), configuration ('where the contingencies of experience are selected, shaped and ordered') and 'the noetic act of reading where the self comes to a greater understanding of human experience over time through the mediation of narrative'.<sup>11</sup> If Furnival and Dowell's 'prefiguration' is indeed a key feature of their unstable narrative acts, their very specific, self-based 'configuration' of their own experiences of otherness appealingly induces a particularly biased interpretation of both identity and alterity. In other words, Sinclair's and Ford's novels focus on narrative alterity—a fictional variant of Ricœur's concept that intertwines narration, identity and alterity. In order to highlight this complex interlacing of narration with identity and alterity in both novels, this paper will thus first explore the narrators' failed attempts at portraying the other characters. It will then review the importance of fantasy, idealisation and identification in the narrators' many relations with the other characters. Last, it will look into the narrators' politics of alterity, showing that Ford and Sinclair have created particularly dense and careful explorations of identity and alterity that fiction alone can successfully create.

---

9. Paul RICŒUR, *Soi-même comme un autre* (Paris: Seuil, 1990) 138.

10. Paul RICŒUR, 'Narrative Identity', *Philosophy Today* 35:1 (Spring 1991) 73.

11. Patrick CROWLEY, 'Paul Ricœur: The Concept of Narrative Identity, the Trace of Autobiography', *Paragraph* 26:3 (2003) 1–12.

## 'It is very difficult to give an all-round impression of any man': impossible others and narrating selves

In both novels, the significant number of phrases like 'I don't know', 'I suppose', 'I'm really not sure' as well as the many contradictions clearly indicate the narrators' difficulty in depicting, let alone understanding, the other characters. The narrators' rhetoric of uncertainty originates in Ford's impressionistic project,<sup>12</sup> as in Sinclair's case-based aesthetics, but the overwhelming recurrence of these phrases indicates that doubt, hesitations and the limits of the narrators' discourses are actually the centrepiece of both texts.

Despite conceptual differences, the difficulty of portraying the other is indeed programmatic in both novels. Dowell, for one, exclaims: 'It is very difficult to give an all-round impression of any man, I wonder how far I have succeeded with Edward Ashburnham. I dare say I haven't succeeded at all. It is even very difficult to see how such things matter'.<sup>13</sup> Here, Dowell confesses that his attempt has been a failure, but the anaphoric repetition and the overall structure of the extract gives Dowell's comment duplicitous meaning. The second occurrence, 'it is *even* very difficult to see how such things matter', does not convey the same type of difficulty: Dowell could also be suggesting that giving an impression of other men ('such things'), and of Ashburnham in particular, is indeed too difficult to actually matter. In addition, the text implies that Dowell has 'not succeeded at all' in depicting Ashburnham but that Ford did succeed in giving an impression of Dowell's *homo duplex* complexity. The internal focalisation thus weaves a nearly literal and very ambiguous narrating-other into the character-self for both Dowell and Furnival who recount their very unstable narrative identities.

There are indeed many similar ambiguities in Furnival's hesitations. To start with, his opening sentence is also filled with doubt and contradictions: 'I suppose, to be accurate, the very beginning was the day I first met him in nineteen-six no, nineteen-five it must have been' (*TJ* 4). The use of 'I suppose' along with the adjective 'accurate' sheds doubt: whose story is Furnival about to tell us? This is probably

---

12. See for example 'the author [. . .] must remember that a person present at a scene does not see everything and is above all not able to remember immensely long passages of dialogue'. Ford Madox FORD, 'Techniques', *Southern Review* I (July 1935): 23. See also 'you attempt to involve the reader amongst the personages of the story' (Ford, 1914, 323).

13. Ford Madox FORD, *The Good Soldier* (1915; New York: Norton, 1995) 101. Henceforth referred to in text as *GS*.

a combined story that relies on meetings and defining interactions ('the day I first met him'), as much as on his overarching sense of subjectivity. In the Western philosophical tradition, the other is often described as existing only in relation to the self<sup>14</sup> and, Ricœur for one, has shown that the ipse-identity relies on alterity (Ricœur 1990 14), that is on 'the otherness of other people and the otherness of one's own conscience'.<sup>15</sup> I would argue that both novels thoroughly explore the complexity of these relations to alterity while showing that the narrator's self-perceptions and self-narrations stem from their relations with these other characters. Jevons and Ashburnham are indeed extremely influential characters, yet their respective influence varies throughout the novels and is processed differently by both narrators as Dowell's and Furnival's narrations alternately portray other characters as mirroring peers, puzzling mysteries and attractive fantasies, hinting at the wide range of intricate relations expressed between the unreliable narrating selves and the narrated others.

Dowell's and Furnival's experiences of alterity are thus particularly unstable and partial and yet, their attempts at describing Ashburnham and Jevons are particularly dense. Their recurring hesitations about other characters also point to their own hesitations about themselves and eventually to their individual limitations, which seem to prevent them from experiencing the 'otherness of [their] own conscience' (Kaufman 157). In *The Good Soldier* and *Tasker Jevons*, depicting the other is indeed a bit of a challenge for the narrating selves, as both novels skilfully show how the narrator's language and representations influence the way they approach alterity, or perhaps, prevent them from experiencing it, let alone understanding it. As such, Dowell's and Furnival's portraits of these other characters offer a variation of Attridge's definition of the other as 'always and constitutively on the point of turning from the unknown into the known, from the other into the same.' (Attridge 22). There seems to be no such turning point

---

14. See for example Derek ATTRIDGE, 'Innovation, Literature, Ethics: Relating to the Other', *PMLA* 114.1 (Jan 1999): 20–31 ('Another virtue of the phrase the other—which it shares with the new—is that it is premised on a relation. To be other is necessarily to be other to', 22); Frédéric LAUPIES, *Leçon philosophique sur autrui* (Paris: PUF, 1999). See also Paul RICŒUR, *Soi-même comme un autre* (Paris: Seuil, 1990) 13. Last, André Lalande defines alterity as one of philosophy's most 'fundamental problems' (my translation) since it is opposed to and yet intrinsically linked to the notion of the self. André LALANDE, *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie* (1950 ; Paris: PUF, 2010) 104.

15. Sebastian KAUFMANN, 'The Attestation of the Self as a Bridge between Hermeneutics and Ontology in the Philosophy of Paul Ricœur', PhD thesis submitted at Marquette University in 2010 157, accessed 5 July, 2019.

in Ashburnham and Jevons; rather, both narrators constantly seem to try to emulate the other, rather than to try to get to know them, or, as Dowell has it, to ‘follow [. . .] faintly’ Edward Ashburnham:

In my fainter sort of way I seem to perceive myself following the lines of Edward Ashburnham. [. . .]. I am no doubt like every other man [. . .]. At the same time I am able to assure you that I am a strictly respectable person. [...] I have only followed, faintly, and in my unconscious desires—Edward Ashburnham. (GS 151)

Through Ashburnham and Jevons, Dowell and Furnival can reinvent themselves and design a very respectable or very reasonable (yet probably very fake) self-portrait. Portraying (or pretending to portray, or partially portraying) the other enables the narrators to fictionalise themselves and experience a specific type of alterity, not via the other characters, but rather via this new version of themselves, thereby producing a very particular form of narrative alterity. Similarly, what does ‘following the lines of Edward’ mean, if not (perhaps) a metafictional reminder that Dowell’s perception of Ashburnham is a fictional construct and that he is also reconstructing himself in a very biased, subjective way? As Guillaume Cingal suggests, Ford’s modernism challenges one of the classical *topoi* of *Doppelgänger* literature, with the survivor haunting and preying upon the memory of Ashburnham.<sup>16</sup> In becoming a fainter version of the dead hero, Dowell is thus turning into a fictional creation of his own.

Such narrated portraiture, especially with their focus on limitations, hesitations and gaps, thus also imply partial and reflexive self-portraits and create a specific type of hybridity that can be considered as an alternative experimentation with the modernist discourses on the self. Indeed, recent modernist studies have reinvestigated the modernist ‘biographical quest’ that aimed at representing the fragmented individuality as well as the complexity and ambiguity of identity writing.<sup>17</sup> In her chapter on ‘the development of the taste for [factual and fictional] biographies’ in the modernist era (Marcus 129), Laura Marcus analyses the ‘new equality between biographer and subject’ that transpires from Lytton Strachey’s *Eminent Victorians* (126). Her

---

16. Guillaume CINGAL, ‘Un reste autre part’, in *L’autre*, eds Dominique Daniel and Michel Naumann (Tours : Presses Universitaires de Tours, 2006) 170.

17. See for example Laura MARCUS, *Dreams of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014) 142; Maria DIBATTISTA and Emily ONDINE WHITMANN (eds), *Modernism and Autobiography* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2014); Victoria GORDON, *Identity-Construction and Development in the Modernist Bildungsroman*, PhD thesis submitted at Lesley University, 2016, digitalcommons.lesley.edu/clas\_theses/3, accessed 5 July, 2019.

remarks on the characteristics of the 'new biographies' could very well be applied to Ford's and Sinclair's novels that represent a subtle interplay between the narrating self and the narrated other thereby forming a new type of hybrid narration that appealingly complicates the fictional biographical act. The instability and subjective dimension of the narration that depicts the life of another character—be it fictional or historical—seem to be the key tenets of both the new biographies of the modernist period and of Ford and Sinclair's experiments with unreliable narrating selves. If the very structure of *Tasker Jevons* (Book I: My Book; Book II: Her Book; Book III: His Book) suggests that Furnival needs to take a detour via other points of view to try to better account for Jevons's specificities, there is no clear change of focalisation in the three books. Even if Books II and III somehow seem to pay more attention to Viola and Jevons respectively, both books still exclusively convey Furnival's point of view and perspective: things always boil down to the story of his complex relationship with Jevons. We should also note that the story is still being told more or less chronologically, which might be yet another reminder of Furnival's conventional approach to narratives, as opposed to Jevons' more ambitious, experimental genius. The very structure of the narrative thus harks back to Furnival's limited personality. Just like *The Good Soldier*, *Tasker Jevons* is not just a portrait: both novels are also self-explorations that portray the narrators' perplexing responses to characters that are 'distinct from, different from or opposite to themselves', to quote the first definition of "other" from the *Oxford English Dictionary*.<sup>18</sup> Sinclair's three-book structure and its aborted confrontation of perspectives or points of view are also in line with the second definition of 'Other' in the *Oxford English Dictionary*: 'Alternative of two (the other side of the street)'—a dichotomy that paradoxically emphasises the numerous links and possible relationships between the self and the other. Both novels seem to share a similar approach: they both focus simultaneously on these eponymous others and on their onlookers while representing the context and background, that is, the way the self and the others interact and influence one another. Dowell is indeed prompted to ask 'What about myself?' (GS 15), as a conclusion to his first description of Edward Ashburnham, betraying his underlying self-centred motives that prevent him from recounting,

---

18. *Oxford Dictionary of English* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1958) 1258.



let alone experiencing friendship and the long-lasting 'deepening' bonds that could be expected from such an enduring relationship.<sup>19</sup>

*The Good Soldier* and *Tasker Jevons* explore the intricacy, complexity and instability of the narrators' links to the other characters, but the fictional medium adds another layer of alterity through the stance of the reader. Indeed, another interesting common point is that the stories are told to someone, a 'silent listener' (*GS* 17 and 'On Impressionism' 269) or a reader, who becomes an additional inherent other in the novel's configuration. The presence of an anonymous third party might indeed function as a 'sympathetic soul opposite [Dowell]' (15) to whom he could honestly confess, but social psychology has also demonstrated that anonymous others, witnesses or an audience, can also provide a context for justifying or reinforcing pretence and self-staging.<sup>20</sup> This fascinating structural ambiguity is also very clear in the opening page of *Tasker Jevons*, in which Furnival justifies his telling Jevons's story:

Of course this story can't be published as it stands just yet. [. . .]

I'm not forgetting that I *have* published the end of it already. But only in the way of business; [. . .] it was all part of my Special Correspondent's job. [. . .]

What I wrote then doesn't count. I had to tell what I saw just after I had seen it. I had to take it as I saw it, a fragment snapped off from the rest of him, and dated October 11th, 1914, as if it didn't belong to him; as if he were only another splendid instance. [. . .]

Told like that it didn't amount to much.

This is the real telling. (*TJ* 3–4)<sup>21</sup>

Like Dowell at the beginning of *The Good Soldier* (*GS* 5), Furnival introduces the story of Jevons as a reflexive piece of writing. Yet, his

---

19. See for instance Matyas SZALAY, 'Spiritual Friendship and the Foundations of Political Community' and Elsa GODART, 'Je est un autre: Ontologie et éthique', *L'Invention de l'autre*, eds Joanna NOWICKI and Czesław POREBSKI (Paris: Sandre, 2008) 51–85.

20. See for instance Allen EDWARDS, 'The relationship between the judged desirability of a trait and the probability that the trait will be endorsed.' *Journal of Applied Psychology* 37 (1953): 90–93. David Trotter also comments on Dowell's unconvincing and 'eerily abstract' silent listener who 'cannot hope to represent consensus of any kind'. David TROTTER, 'The Modernist Novel', *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, ed. Michael LEVENSON (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999) 69–98 (72).

21. Italics in the original.

aim is very clear: to make us see beyond Jevons's 'splendid' reputation<sup>22</sup> and 'to show [us] the man he was' (*TJ* 336). Yet, despite the negative undertone, Furnival's interest in Jevons and his insistence on the need for a longer story (more than 'a fragment' or a 'snap[shot]') do make Jevons appear as a complex being, a perplexing other, who first resisted everyone's immediate comprehension. Like Dowell's claims of naivety and his sometimes mildly convincing praises of Ashburnham, Furnival's story somehow escapes the initial purpose and becomes another type of creation.

