WOMEN OF THE LEFT BANK

PARIS, 1900–1940

Where do we meet? The geography of our friendships, the topography of the course of the relation, the spots, the fiery mountainous excitement and valleys, the silences—a steady humming when it is simply there, neither high nor low, not remarked on—all this needs a school of cartographers. Consider the point of origin, the meeting. Ancient legend recounts time after time the meeting of men somewhere in the world of nature. At a crossroads, men meet. They go forward together or they go on alone, marked by the meeting. On the battlefield. In their travels, their movement, men meet other men, but never meet women unless the women are locked in towers, because women themselves are rarely itinerant travelers.

—Louise Bernikow, *Among Women*

The young women strolled and talked; their talk is forgotten. After fifty years, though, one scrap of the master's survived.

—Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era*

PART I. DISCOVERIES

MARGARET ANDERSON

DJUNA BARNES

NATALIE BARNEY

SYLVIA BEACH

KAY BOYLE

BRYHER (WINIFRED ELLERMAN)

COLETTE

CARESSE CROSBY

NANCY CUNARD

HILDA DOOLITTLE (H. D.)

JANET FLANNER

JANE HEAP

MARIA JOLAS

MINA LOY

ADRIENNE MONNIER

ANAÏS NIN

JEAN RHYS

SOLITA SOLANO

GERTRUDE STEIN

ALICE B. TOKLAS

RENÉE VIVIEN

EDITH WHARTON

1
WOMEN OF THE LEFT BANK

These women were part of the artistic community that formed on the Paris Left Bank early in the twentieth century. Their literary contributions—which include major works of prose, poetry, drama, critical and journalistic essays, autobiographies, *pensées*, and memoirs—display wide-ranging interests and diverse talents. In addition to their own writing activities, several of these women set up bookshops, publishing houses, hand presses, little magazines, and artistic salons through which they advertised and marketed the products of literary Paris. While certain of them are less well remembered than others, each had a particular influence on the Paris cultural scene (and was influenced by it), and collectively theirs was a formidable energy and versatility.

This study examines the lives and works of these women in the Paris context. Of primary significance is the experience of being a *woman* in this time and place. The question that predicates this inquiry is not "What was it like to be part of literary Paris?"—a question compulsively asked by both the participants and the analysts of this period—but rather "What was it like to be a woman in literary Paris?" The women included in this study provide diverse answers to this question, their collective responses suggesting rich and complex experiences that illuminate heretofore overlooked aspects of the cultural setting in which Modernism developed.

Of particular interest are the ways in which the patriarchal social and political settings of Western culture affect the subject matter and methods of woman's writing and influence the creative process from which that writing is born. The expatriate Paris experience constructed itself in ways that both challenged and underwrote this patriarchal heritage; thus it is not possible to examine the living and working situations of female

Modernists separate from those of their male colleagues or to investigate the founding principles of women's literary contributions to Modernism without questioning the assumptions in which male Modernist practice situated itself. That is, this study considers the issue of gender as an important (and all too often disregarded) element in defining the aesthetics and politics, the theory and practice, of what we now call Modernism.

Paris Remembered

Rarely has a time and place so captured the imagination as the Paris of these years. From our contemporary perspective, this period is set apart in the historical flux of the twentieth century, strangely removed from us and yet, curiously, still of interest. Our impressions of these years are marked as much by the sense of a self-indulgent hedonism as by the record of an intellectual fervor. These impressions derive from a variety of sources—from memoirs by the participants and hangers-on, from biographies and autobiographies of the great and near-great, from literary gossip disguised as academic treatise, from yellowed newspaper columns in the Paris editions of the *New York Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune,* and from Janet Flanner's "Letter from Paris" in the *New Yorker* and Eugene Jolas's editorials in *transition* magazine. In novels by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Djuna Barnes, and Jean Rhys, and in Gertrude Stein's autobiographies and her homage to the city, *Paris France,* such diverse figures as Josephine Baker and Kiki of Montparnasse mingle with Léon-Paul Fargue, Ezra Pound, and other Left Bank writers in startling ways.

We have romanticized those years, and so have those who lived through them. The few alive today who were part of that Paris life possess a fund of dim memories and stories too often told. The recent deaths of Djuna Barnes, Winifred Ellerman, Caroline Gordon, and Katherine Anne Porter or the publication of Morrill Cody's memoir, *The Women of Montparnasse,* perhaps took us by surprise, since we assumed all these people to be already dead. For lives so much a part of the Paris years, anachronistic later existences seem indeed displaced in time. In a recent letter to a friend, Maria Jolas (who with her husband, Eugene, founded *transition* magazine in 1926) ingenuously asked: "Did you not write, thinking I was dead? Well I'm not." Still, we feel perhaps that remnants of an age so removed from our own should be safely sealed by history, all the participants quietly at rest in Passy or Père Lachaise cemeteries. The collected letters of Alice B. Toklas, most written after the death of Gertrude Stein in 1946, are entitled *Staying On Alone.*[1] They record the painful afterlife of a lover left behind, one whose future was to be constituted by memories of the past. Alice Toklas is no longer "staying on alone," but

some few still are. Something more than the malingering appearance of aged expatriates who have outlived their era, however, disturbs our notions of the "pastness" of this age.

Uneasy with the assumed historicity of the Paris years, one may question the degree to which this chapter of our cultural development is closed. One suspects that our hesitation in closing the historical door on this period is due to a sense that the shock waves these years produced are still resounding through our culture. Perhaps we also feel even more strongly now the break that such events as the publication of *Ulysses* or the presentation of the *Ballet Méchanique* made with the nineteenth century, a period that in 1920 seemed further removed in time than the nearly seventy years that separate us from the end of World War I. The war constituted a rupture in the life that went before it, uprooting those nineteenth-century values that had tenaciously persisted into the twentieth century. It is hardly likely that—had there not been this war, had there not been the resultant economic decline in Europe, had the war not provided an introduction to the very existence of Europe—those dozens of Americans with bags in hand would have determinedly found their way to the Gare St. Lazare in search of the sophistication and freedom that Paris represented. All life in Paris during these years was influenced by this influx of expatriates who appropriated the city as their own, overlaid their American values on a culture that was hardly indifferent to the vitality of such a liberated breed. The generalizations are well known to us; terms like the "Lost Generation" or the "Jazz Age" are such worn clichés that their sources are often lost to present history. Indeed, the sources of that intellectual and artistic revolt remain obscure, although the conditions of its occurrence and its consequent effects are well known to the least literary among us. Paris of the twenties and thirties continues to be both aesthetically and anecdotally available, a circumstance that constrains the effort accurately to read its social and cultural backgrounds.

Cultural Readings

But recent interest in this era is spurred by something other than the accumulation of anecdotal evidence. Two incongruent factors have structured renewed interest in the period. First is the availability of the private papers, letters, and diaries of those present in Paris during these years; these form a record that, unlike published memoirs, documents the period from a less self-conscious and self-serving perspective. The women of this study were born between 1862 and 1903, the births of Edith Wharton and Anaïs Nin enclosing three generations, their arrivals in Paris separated by almost twenty-five years: Wharton settled in Paris in 1906 (living there part of every year until her permanent residence in 1912); Nin (who had

been born in Paris) returned to her native city just prior to 1930. Wharton, who died at 75 (as did Sylvia Beach), was one of the shorter-lived of these women. Stein died at age 72 of cancer, but Natalie Barney lived to 96; Djuna Barnes, Katherine Anne Porter, and Alice B. Toklas to 90; Winifred Ellerman to 88; Margaret Anderson to 87; Janet Flanner and Caroline Gordon to 86; Mina Loy to 84. Maria Jolas, one of the few women of this group still living, resides in Paris, aged 93. And while Kay Boyle—in her early eighties—may still publish her memoirs, her compatriots have been consigned to posterity, their estates settled, their papers catalogued in American libraries, their private record now available to a public still hungry for more information.

A new generation of readers and critics is already at work researching these materials. Prior to 1976, only two women in the group had been accorded full-length biographies: Gertrude Stein and Edith Wharton. Since 1976, Djuna Barnes, Natalie Barney, Sylvia Beach, Colette, Nancy Cunard, H. D., and Alice B. Toklas have become the subjects of biographical studies. The past five years have produced the first full-length examination of works by Djuna Barnes, H. D., Mina Loy, Anaïs Nin, Adrienne Monnier, Katherine Anne Porter, and Jean Rhys as well as the republication of many out-of-print works by these women. Critical and biographical investigations of several others are currently in progress.

New approaches to cultural history, most significant among them feminist criticism, have provided important alternative perspectives on the Modernist literary effort and have opened avenues of approach to the diverse lifestyles and literary contributions of expatriate women. Feminist criticism directed toward rediscovery and reevaluation of the work of women writers has already altered our view of Modernism as a literary movement. It has testified to female experience in the social and intellectual settings of modern history and has examined the modes of entrapment, betrayal, and exclusion suffered by women in the first decades of the twentieth century. It has exposed the absence of commentary on women's contributions to Modernism and has rewritten the history of individual women's lives and works within the Modernist context.[2] Feminist critical practice points toward—indeed, calls for—reevaluation and redefinition of Modernism itself. Once women Modernists are placed beside their male colleagues, the hegemony of masculine heterosexual values that have for so long underwritten our definitions of Modernism is put into question. Modernism may then be seen to be a far more eclectic and richly diverse literary movement than has previously been assumed. Discovering important differences among the lives and writing of Modernist women may also suggest the heterogeneity of gender groups and shed light on differences among the lives and writings of male Modernists. Distinguishing the effects on literary practice of such determinants as

social class, education, sexual orientation, and religious and political persuasion may also reveal the extent to which the women of the expatriate Modernist community shared a commonality of experience that often ignored such boundaries.