If Furnival stresses Jevons's otherness, while repeatedly criticising it, Dowell often opts for a subtle denial of Ashburnham's alterity. For example, when Dowell declares that Ashburnham is 'just a normal man and very much of a sentimentalist' and that he is 'not a pathological case' (*GS* 102), he deliberately attempts to erase Ashburnham's attractive specificities and potential significance or appeal. If Sinclair's novel also insists on the perplexity that can be aroused by radical otherness, *The Good Soldier* ambiguously shows, with and despite Dowell, the contradictory experience of trying to depict or understand an individual. This is fairly explicit when Dowell remarks: 'my wife and I knew Captain Ashburnham as well as it was possible to know anybody, and yet, in another sense, we knew nothing at all about them' (*GS* 9). Thus, both novels integrate the inherent mechanisms of alterity differently: Sinclair's text represents Jevons's absolute alterity, a fascinating, yet potentially unsolvable enigma while *The Good Soldier* explores the elusive quality of alterity. Contrastively, Tasker Jevons is the epitome of otherness: Furnival singles him out and attempts to scrutinise him from the outside, as if he had aimed to solve an enigmatic case study. Yet, Furnival's ambiguous attempt at telling Jevons' 'real Story' is a failure, because the narrator lacks the necessary skills, or the 'impersonal kindness' that Sinclair has advocated elsewhere,<sup>23</sup> or, like Dowell because of his constant returns to himself, to his own identity and self-perceptions.

With Dowell and Furnival, both novels also point at the difficulty of seizing what is 'not the same' (Attridge 22) in others as a means for involving their readers. In terms of reception, since an imaginary reader is being addressed in both novels, every actual reader

---

22. The adjective 'splendid' is used four times in the novel to describe Jevons's endeavours or his effects on other characters.

23. In her tribute to H. M. Gwatkin, Sinclair wrote: 'I shall never forget his kindness. It has a peculiar, searching, impersonal quality, he was like a keen-sighted physician diagnosing a case', Box 24, folder 456, Kislak Center [unpublished].



potentially plays a part in this programmatic aesthetic of uncertainty. However, this part profoundly differs in both novels. *The Good Soldier* relies on a more or less salient, incredibly dense and fluctuating, yet potentially understandable alterity as an inherent part of the human condition (the other is different, yet 'so near', to quote Dowell) while in Sinclair, the altogether mysterious, exceptional, almost symptomatic other is the novel's main focus, eliciting, paradoxically, a sense of certainty. By contrast, Julian Barnes underlined the open-ended 'towering either/ors'<sup>24</sup> in *The Good Soldier*, suggesting for instance that Leonora is either a martyr or a destroyer. Contrastingly, *Tasker Jevons* stages the irreducible specificity of a profoundly other character, a sublime exception whose alterity can barely be grasped by anyone. Jevons 'stands out' (as it is repeated six times in the novel), he cannot adapt to other characters and his self-absorption is depicted as yet another example of his completely alien behaviour. Comparatively, in Ford's novel, all characters display some degree of social skills and all aim at developing relations with other characters. *The Good Soldier* stages the wide-ranging and dialogic uncertainty of a group of characters who waver between two poles or combine positions on the spectrum of alterity.

### **'The craving for identity': Fantasy, identification, fiction**

Despite their diverging depictions of the others, both novels articulate alterity with fantasy and fiction. Indeed, since both narrators hold a restrictive view of alterity, neither can really comprehend or experience it: for them, the other still remains an appealing object of longing, fantasy and idealisation. As suggested in the previous section, Ford seems at times to mock the very concept of otherness through Dowell's supposed blindness, while Sinclair depicts the other as intrinsically unknowable. Of course, Ford's approach does not only include humorous distance, and the book is formidable in the sense that it is almost impossible to develop a general discourse for fear of missing out on significant exceptions, ambiguous counter-examples, or open-ended phrases. Similarly, Sinclair at times also gives counter-examples in which 'the other' and the self are actually completely

---

24. Julian BARNES, 'Preface' *The Good Soldier*, ed. François GALLIX (Paris: Ellipses, 2005) 11–15.

at one, thereby challenging the very notion of otherness. In Furnival, a clearly inferior or limited character, the idealisation of Jevons as the ultimate other is stressed by the contrasting, symbiotic relation between Jevons and his wife, Viola. Their respective nursing and caring for one another are a far cry from the fake diseases in *The Good Soldier*. Through their afflictions (her pneumonia and his war injury), Jevons and Viola epitomise an idealised form of love, care, and empathy that is both completely alien and fantasmatic for Walter Furnival. By contrast, as Elizabeth Brunton explains, the main consequence of Florence's and Edward's feigned 'heart conditions' is their extra-marital affairs and a subsequent elaborate game of pretence.<sup>25</sup> In parallel, the symmetrical portraits of Viola and Jevons have little to do with the ill-matched couples in *The Good Soldier*, except that they provide an illustration of what Dowell calls 'the craving for identity':

I don't mean to say that any great passion can exist without a desire for consummation. [. . .] But the real fierceness of desire, the real heat of a passion long continued and withering up the soul of a man is the craving for identity with the woman that he loves. He desires to see with the same eyes, to touch with the same sense of touch, to hear with the same ears, to lose his identity, to be enveloped, to be supported. [. . .] here is no man who loves a woman that does not desire to come to her for the renewal of his courage [. . .]. (GS 79)

As very often with Ford, this passage is deeply ambiguous. For Arthur Mizener, this passage 'is not intended as ironic exposure [. . .] but is what Ford thought true'.<sup>26</sup> Dowell's voiced ideal, to lose oneself in the identity of the woman might indeed evoke the original concept of the death drive as a core component of mutual love and attraction, initially developed by Sabina Spielrein.<sup>27</sup> 'To see with the same eyes' and 'to lose [one's] identity' imply a fusion of points of view that goes beyond the failed confrontations of perspectives of Walter Furnival. The physical proximity that is rendered by Dowell's reflections has more to do with a decentring intimacy and suggests that the self and the other can indeed escape the self-centred postures adopted by both

25. Elizabeth BRUNTON, 'Affairs of the Heart: Illness and Gender Subversion in *The Good Soldier*', *Ford Madox Ford's The Good Soldier*, eds Max SAUNDERS and Sara HASLAM (Brill: Leiden, 2015) 149–164.

26. Arthur MIZENER, *A Biography of Ford Madox Ford* (London: Bodley Head, 1971) 259.

27. 'Without destruction, coming into being is impossible' (182). Sabina SPIELREIN, 'Destruction as a Cause of Coming into Being' (1912), *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 39 (1994) 155–186. Freud reworked the original concept in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920).

narrators. As we shall see in the final section, female characters in both novels do emerge as very particular others.

Interestingly, other ‘craving[s]’ for sameness can be found elsewhere in *The Good Soldier*:

For I can’t conceal from myself the fact that I loved Edward Ashburnham—and that I love him because he was just myself. If I had had the courage and virility and possibly also the physique of Edward Ashburnham I should, I fancy, have done much what he did. He seems to me like a large elder brother who took me out on several excursions and did many dashing things whilst I just watched him [. . .] from a distance. And, you see, I am just as much of a sentimentalist as he was. (GS 161)

Similar claims are repeated throughout the novel: ‘We were four people with the same tastes, with the same desires’ (GS 12). These statements are often linked to recurring fantasy of a collective ‘we’ (just as Furnival the somewhat renowned journalist constantly assimilates his talent to the impressive literary genius of Jevons). What is at stake in Dowell and Furnival’s inclinations may be what social psychologist Henri Tajfel called the group identification theory, which holds that one’s identification with a group is an important compound of identity formation.<sup>28</sup> In other words, the way individuals define or consider other people shapes their identity and self-representations. Yet, Furnival and Dowell sometimes reverse this mechanism or at least take a shortcut, as they often fail to make any space for the others’ points of view, thereby denying the very concept of alterity or otherness. Both novels indeed suggest that the narrators’ focus is their own representations and narrated identity and that their discourses are a combination of idealisation, and identification, but also self-absorption.

Moreover, one cannot but notice that Dowell’s ‘craving for identity’ is not exactly true to his behaviour (his courtship of Florence has indeed little to do with this idealised fusion of identities). The phrase ‘to come to her for the renewal of his courage’, along with the word ‘calculation’,<sup>29</sup> also conveys a form of utilitarian seduction and

---

28. Henri TAJFEL, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1981).

29. Besides Poole’s fascinating analysis of Dowell’s ‘economic thought-process’, we could also compare the use of the term ‘calculation’ to Jevons’ ‘calculated scheme’ (24) to seduce (the already seduced) Viola. Interestingly, the term appears six times to describe either Jevons’ or Viola’s appraisal of various situations. Roger POOLE, ‘The Unknown Ford Madox Ford’, *Ford Madox Ford’s Modernity*, eds Robert HAMPSON and Max SAUNDERS (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003) 124.

might thus confirm John Meixner's claim that: 'In Dowell, something of the common state of humanity is missing, a lack reflected in the responses of other characters'.<sup>30</sup>

## 'A desire for communicativeness': Unreliability and the politics of alterity

In this final section, I would like to explore Meixner's claim about what is missing in Dowell (and in Sinclair's *Furnival*). What both lack, this 'something of the common state of humanity', could indeed be described as a capacity for really or honestly exploring and experiencing alterity, which makes them such good unreliable narrators. Cognitive and clinical psychology refers to the 'Theory of Mind' as the ability to suppose the existence of mental states, such as intentions, feelings, beliefs or emotions, in other people. Blondel explains that the Theory of Mind 'is also what enables us to focus our attention on, and/or predict other people's behaviour'.<sup>31</sup> Dowell and *Furnival* strikingly misattribute mental states to the other characters around them; however, without applying psychopathology studies to fictional characters, I aim at examining the influence of Dowell's and *Furnival*'s errors and contradictions on the construction of narrative identity and alterity in both novels.

Despite their longing for physical contact, for care and for sexuality, both narrators paradoxically share an ambiguous rejection of communication and intimacy that prevents them from embracing otherness. To Leonora, who twice expresses 'a desire for communicativeness' ('But I do blame her for giving way to what was in the end a desire for communicativeness', *GS* 29), Dowell explains he wanted 'to leave the personal note' (*GS* 29), that is not to expose himself and to keep relationships at a very shallow level. This is also obvious in the strange, and yet very Dowellian, comparison of 'intimacy like a minuet' (*GS* 1). This analogy is quite questionable; at least from a

---

30. John MEIXNER, *Ford Madox Ford's novels: A Critical Study* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1962) 158.

31. Marine BLONDEL, 'Theory of Mind' in Laurence MASSE (ed.), *Anglais pour psychologues* (Paris: Dunod, 2011) 97. See also Peter CARRUTHERS (ed.), *Theories of Theories of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996). Katrina FONG, Justin MULLIN, & Raymond MARR, 'What You Read Matters: The Role of Fiction Genre in Predicting Interpersonal Sensitivity', *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 7:4. (September 2016) 370–376. David COMER KIDD and Emanuele CASTANO, 'Reading Literary Fiction Improves Theory of Mind', *Science* 342:6156 (18 Oct 2013) 377–380; Keith OATLEY, 'Fiction: Simulation of Social Worlds', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 20:8 (August 2016) 618–628.

modern point of view as a minuet is virtually the opposite of intimacy, it involves a mechanic set of rules and structures that gives little room to the spontaneity and authenticity of intimacy). A couple of pages later, Dowell adds: 'it wasn't a minuet, it was a prison—a prison full of screaming hysterics' (GS 12), clearly reinforcing the representation of his aversion to close relationships.

More generally, both novels also enact a sense of absolute distance between the narrating selves and the others. It is in these failed or aborted encounters, or in the narrators' silences and carefully restricted communication that we can best see how alterity is an empty concept for both of them. In Dowell, this distance is built on his many digressions, ironic comments and circumvolutions while Furnival's aloofness has as much to do with his limited skills in developing a theory of mind as with his overarching self-centredness. Even if their sense of distance evolves throughout the novel, it consistently relies on a game of pretence or show that prevents them from telling the story they both pretended to aim for. Dowell and Furnival pursue the contradictory aim of telling the story of other characters while having kept these others out of their intimate self. As a result, both narrators seem to have developed a complex politics of distance and alterity, refusing to expose themselves (while detailing the lives of these others through their own subjective prisms) as a means of manipulation. The results in the diegesis is a sense of domination and recognition (which includes concrete, literary and financial power for Furnival, who, as we understand, used his relation with Jevons as material for a successful book). Such an elaborate situation can thus work as a means to involve the reader: manipulation and hidden agendas are omnipresent in both novels, but I would argue that another subtler type of manipulation is at stake in the very narrating act.

*The Good Soldiers* and *Tasker Jevons* seem to draw a parallel between the narrators' blindness or misattributions and their supposed aversion to forming bonds and close relationships. Indeed, the unreliability of Dowell and Furnival also revolves around their biases and preconception, which are sometimes represented as clearly conscious and deliberate strategies, but the narrators' volition is also very unclear in other instances. In terms of reception, this instability might trigger some critical responses or questions in readers.

In addition, the narrators' biases mirror one another. Dowell's possible tactical naivety echoes Furnival's self-staged role as the overly distrustful victim: 'Things, Furny always are different to what you think them. At least they're never half so nasty. [. . .] It was dawning

on me that in this queer business there were details, quite important details that had escaped me' (*TJ* 275). The narrators' biases are also particularly obvious in the way they observe the other characters, reminding us of Lévinas's account of the face-to-face relation ('the face speaks to me and thereby invites me to a relation'<sup>32</sup>), which can be confronted to Dowell's description to Leonora's face and stare:

[Leonora] gave me, suddenly, yet deliberately, one long stare. [. . .] And it was a most remarkable, a most moving glance, as if for a moment a lighthouse had looked at me. I seemed to perceive the swift questions chasing each other through the brain that was behind them. I seemed to hear the brain ask and the eyes answer [. . .]

And, suddenly, into those cold, slightly defiant, almost defensive china blue orbs, there came a warmth, a tenderness, a friendly recognition . . . oh, it was very charming and very touching—and quite mortifying. It was the look of a mother to her son, of a sister to her brother. It implied trust [. . .]. By God, she looked at me as if I were an invalid—as any kind woman may look at a poor chap in a bath chair [. . .]. Why, she would run after me with a rug upon chilly days. (*GS* 29)

An interesting reversal comes into play in this extract: Dowell 'seems' to hear or see a lot of things in Leonora's stare, but he also seems to be missing the point. Instead of the expected guidance (as provided by a lighthouse), what Dowell perceives are things that he already knows: unlike Lévinas's construct, he does not discover anything new or inviting in Leonora's face, and his observations merely confirm details or facts that had previously come to his knowledge.<sup>33</sup> The evolution in the lexis used to describe what Dowell sees in Leonora (along with the repetition of the [ing] suffix and the variation of adverbs: 'very charming and very touching—and quite mortifying') leads to the humorous observation of the last sentence, which, through its comical dimension, does emphasise the narrator's self-centredness and limited openness to alterity. Dowell's comment is also a convincing illustration of Samuel Hynes's remark that 'Dowell is consciously self-deprecating, and thus blocks, as any conscious ironist does, the possibility of being charged with self-delusion'.<sup>34</sup> By contrast, irony is

32. Emmanuel LÉVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso LINGIS (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991) 198.