Feminist criticism, in the context of post-Modernist literary theory, provides a method of discovering both similarities and differences, commonalities and divergences of experience. It poses a question already asked by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar: "What does it mean to be a woman writer in a culture whose fundamental definitions of literary authority are . . . both overtly and covertly patriarchal?" (*Madwoman*, 45–46). Deconstructive critical theory suggests that patriarchal culture is coupled with Western thought, which is structured in terms of polarities (male-female, good-evil, speech-writing), in which the second term is, according to Barbara Johnson, "considered the negative, corrupt, undesirable version of the first" (Derrida, *Dissemination*, viii). Feminist critical theory reads the effects of patriarchal constraint on women; deconstructive practice measures those effects with particular attention to the equivalence of "writing" and "woman" as devalued items in a hierarchical scheme of values.

The combination of these critical methods would seem to offer a doubled reading perspective of particular value in examining the place of women writers in Western society, but it is precisely this mutual reinforcement of the doubled reading that for some weakens the critical value of these combined methodologies. It has been argued that the two practices always arrive at the same conclusions: that the patriarchy represses woman, entraps her, subjects her to its self-reinforcing images; that in the patriarchy woman exists under erasure, absent, dispossessed of identity. Such readings suggest that woman either apes patriarchal forms (in order to assure a special dispensation for herself under its law) or exists in *re*action against the forms of patriarchal repression. Thus in Gilbert and Gubar's reading of the patriarchal psychosexual heritage (following the work of Harold Bloom), woman finds herself locked out of the societal power structure and locked into literary forms conceived by and written for men. She defines the space of her world in the prisonhouse man has constructed for her, the authority of her writing grounded in anger and madness. This reading ultimately discovers—and even valorizes—the effects of woman's oppression, her illness and unease the results of the patriarchal "sentence" that condemns her to silence. Women's stories are always the same story, the record of a seemingly eternal battle against constraint. In such interpretations, the presence of the patriarchy remains a consistent factor, always defining itself by the same attitudes, the same repressive practices, resistant to changes in history, politics, and culture. Deconstructive practice reads the effects of this "Western metaphysic,"

the power and presence of the patriarchy, in woman's devalued position, equivalent to the secondary place writing plays with respect to speech. Both woman and writing lack the "presence" that underwrites power in Western civilization, and each is defined by absence.[3]

Stated in these ways, woman's plight seems overdetermined, the plot of her story too predictable, the modes of her actions and writing reductive. The authority of her experience rests in its sameness, its inability ever radically to alter its base in fact or to transform that circumstance in fiction. Woman is constantly defined as the debased "other" of the masculine norm. Yet one hopes that both feminist theory and deconstructive practice offer richer possibilities for reading women's history than this résumé suggests. Indeed, it is post-Modernist theory that has "deconstructed" the power of the Western metaphysic, that has dislodged the oppositional and hierarchical value systems that always make woman and writing derivative and demeaned. Deconstructive practice has plotted not only the differences between male and female, masculine and feminine, but the differences *within* each of these categories. Neither the biologically determined categories "male" and "female" nor the socially produced categories "masculine" and "feminine" are absolute—entirely consistent, even monolithic, within themselves. Each inhabits and is inhabited by its opposite. Here one discovers the difference *within* gender, within the experience of gender; here an alternative reading to woman's predetermined plot offers itself.

Female Expatriation: Natalie Barney and Gertrude Stein

Natalie Clifford Barney would seem to represent in the extreme the common denominators of upbringing, education, social status, intellectual ambition, and even sexual preference common to many women of the expatriate community. She was upper middle class but financially independent, a product of private schooling, a veteran European traveler at a young age, culturally advantaged and intellectually determined. She inherited sizable fortunes from both her mother and father; her education with French governesses and in private boarding schools was impeccable; she lived in Europe at various times before settling there permanently in 1902; she aspired to be and became a writer of some stature; she was the most active and candid lesbian of her day, sharing this sexual orientation with thirteen of the twenty-two women of this study. Barney never allowed herself to be consigned to the shadows of literary Paris. Indeed, her own writing may have suffered because of the prominent social role she played within the community, and commentaries on Barney have tended to focus on her life to the exclusion of her art. She was an exceedingly public figure, establishing in her home on the rue Jacob a famous

literary salon that for over sixty years brought together French and Americans, intellectuals and artists. Through her salon Barney wielded considerable power among Left Bank writers, power often employed in the service of her commitment to feminist ideals, using the salon to introduce women writers and their work to each other and to the larger public.