33. We might also read this extract as an illustration of what psychologist Peter Wason called the Confirmation bias. See for example Bettina CASAD, 'Confirmation Bias', *Encyclopedia of Social Psychology* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing, 2007) 162–163.

34. Samuel HYNES, 'The Epistemology of *The Good Soldier*', *Sewanee Review* 79.2 (Spring 1961) 229.

clearly missing in Furnival's conceited account of Jevons and Viola's first meeting:

She came in, and suddenly I made up my mind that she was beautiful. I hadn't seen it before. I don't know why I saw it now. It [. . .] may have been her effect on him. I may have seen her with his eyes. I don't know—I don't know. I hardly like to think he saw anything in her I hadn't seen first. (*TJ* 25)

In the novel, Furnival has just described Viola as having an 'odd little face' (*TJ* 11),<sup>35</sup> while clearly this is love at first sight for Viola and Jevons. What is staged in this scene is also Furnival's sense of denial and jealousy, which the novel later confirms: 'Well, perhaps I am the very last person [to be entitled to write Jevons' autobiography], he made me the last person by what he did to me' (*TJ* 156). This echoes Furnival's unwitting yet extremely interesting parallel between jealousy and storytelling, which seems to rework Dowell and Ashburnham's predicament: 'Well, that's exactly what he did have. He had my luck, I mean the luck I ought to have had, all the time, from the beginning to the very end. But there is one thing he can't take from me, and that is the telling of this story' (*TJ* 3). Furnival's speech aims to convey that failed identification and layers of complex and contradictory relations to others could only be held through the 'telling of [a] story', and that alterity could only be embraced through narration, if not by the narrator himself, at least somehow and more importantly, by his silent listeners. Indeed, Attridge defines the act of reading as 'an attempt to respond to the otherness of the other' and adds that 'reading involves working against the mind's tendency to assimilate the other to the same, attending to that which can barely be heard, registering what is unique about the shaping of language, thought, and feeling in a particular work'. (Attridge 25)

## Conclusion

Ford's and Sinclair's novels thus provide us with an interesting extension of Ricœur's 'narrative identity' that becomes a particularly biased and subjective narration of alterity as the texts revolve around multi-layered and unexpected experiences of alterity for the characters, the narrators, the readers and even the authors. *Tasker*

---

35. See also 'I didn't know then whether it was a pretty face or not. I daresay it was a bit too odd and square for prettiness' (*TJ* 11).



*Jevons* establishes a hierarchy in alterity, with Jevons sublimely and awkwardly standing at the top, while *The Good Soldier* constantly explores alterity in context and thus renders the ever-changing nature of one's relationship to other figures. Through Dowell's and Furnival's diverging unreliability and perplexing limitations, both novels explore alterity differently and even point at the alterity within. The other, which at times includes the narrators themselves, is a never-ending source of fantasy and knowledge, but also of jealousy and mystery that challenges the self's identity, language and representations. As they witness and experiment with fusion, absolute distance, and infinite double-games, both narrators are confronted to a whole range of interactions and relations that they often fail to understand (or pretend to misunderstand). With their respective narrative acts, both narrators become creators of a particular story that somehow escapes their supposed experience and thus serves as a means to elicit critical reading. The overarching open-endedness of both texts and their representations of doubt and uncertainty are revealing indicators of their complex explorations of the manifold changes induced by any experience of alterity.

In both novels, alterity and duality are also deeply ingrained as a continuum, as both texts have had a complicated story with alternative titles. Like the 'Saddest Story' (the original title of Ford's *The Good Soldier*<sup>36</sup>), Sinclair's novel was retitled *The Belfry* for its American edition (as a reference to Jevons's interesting preoccupation for a bell tower in Bruges). In addition, both novels also contain very distinct metafictional details that can also challenge any fixed definition of otherness, for example in the onomastics. Ashburnham comes from *Fordingbridge* while Jevons is referred to as 'a strange animal' (TJ43)—an expression Sinclair used to describe herself in an autobiographical piece.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, in the 1927 dedicatory letter to a new edition of *The Good Soldier*, Ford exclaimed: 'Great heavens, did I write as well as that [. . .] I was astounded at the work I must have put into the construction of the book, at the intricate tangle of references and cross-references'.<sup>38</sup> As Ford's letter suggests, even fiction can become something completely estranged or alien for the artist,

---

36. Martin STANNARD, 'A Note on the Text', in Ford Madox Ford, *The Good Soldier* (1915; New York: Norton, 1995) 179.

37. May SINCLAIR, 'The Miss-May-Sinclair', Literature Boxes/Sinclair, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tildern Foundations, 1907–1908 (unpublished).

38. Quoted in Vincent CHENG, 'A Chronology of *The Good Soldier*', *English Language Notes* 24 (September 1986) 92.



i.e., 'the expression of an [unsuspected alter-]ego' ('On Impressionism' 260), drawing both on the changing self and on the other within the self, and thereby creating what Barthes named the *texte de jouissance* (text of bliss):

The text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts perhaps to the point of a certain boredom<sup>39</sup>), unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language'.<sup>40</sup>

---

39. This might echo Ford's stylistic instruction: 'You will give him passages of dullness' (Ford, 1914, 333).

40. Roland BARTHES, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard MILLER (New York: Hill & Wang, 1975) 34.

Part Five

## **Historical Alterity in Ford's Fiction**



# So Far and Yet so Near: Ford and the Otherness of History

Laurence DAVIES

University of Glasgow

---

Not all people exist in the same Now. They do so externally, by virtue of the fact that they may all be seen today. But that does not mean that they are living at the same time with others.<sup>1</sup>

---

Historical fictions often evoke the alterity of the past, providing spectacles of a time much better or (more often) worse than the author's or reader's present.<sup>2</sup> To use a distinction made by the anthropologist Johannes Fabian, this view is *allochronic*, bringing out the otherness of another time and place, rather than *coeval*, a view which ignores or at least plays down the sense of alterity (Fabian 106–07).<sup>3</sup> A coeval narrative suggests that the past is not really another country and rejects any stance presented *de haut en bas*. Because it poses ethical questions about the 'othering' effects of allochronic thought, Fabian's vision differs from Saussure's less politically inflected model of the synchronic and the diachronic. Fabian's overriding concern is with field work and its academic presentation; by and large, his distinction is ethically close to polar. As applied to historical fiction, however, the contrast between proximity and distance is better taken as a spectrum rather than a moral imperative. For instance, we might compare Pierre Michon's total immersion in the world of early Irish saints and

---

1. Ernst BLOCH, 'Nonsynchronism and the Obligation to Its Dialectics' (1935), Trans. Mark RITTER, *New German Critique* 11 (1977) 22–38. In the original German, nonsynchronism is *Ungleichzeitigkeit*. For Bloch, this nonsynchronicity is a problem in Marxist dialectics. In this essay, I use his observation to cover a broader range of multiplicities and contradictions.

2. The famous opening sentence of Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, written as if from a late eighteenth century perspective, yokes the best with the worst.

3. Johannes FABIAN, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (1983, New York: Columbia UP, 2002).

sinners in *Abbés* (2002; published in English as *Winter Mythologies* and *Abbots*) with Marguerite Yourcenar's multitudinous vision of the early Renaissance *L'Œuvre au noir* (1968; in English, *The Abyss*), whose central character is a sceptic, doctor, philosopher, alchemist, and proto-scientist living both in and out of his own time.

In the second of his *Untimely Meditations* (*Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, 1874), Nietzsche has a great deal to say about uses and abuses of history, much of it relevant to thinking about historical fiction.<sup>4</sup> He recognises three types of historical research and writing. The first is the antiquarian, which in effect subjects the past to distance, pedantry, and isolation; the second is the monumental, which appropriates the past for the exploitation of current biases; the third is the critical, which liberates history from being either frozen in time or pressed into service by particular ideologies.

Antiquarian history itself degenerates from the moment it is no longer animated and inspired by the fresh life of the present. Its piety withers away, the habit of scholarliness continues without it and rotates in egoistic self-satisfaction around its own axis. Then there appears the repulsive spectacle of a blind rage for collecting, a restless raking together of everything that has ever existed. (75)

Ford relishes antiquarianism as much for its comic possibilities and the strangeness and richness of the vocabularies it reveals—those, for example of chivalry, archaic privilege and jurisdiction, uncanny lore, navigation, and ritual.

Although Nietzsche does not expressly say so, monumentalism has two aspects. On one hand it reaches across the ages to find what is noble in the past, but 'will always have to deal in approximations and generalities, in making what is dissimilar look similar' (70). Those who do so wear 'the masquerade costume in which their hatred of the great and powerful of their own age is disguised as satiated admiration for the great and powerful of past ages' (72). On the other hand, there are teleological readings of history that find a continuity between past and present, bringing 'the happiness of knowing that one is not wholly accidental and arbitrary but grown out of a past as its heir, flower and fruit, and that one's existence is thus excused and, indeed, justified'

---

4. Friedrich Wilhelm NIETZSCHE, 'On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life', *Untimely Meditations*, Trans. R. J. Hollingworth. Ed. Daniel Breazale (Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, Cambridge: CUP, 1997) 57–123.

(74).<sup>5</sup> Ford's suspicion of both kinds of monumentalism reveals itself not so much in critique as in a wild and nonsynchronous multiplicity that undermines the single-minded and the over-purposeful.

Nietzsche's third type of historical understanding, the critical, requires an honesty not beholden to any one cause or dogma. 'He [. . .] who wants to throw off this burden at any cost, has need of critical history, that is to say a history that judges and condemns' (72). Yet to pursue this history, 'there is required above all great artistic facility, creative vision, loving absorption in the empirical data, the capacity to imagine the further development of a given type' (93). In 'Creative History and the Historic Sense' (1903–04), Ford imagines the work of a 'Creative Historian':

Let his writing be 'documented' down to the bottom, colloquial of the vernacular, & above all let it be interesting. He may leave his readers to draw their own morals.

It may be objected that such a work of art would be in technique a work of fiction. One replies: 'Why not? For in their really higher manifestations History and Fiction are one: they are documented, tolerant, vivid; their characters live & answer & react one upon another each after his own sort.'<sup>6</sup>

This convergence of critical and creative history does not imply that Ford knew the *Untimely Meditations*.<sup>7</sup> What he does have in common with Nietzsche is a suspicion of orthodox historical writing. Although the overlap is not at all complete, the latter's definitions of antiquarian, monumental, and critical history are helpful in triangulating Ford's historical fiction, which sometimes means that we should trust the tale and not the teller. Despite his antipathy towards 'scientific' history, Ford was adept at finding brilliant period detail as well as creating brilliant flashes of impressionism.<sup>8</sup> In particular, while Nietzsche

---

5. To quote Daniel BREAZEALE's Introduction to the Cambridge *Untimely Meditations*: 'It is not historicism per se to which he objects in this *Meditation*, but rather the unexamined teleology that usually accompanies it'. xv.

6. FORD, *Critical Essays*, eds Max SAUNDERS and Richard STANG (Manchester: Carcanet, 2002) 15.

7. Though the possibility remains. In the early 1890s, Ford spent two summers in Germany, some of this time 'under the care of a quite atheist and strongly Nietzschean Lutheran clergyman'. Max SAUNDERS, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, Volume 1 (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1996) 49–50.

8. For insightful commentaries on Ford's theories and practice as a creative historian, see Sara HASLAM, *Fragmenting Modernism: Ford Madox Ford, the Novel and the Great War* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002) and Seamus O'MALLEY, *Making History New: Modernism and Historical Narrative* (Oxford and New York, 2015). O'Malley also has a

calls for judgement and condemnation, Ford's creative historian 'may leave his readers to draw their own morals'. Yet in Ford's work, an apparent refusal to judge often conceals a sometimes comic, sometimes fiercely ironic vision, which is in itself a form of judgement.

## The 'Half Moon'

*The 'Half Moon'* has an odd beginning. Ford dedicated this *Romance of the Old World and the New* to William A. Bradley, then working in New York as art director and literary adviser at McClure, Phillips & Co.<sup>9</sup> The length of this ten-page dedication is itself unusual for a twentieth-century novel or romance, but in its course, something more unusual still occurs. During the first four and a half pages, Ford thanks Bradley for suggesting the topic of Henry Hudson's voyage in the *Half Moon*, explains his fascination with the psychology of the English 'navigators' who explored the eastern coasts of North America, and makes the connection with the ancient and idiosyncratic town of Rye, a port now some miles from the sea which will figure largely in the narrative.<sup>10</sup> It is the home of Edward Colman, a freeman or baron of the town and the descendant of a clan of ship-masters and builders who for a thousand years have traded, fished, fought, and carried pilgrims. Unlike most of his sluggish and time-bound fellow barons, Colman is enterprising and ingenious, well fitted to cross the Atlantic: 'for, by the time of James I of England men went to the New

---

valuable survey of other work on the topic in his chapter on 'Ford and History' in *The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford*, eds Sara HASLAM, Laura COLOMBINO, and Seamus O'MALLEY (Abingdon, Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2019) 365–79.

9. *The 'Half Moon': A Romance of the Old World and the New* (New York: Doubleday, Page, 1909). After the First World War, Bradley set up a literary agency in Paris whose clients included Stein, Joyce, and Ford.

10. The Cinque Ports, a confederation of ports on the coast of Kent and East Sussex, received a royal charter in 1155, though their distinctive role as defenders of the Saxon Shore was centuries older. In return, the Crown granted a congeries of privileges and exemptions. Joining in 1287, the 'Ancient Town' of Rye was not one of the original five, but replaced New Romney, whose harbour had silted up. The freemen or barons of the ports were entitled to send delegates to Parliament and took part in the coronation ceremonies. Most of the ports, including Rye, were subject to drastic changes of riverbeds and coastline. Ford's *The Cinque Ports: A Historical and Descriptive Record*, a volume of nearly 400 pages was published in Edinburgh by Blackwood in 1900. There are two chapters on Rye and the surrounding villages, 92–122. Ford's quotations from old records, such as the Rye church warden's accounts on 108 reflect his fascination with the details of bygone life, and his talent for archival grazing.



World almost more in search of places where freedom might be found [. . .] They were driven forth from Europe by foolish laws, like that of “owling”; by the desire to be free from superstitions like that of witchcraft’ (vi–vii). (Owling was the capital crime of smuggling raw wool to foreign ports to the detriment of local weavers.) Ford, who is not easily imagined as an admirer of Puritanism, rounds off this paean to European settlement with references to the *Mayflower* and ‘the traditional binding together of your great cities and our very little ones’ (viii). Then, all of a sudden, the Dedication swerves into five and a half pages of exposition. ‘A word as to Edward Colman and Anne Jeal. She stood at her window that looked right down the rocky heights of the town on to the quays and over the grey flats to the sea’.<sup>11</sup> At this point, at least four narrative strands converge: the acknowledgement of Bradley’s suggestion for an enticing historical novel; a brief account of North American history and culture, especially in its Puritan incarnation; Ford’s discovery that Hudson’s second mate was a Colman from Rye;<sup>12</sup> and the opening scenario of the novel itself, with Anne Jeal, the exotic and magically gifted Mayoress of Rye gazing longingly down on Edward as he works on his cogger. This is the first of many *recherché* nautical terms. A *cogger* (more usually, *cog*) was a single-masted vessel with a square-rigged sail and castles fore and aft, widely used in the Baltic and North Sea trades.

This entanglement of fiction and nonfiction, a meeting of text and paratext, is suggestive in several ways. It lays the ground for many other shifts in mode and perspective such as the visionary passages linking Rye, Amsterdam, subarctic waters, and the Hudson River. Such leaps are also chronoclastic, that is to say, they slip unexpectedly and often jarringly from one time to another, or they juxtapose non-synchronous ways of being in the world, as in the contrast between Baconian rationalism and the practice of magic, black or white, or the encounters between Colman, energetic, curious, brimming with ideas, and his fellow jurats and barons of Rye in all their stagnant glory.

---

11. Some of Ford’s other works, notably *Ancient Lights*, *It Was the Nightingale*, and *A Little Less than Gods*, also begin with long dedications, but lack the narrative rupture.

12. In Ford’s telling, John Colman becomes Edward, but historical and fictional characters alike are killed by a Native American bowman on the lower reaches of the Hudson River.

At certain moments, time and space are crumpled together, as they are in the dedication to Bradley.<sup>13</sup>

When, in his amiable way, Ford links the Puritan tradition and the withering of the ‘Dark Ages’ with the shaping of what became the United States, he creates a flattering example of Nietzsche’s monumental history:

But men were beginning to disbelieve—and in consequence men were beginning to look out for truths of all kinds: for new faiths, for new methods of government and, perhaps above all, for lands in which Utopias might be found or might be founded. (vi)

As popular history goes, there is an amount of truth in these claims (for instance about the utopian yearnings) but, so as not to discommodate his dedicatee, a great deal has been swept aside. The extent of Ford’s knowledge of colonial history is unknown, but whether or not he had read about the persecutions of Quakers, Roman Catholics, Baptists, and Shakers in this brave, but hypocritical new world, he knew enough about the merciless treatment of indigenous peoples to write the excruciating scene of the massacre on the Hudson (316–19) wherein, to the horror of Hudson and Colman, the Dutch crew fire a culverin (small cannon) at a flotilla of canoes. This combination of violence and bad excuses recalls the two scenes in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* where the ‘pilgrims’ start shooting at Africans along the riverbank, especially the second when Marlow sounds the riverboat’s whistle ‘because I saw the pilgrims on deck getting out their rifles with an air of anticipating a jolly lark’.<sup>14</sup> For Hudson’s sailors, the massacre is doubly justified, for they regard the men in the canoes as both demons and Catholic converts, and thus fair game twice over. As Hudson weeps,

the Dutchmen jeered at him; for they said that the sign of the Cross was a Papist emblem, that it was fitting to fire always upon [. . .] And they said that they were weary and needed entertainment; and that, compared with these beasts, they were as gods—and the gods slew whom they would, and there was an end of it. (318)

---

13. I have borrowed the word *chronoclasm* from a whimsical story of that name by the science fiction writer John WYNDHAM, published in *The Seeds of Time* (1956), and have added *chronoclastic* to the mix. Some of the most noteworthy chronoclastic slip-pages in Ford’s work occur in *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes*. See Laurence DAVIES, ‘Ford’s Early Fiction and “Those Queer Effects of Real Life”’, *The Edwardian Ford Madox Ford*, eds Laura COLOMBINO and Max SAUNDERS (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013) 185–204, particularly 194–97.

14. Joseph CONRAD, *Youth, Heart of Darkness, The End of the Tether*, ed. Owen KNOWLES (Cambridge: CUP, 2010) 115.

There is no simple or single teleology shaping or governing *The Half Moon*. Edward Colman's is the voice of enterprise, practical knowledge, and thorough preparation, yet for the most part he must be secretive about his goals. He is no egalitarian in the making; imagining his settlement in the New World, he 'was for a king and for bishops and archbishops [. . .] for he said that the common people could not govern. Nay, he would have in the towns mayors and barons and jurats and a lord warden over them all, much such as the Cinque Ports had at home' (308–09).<sup>15</sup> Yet, when still living in Rye, he had chafed at the pettiness of the barons and their inability to deal with any and all sorts of change. In her passion for Colman, Anne Jeal is both tormentor and tormented. In his unceasing desire to find the North-West Passage, Henry Hudson must deal with the Dutch East India Company, whose members hunger after gold and spices and the members of the West India Company, whose minds are set on retaliation for Spain's tyrannical occupation of the Low Countries. King James wishes to be feared, but his body is ungainly and his lapses into Scots are often unintelligible or alarmingly macabre, as when he misreads Anne Jeal's intentions and suggests a programme of entertainment for her stay in London: 'You are a good living maiden, therefore you shall be junketed and made to see many sights. Videlicet, there are my lions here, and sights of armour and men hanging in chains at Tyburn and elsewhere' (218).

Sara Haslam is surely right in saying that in this historical romance Ford 'is not concerned with representing the moral superiority of one form of the religious life over another; he is investigating the magical, poetical and superstitious aspects of Catholicism and, more generally, of women' (Haslam 2002, 135). He is also investigating the strategies for survival of rival groups of antinomian Protestants, who are living in a foreign land, and whose own religious practices are austere. The more radical of the Anabaptists intrigued him, partly because of the extremity of their religious and political ideals and the cruelties inflicted on them by the Catholic bishops, and partly because of his family connections with Münster.<sup>16</sup> Ford also touches on the Anglicans, faced with a new head of the state church who is

---

15. Jurats were magistrates who had taken an oath of office.

16. Indeed he was so much intrigued that he and Conrad had intended to make the whole brutal story the centre of a grand novel with Zolaesque crowd scenes. 'The procedure is for H[ueffer] to read up crabbed German, hunt up information, curious facts and so on, make notes for me' (Conrad to S. S. Pawling, 25 March 1900). Joseph CONRAD, *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Volume 9, eds Laurence DAVIES, Owen KNOWLES, Gene M. MOORE, and J. H. STAPE (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007) 73–75.

dogmatic, superstitious, vain, and already King of a Scotland where Presbyterians and Episcopalians are at loggerheads. Both here and in *The Young Lovell*, alterities are multiple rather than dialectical. Rather than being the harbingers of future success, they reflect the confusions and uncertainties as lived in a then and there.

This multiplicity is partly the result of Ford's love of localism and eccentricity, which manifests itself, for instance, in his presentation of the drunken and untravelled barons of Rye in their meeting hall; partly in his suspicion of triumphalist history; and partly in his delight in voicing quirky characters, such as Belise, the Wise Woman: "I watch round the corner [. . .] I am against Anne Jeal, as white is against black. Nevertheless," and she paused, as if she were weary, "evil is always stronger than good in this earth" (74–75). The performative aspects of Ford's writing come through in the speeches and confidences of Henry Hudson, the close-to-operatic staging of Anne Jeal, and, in a final encounter with her, the sudden and magnificent eloquence of Magdalena Koop.

As signs of alterity, the leaps in time and space in *The 'Half Moon'* are on a different footing from disputations about politics, colonisation, or church government. In this romance, the chronoclastic moments are not only rendered vividly and intensely; they are supernatural. One can make a (somewhat antiquarian) argument to the effect that in the early seventeenth century in Britain, as in Ireland, and Continental Europe, belief in the existence of sorcery and witchcraft was common, and thus to evoke those times and practice is simply appropriate. The astronomer, mathematician, hermetic philosopher, and would-be theurgic magician John Dee won the favour of Queen Elizabeth.<sup>17</sup> Between 1590 and 1592, James VI of Scotland took part in the questioning under torture of alleged witches who were accused among other crimes of trying to drown him in a great storm off the Scottish east coast. In 1604, the year after becoming King James 1 (of England, Scotland, and Ireland), he saw to it that the Westminster Parliament passed a new and stricter Witchcraft Act against communing with familiar spirits. *The 'Half Moon'* is set around 1609, Anne Jeal practices goetic magic, raises storms to imperil Hudson's voyage, and makes wax dolls (or 'poppets') to make life more miserable for Colman. In a semi-comic scene, she also visits the conjurer Doctor

---

17. Theurgic magic summons the help of blessed spirits; goetic magic, the demoniac kind.

Eusebius, a ‘man half charlatan’ but also a believer in ‘great secrets’ (254), who is less than a match for her.

This is not entirely a case, though, of ancient credulity matched against modern scepticism. For example, Reginald Scot, a country gentleman from Kent, published his sceptical *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* in 1584, and he was by no means the only author in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Europe to cast doubt on the reality of witchcraft and the efficacy of magic.<sup>18</sup> Ford, on the other hand, was writing at a time when the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) was carrying out research on telepathy and hauntings, and when stories of ghosts, vampires, witches, and sorcerers were as popular as they had been in the second half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the British publisher of *The ‘Half Moon’*, J. Eveleigh Nash, had already brought out Algernon Blackwood’s *The Empty House and Other Ghost Stories* (1906) and would become a leading purveyor of uncanny fiction. Ford himself published Ella D’Arcy’s ‘From the Chronicles of Hildesheim,’ the story of the seduction of a young monk by a cloud-witch, in the November 1909 number of the *English Review*.<sup>19</sup>

Within the text itself of *The ‘Half Moon’*, some room is set aside for scepticism. Up to a point, the telepathic episodes can be explained as outcomes of illness or obsessive passion. After the great storm off Long Island, Hudson puts Edward’s fainting fit down to a recurrence of ‘Dutch fever’, caused by drinking the foul waters of the Amsterdam canals: ‘and he said that it was a very common thing for men sick of this disease to see visions—and what more natural than that they should see what most they thought of?’ (314). Colman himself first sees then rejects that possibility.

So that it might well be that these were only the creatures of his own imaginings and dreams. But he was certain that he had seen his town of Rye very clearly in the night, the lights climbing up the little hill in a triangle or pyramid.

What’s more, certain scenes of witchery corroborate the eeriness of Anne Jeal’s doings with an intense physicality. Here, for instance, in a cramped chamber in the Tower of London, she exposes the poppet to a roaring fire.

---

18. Scot died in 1599, so did not have to face the wrath of James I, who tried to have every copy of the book destroyed

19. On the final page, the narrator asks: ‘That no witch-woman ever came down into the cloister garden we may hold as fact, but did the boy, day-dreaming, almost hypnotically, translate his dream into action?’ (617). An episode of *A Call* appeared in the same number.

It had melted very suddenly between her fingers, and the head part, which she had held downwards, one whole cheek had run away in a huge drop. This drop lay on the bricks before the hearth, as big as a crown piece, and with little spatters all around it in a circle. (224)

According to Max Saunders, ‘Ford’s “visions” were probably what could be called “eidetic images”; powerfully visual imaginings, such as occur at the intensest moments throughout his writings’ (Saunders I 386). Whether we encounter such blazingly strong passages as representations of transcendental forces or as a transfiguration of material life, their alterity is overwhelming.

## The Young Lovell

*The Young Lovell*<sup>20</sup> is rich in times, chronologies, and durations, or to put the case another way, measured time, itemised time, and felt time.<sup>21</sup> It opens with Paris Lovell, after a night of agonisingly felt time, ending his vigil a moment too soon by getting off his knees. It ends with Lovell entering what one might expect to be the abjection of the hermit’s cell, which instead frees him and his horse Hamewarts (‘Homewards’) to enter a pagan paradise as if imagined by a *quattrocento* artist—Piero di Cosimo, say—a sort of Renaissance Valhalla, under the care of Venus and her women, who anoint the jousting heroes ‘with juices and oils so that all their wounds were healed whether of the horses or the heroes’ (308–09). While the knights take their rest on fragrant couches of flowers, the goddess shows them ‘The cities of the plains [. . .] and Rome and Delphi and Tyre’ (309). It is all a miraculous inversion of the nightmarish ordeal of the beginning, and again, out of ‘normal’ time. In view of his abandonment of Lady

---

20. All references and quotations come from the first British edition: *The Young Lovell* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1913).

21. Here, I have added *chronology* to Henri Bergson’s distinction between *temps* and *durée* (measured or scientific time, and felt or experienced time) first set out in *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (1889), and in English, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1910). A chronology is a system of organising or recording events in time, but not necessarily on a uniform grid. Fictional or autobiographical narratives, for example, are far from uniform. Several Ford scholars have referred to Bergson’s investigations of ‘quantitative’ and ‘qualitative multiplicity’. One example is Andrew FRAYN’s essay ‘This Battle Was Not over: Parade’s End as a Transitional Text in the Development of “Disenchanted” First World War Literature’, *Ford Madox Ford: Literary Networks and Cultural Transformations*, ed. A. GAŚIOREK and D. MOORE (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008) 201–16.

Margaret, and his being walled into his squalid cell, it also comes as an unexpected shock.

In between these, so to speak, bookends, we have penitential time as observed by the Monk Francis (formerly Sir Hugh Ridley), whose penance for accidentally slaying a kinswoman seems to have no end. When enchanted by the White Lady, Lovell enters magical time, which is sheltered from time in the diurnal world.<sup>22</sup> The Monk Francis comforts Lovell, arguing most eloquently that what he has seen in the three months' absence was no wicked temptress but an angel: "So it may well be that that angel [. . .] having no knowledge of time and none either of the necessity of mankind for shelter or food [. . .] this fair, pretty angel in staying ninety days before you may have thought it was but the space of a minute." (134). Both Paris Lovell and John Sherwood, Bishop Palatine of Durham, have spent time in *quattrocento* Italy (in Sherwood's case, a considerable extent of time, enough to become familiar with Machiavellian thought), and the experience dwells brightly in their memories. There is the recurrent time of rituals celebrated in the monastery at Belford and at Durham cathedral. Furthermore, there is also the recurrent time of paying tithes, rents, and easements, sometimes spelled out in picturesque detail (118–19).

The historical background of this romance is a tangle of nonsynchronous thought and partisanship. It begins less than a year after Henry Tudor claimed the throne of England as victor of the Battle of Bosworth Field, 22 August 1485, thus ending the Wars of the Roses, but by no means ending the power of the territorial magnates, especially in the North. The intrigues and rivalries of these magnates play a large part in *The Young Lovell*, as do the powerful but not always single-minded interests of the church at a time when senior clerics of the North often wore armour.<sup>23</sup> As if these struggles were not enough, there was almost continuous fighting with the 'false Scots' of

---

22. Some literary examples accessible in the late nineteenth century might include 'Lanval', one of the *lais* of the twelfth century poet Marie de France, where a fairy woman offers the knight eternal life, and takes him away on her horse to Avalon; in the 'second branch' of the Welsh *Mabinogion*, 'Branwen ferch Llŷr' ('Branwen, daughter of Llŷr'), seven survivors of a war with the Irish spend seven years serenaded by birds in one castle and eighty in another, feasting and forgetting all sadness. For further analogues, see HASLAM 158–59 and Paul SKINNER, "'Pretty Big and Serious": Ford Madox Ford and *The Young Lovell*', *The Edwardian Ford Madox Ford*, eds Laura COLOMBINO and Max SAUNDERS (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013) 237–55, particularly 240–43.

23. See for instance the account of the Bishop Palatine's extensive armoury (184–86). A Bishop Palatine holds princely rank, and thus the Bishop of Durham exercised secular as well religious power over his diocese.



the kingdom to the North; some of it provoked by European power politics, some by the mutual dislike of the two kingdoms,<sup>24</sup> and some by reivers from districts north and south of the border and from the debatable lands where the line of the border had never been fixed—part-time brigands who seized any opportunity to steal cattle and any portable goods.<sup>25</sup> In other words, conditions in County Durham and even more in Northumberland were close to a war of all against all, not least at sporting events. ‘For the men of the North parts of those days were great fighters and would seldom miss an opportunity an opportunity of a tulzie,<sup>26</sup> unless there was a great football match to go to, and even for that generally they would contrive to leave off a fight for the time being, to resume it after the game was over’ (275).

Throughout *The Young Lovell*, Ford plays off the fierce conflicts, compromises and practicalities of the day against the imperatives of chivalry, religion, and formal courtesy. Here are Brother Francis’s thoughts about his friend’s passionate dedication:

For the Young Lovell had talked always of high, fine and stainless chivalry, of the Mother of God as the Mystic Rose, of the Tower of Ivory, and of the dish that had the most holy blood of God. Of none of these things had Sir Hugh Ridley that was afterwards the monk Francis, heard tell, when he had been a knight of the world. (128)

Paris Lovell has gone to extremes in a society where compromise, evasions, ingenuity, cunning, and practicality flourish.<sup>27</sup>

Lady Margaret of the Wear is a fine example of a woman adept at bending the rules of ladylike decorum. When she first appears at the betrothal ceremony, she wears ‘a gown made of twenty-six yards of

---

24. There are several references to Paris Lovell’s intrepidity at the Battle of Kenchie’s Burn, farther into Scotland than war parties usually went.

25. Ford uses the spelling *riever* throughout. To cover any suspicion that Lovell had been away with ‘the bonny witch-wives’ during his absence, Elizabeth Campstone offers to say that he had been held to ransom by the reiver Gib Elliott.

26. Scots (and probably Northumbrian) for a brawl.

27. There are some hints, however, that he eased his standards a little while in Italy studying ‘sundry ways of dalliance’ (24). There was a resonance to self-sacrificing chivalry in Ford’s own lifetime. The mediaeval pageant at Earls Court in West London described by SKINNER (249–50) was only one of many nineteenth and early twentieth celebrations of the cult of chivalry. Mark GIROUARD’s *Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1981), offers a rich exploration of this phenomenon, starting with the Eglinton Tournament in 1839, a reenactment inspired in part by *Ivanhoe*. This revivalism, though, was far from being only an excuse to dress up. The figure of the knight *sans peur et sans reproche* (traditionally associated with the chevalier Bayard) figured again and again in the iconography of mourning and attendant angels, especially mourning for soldiers lost in colonial and other wars.



patterned damask from the city of Bruges', but when she discovers the imposture of Decies of the South, she punches him in the face (43). Later, when the crooked lawyer Master Stone tries to persuade her to accept the Decies, she retorts: "I make nothing out of all this talk. But I think I will not marry with a great toad that hath a weasel gnawing at his vitals" (71). In the virtuoso scene at Warkworth Castle, she is more than a match for the Earl of Northumberland; she disparages the Percies as lower in standing than other families in the North, he addresses her as "Margaret Eure and my gentle cousin", and her response is to call him "a very filthy knave, and so thou knowest and so know all thy neighbours" (143–44). A few moments later, she shows her mastery of the ironic curtsey (146). To cap it all, she then effects a cunningly-devised getaway for her and her retainers (146–51).

Just as he delights in the stratagems of siegecraft, Ford has plenty to say about fighting as a business. Impoverished by their service in the Wars of the Roses, older knights were sceptical about the prospects for attacking Castle Lovell. They 'were rather bitter, cynical, and perforce mercenary, than loyal, pious, and chivalric.' Outfitting their sons would be costly, armour and silks would soon be damaged, and there might be demands for ransom. If the castle were taken, there would be no chance of a profitable sacking. 'They would have nothing for it but praise, renown, the love of God, and the approval of Holy Church, as well as some plenary indulgences. But these were all things that filled no bellies and brought no cattle home' (277–78). Young Lovell himself has a gift for logistics, so that 'he had thought less of the lady of the doves' (212–13). He commandeers beasts on the hoof, orders the digging of brine pits, makes attractive offers to the armourers, and returns from the town of Morpeth with 'nearly all that he need of harness, pikes, bows, pack-horses [. . .] but only one hundred and twenty barrels of arrows, three sakers and a little gunpowder' (212).<sup>28</sup>

In the paragraph about knightly fathers and sons just quoted, are three devastating and incriminating sentences among the venal complaints about the poor returns from raiding, delivered with a sardonic irony that recalls Conrad:

Most fathers would have gladly let their sons ride into France; such an enterprise as that of the Black Prince was still talked of. In that chevauchee he had ridden through France from north to south, from

---

28. A saker was a long-barrelled gun with a smaller bore than a culverin.

Calais to Marseilles, and had sacked more than six hundred towns and slain more than sixty thousand men, meeting with very little resistance. That had been a very chivalrous, gentle, joyous, and splendid raid. (277)

Edward, the Black Prince, was the eldest son of Edward III, and carried out these serial atrocities in 1355–1356, during the Hundred Years War. Despite its use by Ford, *chevauchée* has yet to appear in the Oxford English Dictionary, and Robert translates it as *cavalcade*. In a fourteenth-century context, it meant a series of raids carried out by small squadrons of light horsemen, destroying crops, buildings, and people. Ford's figures are doubtless exaggerated, and the technique was sometimes used by Spaniards, Scots, and Frenchmen, but in any case, the practice tests the idea of chivalry almost to destruction. It has often been argued that Ford looked fondly on Mediaeval values. See, for instance, Green, Robert. *Ford Madox Ford: Prose and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981. 40–41. Not quite, and not always. That Tietjens is a gentleman of high principles with an impulse towards self-abnegation does not mean that the feudal world abounded with such men. It's noteworthy that in Part II, Chapter III of *Provence: From Minstrels to the Machine*, Ford takes the side of the Albigensians against the crusaders from the north who stamped out their religion and their culture. This passage from *The Young Lovell* is a choice example of what Nietzsche meant by critical history.

## The Portrait

*The Portrait* also shows Ford's indignation about cruelty and false consciousness, but not immediately.<sup>29</sup> For roughly the first 180 pages of the volume, the agenda concerns rich people behaving badly: conspicuous consumption, foppishness, reckless gambling, snobbery, greed, and a myriad grumpy hangovers.<sup>30</sup> The period is probably the 1730s, but whether by accident or design, Ford's chronology is blurred. At this remove, it is hard to know whether he was muddling his history or setting up an historical joke or two.<sup>31</sup> Here is a sample;

29. *The Portrait* (London: Methuen, 1910).

30. Gene M. MOORE's fine essay on *The Portrait* has much to say about its visual aspects, especially the affected mannerisms of the *beau monde*: 'Ford's Chef d'Œuvre Inconnu', *Ford Madox Ford and Visual Culture*, ed. Laura COLOMBINO (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2009) 109–18.

31. Some passing comments on the book assume that the setting is the Regency period (1811–1820), another time of spectacular indulgence by wealthy men. Everything from

Jack Williamson, of the lesser squirearchy, is a 'bully' or drinking crony of Sir John, a baronet:

Sir John, reeling to the rear, sat down upon the back of Mr Williamson, who was crawling hindways towards the door. He had been put to so many more disagreeable usages, that merely to afford a seat to his patron seemed to him comparatively agreeable, and so long as he could, he supported the burden. [. . .] Mr Williamson's arms and then his thighs gave way beneath him, and Sir John subsided on to the ground like a general whose horse is killed beneath him. (34)

The portrait itself is 'Celia in Her Arbour', a painting of a mysterious young woman which is the talk of the town. The senior Bettsworth brother wagers £20,000 that he can find 'Cecilia' and marry her within six months.<sup>32</sup>

In search of the phantom woman, the brothers travel to Ashford in Kent. The local people are on edge, having listened to false rumours about there being 20,000 French soldiers encamped on Romney Marsh and eager to attack the town. Their leader is the Duke of Berwick, illegitimate son of James II, who had a distinguished military record in the French army. That the Duke left England in 1688, has never been back, and is now elderly, escapes the attention of the panic-stricken townsfolk. Mr Justice Bestwell stirs the pot. Like so many other characters in this work, his appearance is grotesque and his opinions rampantly chauvinistic.

Mr Bestwell suddenly drew his sword, which was a great deal too large for him.

'Ho! he exclaimed, 'shall we be threatened? Ho! we are swordsmen, too! Ho! I am a match for six Papists and French frogs!' And at each

---

the latest fashions to political and artistic allusions, however, suggests a much earlier date. After trying to drive his carriage up the steps of St Paul's Cathedral, the uncle of the Bettsworth brothers (principal characters in the narrative), is banished from London by William III, who died in 1702; the ban has lasted thirty years. In an early chapter, the rakehell and future Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir Francis Dashwood makes an appearance at the Dilettanti Society, which started its wildly inebriated career in 1732. In the 1730s, Hogarth published *A Rake's Progress*, one of the visual influences on Ford's book. (There are also some echoes of Restoration drama, clearly modelled on Sir John Brute in Vanbrugh's *The Provok'd Wife*, 1697). MOORE makes a good case, though, for 1744–45, citing allusions to the Battle of Dettingen, 1743 (the last time a British king appeared at the head of his army). As Moore says, 'the text is unstable' (212–13).

32. Following the protocols of the landed gentry, the elder brother's name is not given; the same protocols applied to a family's eldest unmarried daughter: for example, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane is called Miss Bennet.

ejaculation he leapt into the air, fainted towards Mr Rowland's face, and uttered a shrill and ape-like cry of rage. (195)

But soon, caricature gives way to realistic suffering. Mistaken for the Duke of Berwick, Mr Bettesworth is shackled and marched off to a round tower which serves as the town jail. 'The floor was ankle deep in stinking straw. A lantern hung from the green and slimy wall, and gave out an odour of rancid oil' (203). His cell-mates are a prostitute who has just been whipped, an ancient woman accused of gathering a few sticks for a fire, and Mr Williams, a Methodist minister under suspicion of preaching without a licence.

"In the name of God, what place is this?" Mr. Bettesworth asked again.

"This is England—a Christian land", the Methodist said with a deep irony.

"But, sir, Mr. Bettesworth said, "is it possible that they should incarcerate so many?" [. . .]

"God help me, we are but a very small consignment [. . .] For it is usual to have ten or twelve wretches in this hole." (204)

After Mr Bettesworth and the minister escape, Bettesworth does for a while take a legalistic interest in the other prisoners, but his conversion to proper justice and good causes is far from complete. He tells his younger brother: "I myself, since I am of the most account, was the most unfairly handled" (228). His amour propre has suffered, but not too much. The Methodist has a wider vision, and readers may well be jolted by the switch first from absurdity and arrogance to stark cruelty then back again to the posturings of the wealthy and their followers. Those scenes in Ashford jail are hard to forget, as they stand out from the surrounding episodes of bluster, frivolity, and temporal confusion like fragments of late nineteenth century realism in a hurly-burly of Menippean satire.

## Conclusion

All three of the romances discussed here have their shock effects, their disorienting manoeuvres, their unanticipated leaps, their glimpses of multiple alterities and contradictions. Rather than see each one of them as a homogeneous representation of a particular era, it is better to recognise that each one of them contains multitudes.

The *Fifth Queen* trilogy shares some of these elements.<sup>33</sup> The volumes lack the caricatural aspects of *The Portrait*, and the supernaturalism of *The 'Half Moon'* and *The Young Lovell*, but they offer several of those moments when Ford's narration becomes joltingly strange. For instance, in *Privy Seal* Katharine Howard is granted an audience with Anne of Cleves:

The silence and the bright light of the sun swathed these two women's figures, so that Katharine seemed to hear the flutter against the window-glass of a brown butterfly that, having sheltered in the hall all winter, now sought to take a part in the new brightness of the world. Katharine kept her knees, her eyes upon the floor; the Queen, motionless and soft, let her eyes rest upon Katharine's hood. [. . .] The butterfly sought another window; the Queen spoke at last. (367)

Here and elsewhere in Ford's fiction, the intensity of sight and sound and the shifts in scale come close to the cultural critic Mark Fisher's anatomy of the eerie and the weird. Fisher sees them as 'to do with a fascination for the outside, for that which lies beyond standard perception, cognition and experience. This fascination usually involves a certain apprehension, perhaps even dread'.<sup>34</sup>

Other features in common with the three romances include ironic passages both horrific and absurd, sceptical portraits of historical characters such as Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop and martyr to be, multivalent renderings of politics and religion, and a sense that, as Ernst Bloch puts it, 'Not all people exist in the same Now' (22). Lincolnshire in 2.ii. of *The Fifth Queen Crowned* appears as a county violent and benighted, quite different from the 'Now' of Tudor London. On an afternoon in *Privy Seal* Hampton Court is deserted because some of the lords are in the forest hunting with the King, dressed in green as 'jolly Englishmen', and others have ridden in their best apparel to escort the ladies returning from a nearby palace, while the Privy Council is away on national and sacred business. They 'were gone to sit in the scaffold to see the burning of the friar that had denied the King's supremacy of the Church and the burning of the six Protestants that had denied the presence of Christ's body in the Sacrament' (373). The religious struggles depicted throughout involve three rather than two stances: Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Anglican, each of which

---

33. *The Fifth Queen* (London: Penguin, 1999).

34. Mark FISHER, *The Weird and the Eerie* (London: Repeater Books, 2016) 8. While influenced by Derrida's *hantologie*, Fisher's framing of the uncanny in artistic praxis is notably original.

is entwined with English and Continental political intrigues. As Katharine Howard's cousin Throckmorton puts it: 'Here is a King that fights with a world that is part good, part evil'. When Katharine invokes the Spartans' struggle against the Persian empire, he rejoins: 'Why, dear heart, those were the days of a black and white world; now we are all grey and piebald' (170–71).

Ford's historical fictions are riddled with contradictions, ambiguities, and multiple hostilities, but piebald they are not. They speak to his present: in *The 'Half Moon'*, for example, to Manifest Destiny in the USA and new laws controlling immigration to the UK;<sup>35</sup> or in *The Portrait* the fear of military invasion so frequent in popular fiction of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Europe. They speak of other times with heterodox and disruptive vigour. Their verve and unexpected twists and turns make them both allochronic and coeval. They are iconoclastic too, and wary of master narratives. The multiple teleologies that proliferate in every volume swerve away from the idea of popular—and in Ford's day quite frequently academic—history shaped towards a purposeful outcome, whether of politics, social enlightenment, or one form or another of triumphalist Christianity.<sup>36</sup> Ford was both a creative historian and, in Nietzsche's rigorous terms, a critical one.

---

35. The Aliens Act of 1905, the first of its kind, was aimed at would-be immigrants from Eastern Europe, most of them Jews fleeing persecution within the Pale of Settlement.

36. In British historical fiction of the day, mostly Protestant, but there are also fervently Roman Catholic novels, such as *Come Rack! Come Rope!* by the convert son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Father Hugh Benson (1912).

# Napoleonic Fiction Twinning: Ford Madox Ford's *A Little Less Than Gods* (1928) and Joseph Conrad's *Suspense* (1926)

Georges LETISSIER

University of Nantes

Ford Madox Ford is a historical novelist; *The Fifth Queen*, his Tudor trilogy, has been praised for its visual, pictorial quality. Yet, critics have been much less interested in *A Little Less Than Gods*, which is usually dismissed as a less compelling novel. In this Napoleonic romance, the author shows a genuine concern for an historical Other, as the action is set far from the English soil, in turn on the island of Elba, on French roads, in Paris and ultimately in Le Havre, before being carried over to the American continent. In this sense, it proves a cosmopolitan novel and the exact reflection of Ford's own cosmopolitanism. This multiculturalism is something Ford shared with Joseph Conrad who had left his own Napoleonic novel, aptly titled *Suspense*,<sup>1</sup> unfinished, when he died in 1924. Of course Conrad's predilection for the Napoleonic era is evidenced by such texts as 'The Duel' or *The Rover*, but, according to Ford, it dated back to the time of their literary friendship: 'At one time it was to become a collaboration with another writer [. . .] But a lamented death cut short his story and I considered myself at liberty to take it on myself'.<sup>2</sup> The projected act of dual authorship, which was fated to remain virtual, opens up fascinating perspectives on what might be called deferred, tandem story-writing, which is given a concrete illustration through the two historical novels under study in this paper. It is only once Conrad was no more that Ford set out to pen his own Napoleonic fiction. Max Saunders touched upon this postponed creative intertwining most judiciously, when he

---

1. Joseph CONRAD, *Suspense. A Napoleonic Novel* (London: Dent, 1925). Subsequently referred to in the text as *S*.

2. Ford Madox FORD, 'Dedication', *A Little Less Than Gods* (London: Duckworth, 1928) vi. Subsequently referred to in the text as *LLG*.



remarked: 'Ford often wrote of himself as Conrad's double; here, the elder double's death liberates the younger'.<sup>3</sup>

In literary studies, the notion of influence has almost exclusively been approached diachronically, often following the Bloomian paradigm of 'anxiety'. It is the purpose of this paper to investigate Conrad's and Ford's Napoleonic novels as twin, proxy texts, instancing many parallel figures of doubling. Sibling relations involving incestuous attachments are common to both, as is the inscription of filial relationship. 'So the story is, in effect, a page from intimate history' (*LLG* vii) claims the novelist in his introduction to *A Little Less Than Gods*. Isn't there the idea that this tight intermeshing between intricate family romances (in the psychoanalytical acceptation) and historical romance, makes of these two novels, mutually enriching case studies. In this perspective, they would shed some light on the literary partnership between Conrad and Ford, and make of each of the two writers a sort of *duplex auctor*. A few useful reminders on the literary collaboration between Conrad and Ford will be followed in a second part by a study of doubling as a device characteristic of Ford's historical method. The last part will be dedicated to the incest motif which is a twinning trope for a comparative outlook on both novels, and beyond that affords an insight into a literary obsession shared by the two writers, one that was to prove foundational in their lasting complicity.

## Collaboration, continuation, bifurcation

Initially, Ford and Conrad's collaboration turned on 'Seraphina', a story by Ford that was subsequently expanded into *Romance*, their first jointly authored novel. 'Seraphina', inspired by an essay from Dickens's *All the Year Round*, called 'Cuban Pirates' (Saunders II 112), introduced shady characters, such as gangs of smugglers, and paved the way for the cast of shifty sailors and undercover agents milling around in the port of Genoa, where most of the action in Conrad's *Suspense* unfolds. Similar crisscrossing patterns of a budding dual authorship may be seen in a 'Mother', another story by Ford, also staging smugglers acting in the fateful year of 1815. 1815 was later to prove decisive for the two writers' Napoleonic narratives. Ford chooses a

---

3. Max SAUNDERS, *Ford Madox Ford. A Dual Life. Vol. II: The After-War World* ([1996] Oxford: OUP, 2013) 321.



larger scope by taking into account Napoleon's exile on the island of Elba, which historically covers the period from 4th May 1814 till 28th February, then the Hundred Days' intermission from 20th March 1815 till 8th July 1815, before considering the aftermath of this transitory episode of French history in the third and last section. Conrad's span is far more reduced, concentrating on three days in February, just before the launch of Napoleon's expedition to reconquer France, even if there is no precise indication of the imminence of such an event. The fiction therefore recreates the state of expectancy hovering over Europe awaiting with bated breath the outcome of the Vienna Congress whilst the deposed Emperor is rumoured to be biding his time on his Mediterranean rock. Hence the aptly chosen title of *Suspense*, suspense in more senses than one as is going to be shown in the last part. As in Dino Buzzati's *The Tartar Steppe* not much seems to happen, at least overtly. Ford's romance, for its part, is in the thick of things as it follows Napoleon's move from a close range, though the intermediary of George Feilding, an English lieutenant, freshly returned from the Peninsular War. Feilding, despite his unflinching loyalty to the English Crown, cannot help hero-worshipping Napoleon. This contradictory, dual commitment is in itself illustrative of the ambivalence and paradox defining *homo duplex*, the seminal principle of Fordian psychology. In short, both *Suspense* and *A Little Less Than Gods* complement each other, with the first confined to the outskirts of the action entertaining the sense of an impending, ominous turn of events when the second is caught up in the ineluctable process of history in the making.

The so-called literary friendship between Ford and Conrad implied hard work and dedication: 'we worked together – like two navvies digging at a job of work'.<sup>4</sup> It also provided a unique example of the practicalities of co-writing, with Ford more preoccupied with style and Conrad with a new form for the novel. Ford praised his elder's 'infinitely greater hold of the architectonics of the novel' (Saunders II 113), which may sound extremely laudatory in view of the technical mastery displayed in Ford's own *A Little Less Than Gods*. The collaboration entailed a lot of reading and thinking aloud, so that a loop of double aural and oral exchanges made up the staple of each and every session: 'we had got so used to reading our own works aloud to each

---

4. Ford Madox FORD, *Critical Essays*, Max SAUNDERS and Richard STANG eds (New York: New York UP, 2004) 288.

other that we finally wrote for the purpose of reading aloud the one for the other'.<sup>5</sup>

While such a time-consuming partnership, lasting from 1898 till 1909, proved fruitful as may be attested by the works it produced: *The Inheritors* (1901), *Romance* (1903) and *The Nature of a Crime* (1906), by the time both *Suspense* and *A Little Less Than Gods* came out it had stopped for quite a while. *Suspense*, an unfinished novel, written between November 1921 and July 1923, was not published before 1925. *A Little Less Than Gods* followed in 1928 and there may have been some competition between the two writers since when Ford expressed his intention of writing about Napoleon's return to France after his first abdication, Conrad replied that his own version would not touch upon affairs in France except in a distant way and would close on Napoleon's departure from Elba (Saunders II 614). Conrad would have finished, had he completed his novel, where Ford starts. Yet, because of the change in focus and angle, Ford's romance is hardly a continuation of Conrad's novel, it is more an exfoliation from a collaborative project envisioned as early as 1902. It is also a clear bifurcation from the common track as Ford was to assert his own take on a shared historical context. There is nonetheless bound to remain a whiff of nostalgia in each of the separate works evolved from a past complicity. To Conrad the Mediterranean novel harked back to teenage experiences in Southern Europe harbours, notably Marseille and Genoa. As for Ford, he was likely to have borne in mind the lingering memory of his accomplice, whose spectral presence now stood in for the silent listener he mentions several times in *The Good Soldier*.

## Historical Doubling in *A Little Less Than Gods*

Ford chooses to write history from the wings, as it were, by underscoring events which will later turn out to have left no lingering trace, events that are fated to remain beyond the pale of grand history. The Hundred Days, from 20th March till 8th July 1815, fails to restore Napoleon and is a historical appendix leading nowhere. *A Little Less Than Gods* thus recalls incidents which French historiography has sometimes discarded because they did not easily fit into the nation's grand narrative. For instance, the White Terror, i.e. the Ultra Royal-

---

5. Ford Madox FORD, *Return to Yesterday* ([1931] Manchester: Carcanet, 1999) 191–192.

ists' brutalities in the wake of the second abdication is far less known than the Red Terror. If 'history repeats itself first as tragedy, second as farce',<sup>6</sup> Ford, for his part, blends tragic grandeur with farcical elements to evoke the King of Elba's re-conquest of France. The Eagle's last triumphs prior to the crushing defeat of Waterloo are mentioned together with the somnolent emperor crossing 'his white hands on his generous yellow waistcoat' (*LLG* 108). By juxtaposing the inflationary rhetoric of historical aggrandisement: 'Less than a godhead could hardly inhabit that frame of manhood' (*LLG* 109) with carnivalesque deflation: 'he had always a new fowl spitted and roasted every half hour so that he might eat at any moment of the night or day' (*LLG* 103), Ford anticipates on post-modern historiographic metafiction. For example, Jeanette Winterson in *The Passion* also alludes to Bonaparte's greed for chicken as illustrative of his insatiable, indiscriminate appetite: 'birds in every state of undress; some still cold and slung over hooks, some turning slowly on the spit, but most in wasted piles because the emperor was busy'.<sup>7</sup> Ford, however, does not settle for one definite ideological stance, the parodic over the epic, or the other way round. In this respect, he represents an historical other. This historical other is best defined by the author himself through the trope of the mirror, an eminently Fordian figure. What Ford writes of Napoleon may be transposed on to the reader to explicate the specific, idiosyncratic relation to history which the novel establishes:

The Emperor knew an astonishing amount about England—but it was as if he knew it queerly, not so much wrongly, as with a distortion, as you may see in certain mirrors that broaden you out, diminish you or turn you all askew. . . . (*LLG* 108)

This modified vision of the historical past largely consists in doubling perspectives.

Introducing a double perspective is inherent in the process of characterisation in the case of historical fiction. Georg Lukács sees this technique at work in Walter Scott's novels which combine historical faithfulness and fictional invention to convey 'the authenticity of the historical psychology of [. . .] characters, the genuine *hic et nunc* [here

---

6. 'Hegel remarks somewhere that all great world-historic facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce'. Karl MARX, *18th Brumaire of Louis Napoléon Bonaparte*.

7. Jeannette WINTERSON, *The Passion* ([1987] London: Vintage, 2001) 3.

and now] of their inner motives and behaviour'.<sup>8</sup> Ford bestows what amounts to historical consciousness on his invented characters, notably George Feilding often used as focaliser. Moreover, authentic historical characters such as Napoleon, Marshall Ney and his wife Aglaé or Louis XVIII, aka Louis le Désiré: 'in truth a mountain of flesh' (*LLG* 260) cohabit with fictional ones like Mr Assheton Smith, his Britanic Majesty's Representative upon Elba. Smith, the English milord, is like a host of other Fordian characters, notably Ashburnham, inspired from Arthur Marwood, one of the writer's closest friends so that a dual filter is introduced as biographical data are superimposed on historical sources.

The novel opens on what may be described as situational doubling with a duel between George Feilding, the English lieutenant and colonel-count dei Gatti di Vivario, a Corsican follower of the Emperor. Both are in love with the same woman, Hélène, the Baronne de Fréjus, and both admire Bonaparte. Feilding joins in the expedition taking Bonaparte back to France as a prisoner on parole and dei Gatti subsequently becomes his mentor on account of his swordmanship. This set of coincidences in the action is further enhanced by more essential correspondences which could be called sibling doubling, or to take up Ford's own phrase 'sib and rib' (*LLG* 73). Sib denotes relation by blood and descent to which is added rib, with its biblical echo of Adam's rib, so that consanguinity is associated with consubstantiality. Indeed, before she married a suspect financier, de Fréjus, Hélène, the daughter of the Marquis de Dinant, had been raised in England as a French émigrée and offered protection by Squire Feilding, George's father. In the novel, the fact that George and Hélène, besides being childhood friends brought up like brother and sister, are actually biological siblings is announced by the squire himself in a melodramatic scene (*LLG* 207). Furthermore, the motif of children born of adulterous affairs resonates with Bonaparte's own origins as the putative 'bastard of count de Marboeuf' (*LLG* 18).

Through two metonymic chains of doubling, Ford determines the two historical forces which actuate the plot: finance and warfare. Bonaparte's reconquest of France is indeed a financial as much as a military expedition. Yet money lenders aim at making a profit out of Napoleon's discomfiture quite as much as out of his success when the militaries are single-minded in their purpose to restore the 're-rising

---

8. Georg LUKÁCS, *The Historical Novel*, trans. Hannah and Stanley MITCHELL (London: Merlin, 1962) 60.

sun' to his throne (*LLG* 153). Assheton Smith, the English milor (*sic*) and the Baron de Fréjus, both belong to the new race of nabobs and financiers who vie in importance with the great commanders and conquerors (*LLG* 76). They both see themselves as the Napoleon of the haute finance, though it takes the Baron some efforts to raise twelve million livres when Smith can levy a similar sum with a mere stroke of the pen. Likewise, it is another metonymic link, the sword, which connects Colonel-Count Gatti, le maître d'armes of the exiled Emperor's last remaining troops and Marshall Ney, le Beau Sabreur.

Ford's predilection for duality thus informs the various aspects of his fiction and leads him to proceed through contrastive sets of binaries, both synchronically and diachronically. For instance, Bonaparte is said to be emperor by the love of the people when Louis XVIII is king by divine right, as if the two more or less synchronous heads of torn France were like the two sides of a coin. On the international scene, Napoleon may be confined to a parody of a palace, disgraced on a tiny Mediterranean island, but he has nothing to envy Tsar Alexander I who is under the tyrannical domination of Madame Krudener, a clairvoyant who exerts her occult powers on his enfeebled mind. And the use of a gallery of contrasted portraits as a historical method branches out in all directions. To Bonaparte, the Corsican upstart marooned on his rock is opposed his arch enemy, Wellington, the upstart Parliament man who would not hesitate to drag his country into wars to add another strawberry leaf to his Duke's coronet. And the domestic realm is also shaped by this hegemonic dual contrastive approach. Thus the Prince of Wales' tumultuous life and his wife Caroline of Brunswick's many adulterous affairs resulting in the birth of a child probably sired by one of her lovers, Captain Mauby/Manby, are set in sharp contrast with Napoleon's prospect of blissful life at the Tuileries before the hearth-fire with his consort and the Prince of Rome.

Doubling is not confined to the mighty and powerful nor is it limited to synchronous temporality. Indeed, due to historical upheavals, notably the shifts from the Revolution period to the Empire, and from the Empire to the Restoration, that was itself briefly interrupted by the Hundred Days transitory episode, many characters have a double biography and possibly two successive personalities. The Baron de Fréjus, formerly known as Friedrich Scheffauer, the son of a Rhine fisherman, born at Colmar and Marshall Ney, both Prince of the Moskwa and Duke of Elchingen are the two most striking examples. In the latter's case doubling contributes to biographical indeterminacy and

possibly conflicting loyalties, as he is rumoured to have been born at Strasburg or maybe Kehl, either in French Alsace or German Baden Württemberg. Only his lowly origins are set firmly; he was the son of a farrier (*LLG* 143). The change of names, the split biographies and the splicing of two destinies: an authentic Marshall of the Empire (Ney) and a fictitious financier (Scheffauer/de Fréjus) afford tangible illustration of Ford's method of historical doubling *cum* crossing, indeed Ney can be contrasted with Di Vicario for swordsmanship but with de Fréjus for his origins. What's more, the change of identity calls to mind Ford's own change of patronymic. This would most probably bring grist to the mill of Ricœur's study on the dialectic tension between the self and narrative identity, in which the French philosopher argues that an original, dynamic process of identity formation, intermeshing self-recognition and self-estrangement ensues from the activity of story writing.<sup>9</sup> Where John Locke saw irreconcilable contraries between identity and diversity Ricœur holds that narrative production is conducive to an original model of dynamic identity constantly negotiating between *idem* identity (spatio-temporal continuous sameness) and *ipse* identity (selfhood which is predicated on the unique capacity to initiate something new and imputable and which emerges from narration). It might be tempting to claim that Ford intertwines, more or less willingly, data from his own life, a continuous personal substratum, with historical destinies that resonate with his own impulses of self-(re)creation through fiction. The tension between *idem* identity and *ipse* identity is rendered by the capacity of history and the fictitious story to reinvent themselves, in this sense Ford follows Ricœur in showing the necessary complementarity between sameness, the perpetuation of the authorial character and selfhood or agency through the invention of characters manifesting a capacity to recreate their destiny on new foundations, mostly Marshall Ney, but also, albeit, to a lesser extent, Bonaparte, George Feilding and Hélène de Fréjus.

*A Little Less Than Gods* is a twofold historical narrative based upon an unsolved enigma precluding any firm and solid denouement. It opens on a dedication in which Ford accounts for the matrix of the romance he is about to recount. This foreword fulfills a double function, it provides a new perspective on Marshall Ney and, by the same token, French history, by propounding an American sequel to the European, Napoleonic epic, and it clarifies the inescapable dilemma

---

9. Paul RICŒUR, *Soi-même comme un autre* (Paris: Seuil, 1990) 167–198.

in which the historical novelist finds himself caught. According to Ford, the historical novelist either compiles details, and indulges in 'all the mole-work lucubrations of the most learned of contemporary Puffendorfiuses' (*LLG* vii) or else he willfully accepts to peddle the mendacities which mankind spins when treating of contemporary events. In the first case, the search for accuracy is bound to limit the reader to a superficial view of history and the impossibility of reaching a definitive truth. In the second one, a vicarious experience and a sense of truth may be achieved through mental coloration and the conveyance of illusions, i.e. the above-mentioned distorting mirror. In a sense Marshall Ney's example exacerbates this tension between the two possible historical approaches. The end of his life is a historical crux that prevents any definitive closure whilst allowing for the machinations of plotting. So the Puffendorfiuses are likely to stick to indisputable facts by documenting them meticulously whilst, for his part, Ford favours the long view even if it may stretch credibility. Officially, Ney was shot dead by a platoon of Royalists on December 8th 1815. The scene and circumstances of the execution are evoked on several instances in the novel, in keeping with the famous *progression d'effet* technique. Doubts later emerged however on the actuality of Ney's death when in 1846, on his death-bed, one Peter Stuart Ney, a teacher from North Carolina, confessed to having been Napoleon's famous marshal in his previous existence. The anecdote was taken seriously by some historians, like James Augustus Weston in his *Historic Doubts as to the Execution of Marshall Ney*, published in 1895, and dismissed as a hoax by others. Ford, as for him, opts for Ney's American second life and adopts a narrative ploy relying on doubling and Doppelgänger to pull it off. He depicts a travestied execution by having the Baron de Fréjus lay down his life for the marshal at the closerie des Lilas. The substitution of Fréjus for Ney entails a last-minute theatrical *mise en scène*, which is of course oddly reminiscent of Sidney Carton taking Charles Darnay's place at the guillotine in *A Tale of Two Cities*: 'So Fréjus went to the death of Ney, and Madame Aglaé changed clothes with her husband, having taken care that the clothes she had were ample and enormous' (*LLG* 308). However, whereas Charles Dickens blatantly embraces the conventions of melodrama, Ford does not depart from historical facts. Indeed, the duplicitous trickery is both a novelistic twist and an endorsement of a historical enigma leaving two possible interpretations pending. Furthermore, while Dickens chooses the supernatural through Carton's



prosopopœia just after his execution, Ford returns to the factual past by reminding that France was then clearly divided up in two factions:

‘Bonapartist villages might sound for him [supposedly Ney, but in the truth of the fiction Fréjus] the passing bell; villages where most inhabitants were Royalists might illuminate their windows. . . Michael Ney himself had no existence and might from then on dress in men or women’s clothes and wear or lose the sword of the Prophet. . .’  
(LLG 307)

## The ‘Touch of Incest’ as Twinning Factor

Unlike *A Little Less Than Gods*, which is swept along by events, *Suspense* actualises its programmatic title. Structurally, whilst Ford’s novel plays up patterns of continuity through scattered repetitions and deferred resonances, Conrad’s rests on interrupted narrative sequences protracting the state of suspense when in February 1815, Europe is poised at the prospect of Napoleon’s next move from the island of Elba: ‘You can form no idea of the state of suspense in which all classes live here from the highest to the lowest, as to what may happen next’ (S 189). The narrative covers three days and three nights and focuses on Cosmo Lathan who bears many resemblances with George Feilding. He too is an Englishman, whose aristocratic family has sheltered French émigrés during the Terror, he too fought in the Peninsular war so that, as with Feilding, his destiny found itself linked with Napoleon’s campaigns. In *Suspense*, however, the French Emperor’s presence is more felt and discussed than perceived as Bonaparte remains off stage. Additionally, whereas Ford’s Napoleonic fiction features groups of characters or crowds and hones the techniques of voice representation,<sup>10</sup> Conrad’s novel highlights Cosmo’s single destiny. As a result of befriending the *carbornado* Attilio at the outset of the novel, Cosmo finds himself more or less knowingly dragged into an undercover intrigue serving Napoleon’s cause in a devious way. He seems to be carried along by a superior force, against which all resistance would be useless so that he enters Napoleon’s orbit almost by chance or the working of destiny taking the shape of guiding stars: ‘In the whole town he knew only the way to the Palazzo and the way to

---

10. For example by counterpointing the King of Elba’s harangue with the jeering and shouting of the soldiery and by inserting, through short vignettes, samples of the crowd’s responses (LLTG 69–71).



the port. He took the latter direction. He walked by the faint starlight falling into the narrow streets' (S 196). In the harbour, Cosmo gets entangled with a gang of smugglers or conspirators and then recognises Attilio. The scene, whose actual significance is hard to figure out, condenses most of the stakes of international diplomacy just before Napoleon's escape from Elba, as the *carboneria*, of which Attilio is a member, is a secret political association concerned with the plottings concerning Bonaparte's feared departure from his exile. The latter might indeed have repercussions on the future of Europe prior to the Congress of Vienna and an impact on the fate of partitioned Italy. The unfinished novel is abruptly halted and closes with a description of the sky leaving the question of whether the stars of the conspirators have come together aptly unanswered (S 273–274).

Conrad's novel is shaped by a historical, political intrigue that is singularly devoid of any clear emancipatory aspiration. It is mired in the intricacies of devious scheming and potentially contradictory commitments. However, like *A Little Than Gods* with George Feilding and the Baronne de Fréjus, *Suspense* contains a romantic plot which is crucial in that it seals a bond in Conrad and Ford's literary friendship. During his short stay in Genoa, Cosmo Lathan visits his childhood friend Adèle, the daughter of one of France's oldest families—the D'Armand—whom Cosmo's parents accommodated in their Yorkshire property during the French revolution. Adèle is now married to Count Helion de Monteverso, 'an apparently Piedmontese upstart' (S 37). With a bullying husband and servants spying on her, Adèle's situation reflects Napoleon's plight on Elba, which Conrad graphically exposed in a letter to J.B. Pinker: 'It seems that [. . .] he was surrounded by spies, menaced by murderers and threatened by revengeful Spaniards and Corsicans'.<sup>11</sup> Such intertwining between the public and the private is a perfect illustration of Ford's claim to 'convey a sense of the Truth truer than that reached by the industrious compilings of the serious—and so portentous!—Chronicler' (*LLTG* viii). But there is more than this convergence in both writers' historical methodology. The passion between George Feilding and Héléne de Fréjus and the passion between Cosmo Lathan and Adèle d'Armand, Countess of Monteverso, are both shown as incestuous. This is clearly stated in Ford's novel when in a paroxysmal scene Squire Feilding blurts out to

---

11. Letter dated January 25th 1907, *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, volume III, KARL and DAVIES eds (Cambridge: CUP, 1988) 409.

the Baronne: ‘The boy is your brother!’ (*LLTG* 207), and more implicit in *Suspense* where clues are nevertheless interspersed:

It had not been difficult for him [Sir Charles Latham, Cosmo’s father] to learn to love that fascinating French child as though she had been another daughter of his own. [. . .] But on going out of the room he stopped by the embroidery frame and, bending down, kissed the forehead of his daughter—his English daughter. No issue of a great battle could affect her future. As to the other girl, she was lost to him and it couldn’t be helped. (*S* 36)<sup>12</sup>

So, in the last resort, *Suspense* records the shift from historical suspense to a romance in suspense. Both Napoleonic novels, Conrad’s and Ford’s, would ‘in effect’ amount to ‘a page from intimate history’ (*LLTG* vii).

Joseph Conrad left two works unfinished, *Suspense* and *The Sisters*, a novel’s project started in 1895 and abandoned in 1896.<sup>13</sup> Both were in some measure concerned with incest. In 1927, Burton Rascoe, the editor of the *New York Bookman* who had chanced upon Conrad’s unfinished manuscript invited Ford to finish it. Ford, instead, turned in an insightful analysis of what he believed Conrad’s intention would have been had he completed the story. In this essay titled ‘Tiger, Tiger’,<sup>14</sup> he recalls the years of his former collaboration with the Polish-born author, especially 1906 when Conrad dug out the abandoned fragment, naming it his ‘forbidden story’. According to Ford, ‘what he [Conrad], curiously, decided to write of, was incest. I don’t mean to say that he proposed to write of the consummation of forbidden desires, but he did want to render the emotions of a shared passion that by its nature must be most hopeless of all’ (‘Tiger, Tiger’ 497).

Admittedly, incest is inherently bound up with secret which is often the fuel and staple of novel writing. In both *Suspense* and *A Little Less Than Gods* it occupies a central place. It is constantly being solicited and refused; it is an object of obsession and attraction, a dreadful secret and an indispensable pivot. So much so, that it may be won-

---

12. See also ‘He dropped his hands and said, “Austerlitz has done it.” What could he have meant? “It would be hard to guess the connection,” said Cosmo, smiling at his sister’s puzzled face. “Father must have been thinking of something else.”’ (*S* 42) and in a more metaphoric vein, ‘She [Adèle] must have been foretold to him [Cosmo] in some picture he had seen at Latham Hall [. . .] He saw it there plainly as if the blow had been struck before his eyes. The released hilt seemed to vibrate here, while the eyes looked straight at him, profound, unconscious in miraculous tranquility.’ (195)

13. Joseph CONRAD, ‘The Sisters’, *The Bookman* LXVI:5 (January 1928) 481–495.

14. Ford Madox FORD, ‘Tiger, Tiger’, *The Bookman* LXVI:5 (January 1928) 495–498.

dered whether it does not eclipse the interest in history, understood as grand history, in its capacity to shape the novel's scaffoldings. Conversely, could there be a predilection for the incest motif anchored in the post-Revolution and Napoleonic past?

An easy answer, almost a cop-out, would be to put forward Pauline Bonaparte's rumoured incest with her brother Napoleon. She was the only one of his siblings to accompany him to Elba and Ford depicts her as the cynosure of all eyes in the Emperor's parody of a palace, where she stands out 'amidst an agreeable flood of petticoat emotions' (*LLTG* 7). On a more serious note, Michel Foucault in *The Will of Knowledge* comes up with reflections that may open up fruitful directions. He investigates the ways in which sexuality has been controlled and channelled, from a diachronic perspective. He, in particular, draws a distinction between the deployment of alliance, through marriage and kinship ties involving regulatory practices, and the deployment of sexuality which prioritises the body, pleasures of course, but also the subtler range of sensations and emotions partaking of subjectivity. The family does not so much repress sexuality as it nurtures it since it is the privileged site of both alliance and sexuality, to quote Foucault: 'the family is the interchange of sexuality and alliance: it conveys the law and the judicial dimension in the deployment of sexuality; and it conveys the economy of pleasure and the intensity of sensations in the regime of alliance'.<sup>15</sup> So, the family is the locus of affects, sentiments and love where sexuality finds its place. In this respect, sexuality is incestuous because it originates in the family nucleus. Yet, the deployment of alliance maintains some control over family relations by means of the taboo incest. Precisely, this taboo is required so that the family may stay a permanent site of inducement for sexuality pushing the individual to leave this protective haven and set out his exploration beyond its pale. The principles of alliance and sexuality act jointly but with shifts in their balance. In *Suspense*, the narrator comments on the post-revolutionary period, by diagnosing what corresponds to a predominance of the deployment of sexuality over alliance: 'Morals were even looser than in the times before the Revolution. Manners were forgotten. Every transgression was excused in those who were regarded as good royalists' (*S* 131).

---

15. 'elle transporte la loi et la dimension du juridique dans le dispositif de sexualité ; et elle transporte l'économie du plaisir et l'intensité des sensations dans le régime d'alliance'. Michel FOUCAULT, *La volonté de savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976) 143.

Michael Lucey propounds a radically opposed viewpoint.<sup>16</sup> According to him, in the post-Napoleonic Restoration period, intense attention was paid to the deployment of alliance by the bourgeoisie intent on asserting itself as the legitimate locus of social power. The return to alliance was therefore in part an effort to repudiate, or to check, the seemingly free-wheeling fluctuations of these troubled times. Both *Suspense* and *A Little Less Than Gods* depict a transitory moment, an endeavour to bring a corrective to history—through the return of Napoleon—which somehow gets waylaid into historical limbo, with the second abdication and Napoleon’s definitive exile to St Helen. Not only are these novels not amenable to any teleological progress, but they also evidence the blurring of neat social boundaries, with simple commoners like de Fréjus or Ney joining the aristocracy. Conrad’s *Suspense* is maintained in a state of historical irresolution and Ford’s *A Little Less Than Gods* offers a historical sequel—which is at best a matter of conjectures. A lack of definition and an absence of neat contours is the hallmark of these tormented times and it is hardly surprising that the friction between deployment of alliance and the deployment of sexuality is exacerbated. The incestuous bonds constitute the ultimate impossibility which denies romance while leaving the historical process suspended.

## Conclusion

Within a few years’ interval, *Suspense* and *A Little Less Than Gods* treat of the end of Napoleon’s odyssey by setting an incestuous intrigue at the core of the historical chronicle. The two novels present a unique example of deferred tandem writing, crowning this complicity between Conrad and Ford dating back to the two writers’ exchanges around ‘The Sisters’ project. Max Saunders goes as far as to claim that it was a common concern around the topic of incest which settled the intimate foundation of what developed into a literary friendship. The fact is borne out by Ford himself in ‘Tiger, Tiger’:

Incest as a subject seems somehow predestined for treatment by Conrad. In Poland he had been brought into contact with a number of tragic romantic instances of unconscious unions that were within the limits of the Canon Law. And curiously enough ‘The Inheritors’, the

---

16. Michael LUCEY, ‘Balzac’s Queer Cousins and Their Friends’, *Novel Gazing. Queer Readings in Fiction*, ed. Eve KOSOFSKY SEDGWICK (Durham: Duke UP, 1997) 167–196.

first of our collaborations to be published, has a faint and fantastic suggestion of—unrequited—love between brother and sister. It was as much as anything, because of this, that Conrad fiercely—almost fanatically—insisted on collaborating in this book and interrupting the course of ‘Romance’ upon which we had already been laboring for several years. (‘Tiger, Tiger’ 498)

Nearly three decades later, the initial impetus for a mutual literary undertaking had produced two novels which, though authored separately, and with a time gap and notwithstanding their different take on the Napoleonic material, testified to the same attraction to the doubling figure of the incest, sealing the bond between two *duplices auctores*.



## « Horizons anglophones »

### Série *Present Perfect*

Responsables de la série :

Jean-Michel GANTEAU, univ Paul Valéry, Montpellier 3, EMMA EA 741, F34000, Montpellier, France ; Christine REYNIER, univ Paul Valéry, Montpellier 3, EMMA EA 741, F34000, Montpellier, France.

La série *Present Perfect*, dirigée par Jean-Michel Ganteau et Christine Reynier, a pour vocation d'accueillir des travaux portant sur la littérature, la culture et les arts britanniques de l'époque victorienne, édouardienne, moderniste ou contemporaine. Elle publie des recueils d'articles ou des monographies rédigés en français ou en anglais.

Comité de lecture : Catherine BERNARD, université Denis-Diderot, Paris 7, F75013, Paris, France ; Laura COLOMBINO, université de Gênes, Italie ; Ann-Marie EINHAUS, Northumbria University, Royaume-Uni ; Annie ESCURET, univ Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, EMMA EA 741, F34000, Montpellier, France ; Christine FROULA, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60208, États-Unis ; Jean-Michel GANTEAU, université Paul Valéry, Montpellier 3, EMMA EA 741, F34000, Montpellier, France ; Susana ONEGA, Zaragoza University, ES50009, Zaragoza, Espagne ; Christine REYNIER, université Paul Valéry, Montpellier 3, EMMA EA 741, F34000, Montpellier, France ; Stephen ROSS, université de Victoria, CANBC V8P 5C2, Victoria, Canada.

### TITRES DÉJÀ PARUS DANS LA MÊME SÉRIE

*L'Androgyne dans la littérature britannique contemporaine. Métamorphoses d'une figure*, Justine GONNEAUD, 2020.

« Cette époque de doute » : *Walter Pater et la question de la croyance*. Bénédicte COSTE, 2017.

*The Humble in 19th- to 21st-Century British Literature and Arts*. Edited by Isabelle BRASME, Jean-Michel GANTEAU et Christine REYNIER, 2017.

*Parade's End de Ford Madox Ford : vers une esthétique de la crise*. Isabelle BRASME, 2016.

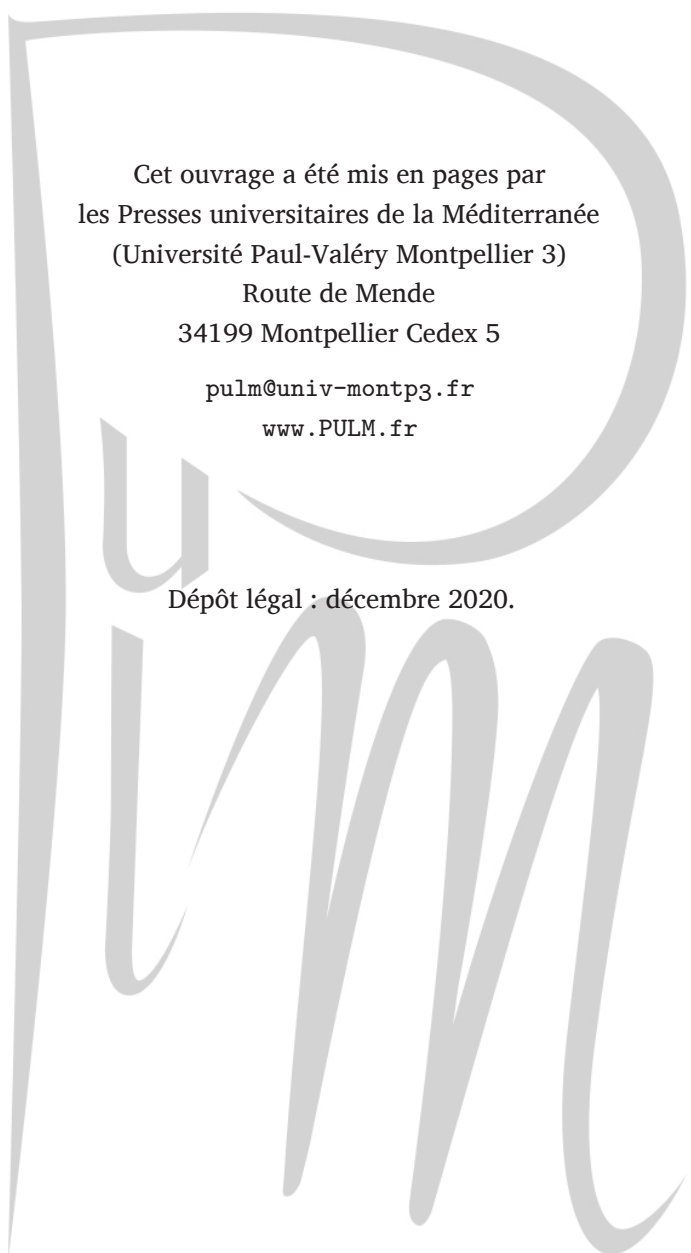
*Ethics of Alterity, Confrontation and Responsibility in 19th- to 21st Century British Arts*. Edited by Jean-Michel GANTEAU et Christine REYNIER, 2015.

*Réécrire l'Angleterre. L'anglicité dans la littérature britannique contemporaine*. Elsa CAVALIÉ, 2015.

*Politics and the Bible in D.H. Lawrence's Leadership Novels*. Shirley BRICOUT, 2015.



- Contemporary Woolf/Woolf Contemporaine*. Claire DAVISON-PÉGON et Anne-Marie SMITH-DI BIASIO, 2014.
- Ethics of Alterity, Confrontation and Responsibility in 19th- to 21st- Century British Literature*. Edited by Jean-Michel GANTEAU et Christine REYNIER, 2013.
- Autonomy and Commitment in Twentieth-Century British Arts*. Edited by Jean-Michel GANTEAU et Christine REYNIER, 2012.
- L'Œil et la voix dans les romans de E. M. Forster et leur adaptation cinématographique*. Laurent MELLET, 2012.
- Modernism and Unreadability*. Isabelle ALFANDARY et Axel NESME, 2011.
- Woolf as Reader/Woolf as Critic or, The Art of Reading in the Present*. Edited by Catherine BERNARD, 2011.
- La défamiliarisation linguistique*. Sandrine SORLIN, 2010.
- Autonomy and Commitment in Twentieth-Century British Literature*. Edited by Christine REYNIER et Jean-Michel GANTEAU, 2010.
- L'itinéraire d'un prophète en fuite ou Le texte biblique et la réflexion politique dans Aaron's Rod, Kangaroo et The Plumed Serpent de D.H. Lawrence*. Shirley BRICOUT, 2008.
- Virginia Woolf et les écritures du moi : le journal et l'autobiographie*. Frédérique AMSELLE, 2008.
- Impersonality and Emotion in Twentieth-Century British Arts*. Edited by Jean-Michel GANTEAU et Christine REYNIER, 2006.
- Impersonality and Emotion in Twentieth-Century British Literature*. Texts collected by Jean-Michel GANTEAU et Christine REYNIER, 2005.



Cet ouvrage a été mis en pages par  
les Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée  
(Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3)  
Route de Mende  
34199 Montpellier Cedex 5

[pulm@univ-montp3.fr](mailto:pulm@univ-montp3.fr)

[www.PULM.fr](http://www.PULM.fr)

Dépôt légal : décembre 2020.