There were important variations in individual circumstances and lifestyles among these expatriate women, but it is Natalie Barney who most often serves as the "type" for the expatriate female Modernist, a woman whose intellectual and sexual independence was secured by financial privilege and social distinction. The degree of financial security experienced by women of the expatriate community varied, however: some were born to exceeding wealth (Natalie Barney, Winifred Ellerman, and Nancy Cunard); some were comfortably middle class (Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, and Maria Jolas); some were often hard pressed to make ends meet (Jean Rhys and Djuna Barnes); and others held paying jobs, usually as journalists (Janet Flanner, Florence Gilliam, and Solita Solano). The range of economic circumstance was significantly greater among women expatriates than among their male compatriots. Except for Harry Crosby, who inherited wealth, the expatriate men of literary Paris were middle class and of modest means. Nearly all supported themselves by some kind of work other than writing literature. They were journalists, bankers, teachers, physicians, and insurance salesmen. F. Scott Fitzgerald, of course, made enough money from his writings to support himself rather well, but his case is unusual. Far more of these writers saw little financial reward from their experimental literary works. In general, the women of the expatriate community experienced greater financial freedom than the men, having arrived in Paris with small annuities or inheritances with which they purchased their freedom from America. For some of them, such support was the only form of income they were ever to know.

A few of these women came from prestigious upper-class families, but most of them came from solidly middle-class circumstances. Their fathers included prosperous businessmen (among them a railroad magnate and a publisher), a university professor, a Presbyterian minister, and two English shipping tycoons. Some of the daughters could trace family histories for several generations in American and English public life, however. Caresse Crosby—Mary Phelps Jacob Peabody before she married Harry Crosby—traced her family back one thousand years to the Isle of Wight. At least two of these women had artistically significant maternal heritages: Kay Boyle's maternal aunt painted the portrait of Susan B. Anthony that inspired the 1936 commemorative postage stamp in her honor, and Alice Pike Barney was an accomplished painter who studied in Paris with Whistler and Duran. While not all of these expatriates were privately educated, they all received similar educations—studying music, painting, or

literature. (Kay Boyle differed from the majority in studying architecture.) Some of these women were graduates of the most elite New England finishing schools, while at least two of them, Gertrude Stein and Sylvia Beach, received erratic educations, shifting between schools in America and Europe as families traveled. Many of these women shared marked similarities in family backgrounds, in cultural and intellectual aspirations, and in political and even religious attitudes (Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas were Jewish, and Winifred Ellerman reported to Robert McAlmon that her father, John Ellerman, was probably Jewish) as well as a homogeneity of childhood experience. In addition, these women appeared to share a common factor in expatriating: they wanted to escape America and to find in Europe the necessary cultural, sexual, and personal freedom to explore their creative intuitions.

Within the broad outlines of this pattern, the individual reactions to essentially conservative bourgeois upbringings varied considerably, as did the personal motivations for choosing to live in Paris. For homosexual women, the reasons for living abroad, the circle of friends developed there, and the integration of personal and professional lives were often influenced by sexual choices. In some cases, the private lives of these women reflected patterns established by the heterosexual world in which they lived. Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, for instance, established a long-standing union that in many ways mirrored heterosexual marriages, coinciding—except in the choice of a female rather than a male partner—with the conventions of their upper-middle-class upbringings. Sylvia Beach and Adrienne Monnier, Janet Flanner and Solita Solano, Djuna Barnes and Thelma Wood, however, established lesbian relationships whose only common feature was an explicit rebellion against the heterosexual norm. Only one made a public issue of her lesbianism. Candidly and openly promiscuous (indeed, committed to an ethics of promiscuity), Natalie Barney also maintained a decorous literary salon at which she served tea and cakes. The sharp contrast between Barney's public image as the leader of a lesbian community and her roles as poet and patron of the arts throws into relief the less obvious disjunction between private life and public convention evidenced in the lives of other lesbian women during these years.

Natalie Barney's place among women in the literary community has been viewed almost entirely as a function of her sexual orientation. In the gossipy biographies and memoirs of her life, Barney's lesbianism is the crucial factor, that which unites her art and life and explains her relationships with both men and women. Only very recently have feminist critics begun to reexamine the premises on which such accounts of Barney's life situate themselves, placing Barney at the center of a community of women committed to producing serious art. Barney's own writing, previously

dismissed as derivative love poetry for a coterie of lesbian women, has begun to receive serious attention as critical examination plots the relation between form and content in these writings, between the shape of Barney's life and the subjects of her literary vision.[4] Lillian Faderman notes, however, that "what is generally passed over . . . is the extent to which [Barney's] circle functioned as a support group for lesbians to permit them to create a self-image which literature and society denied them" (*Surpassing the Love of Men*, 369). This literary and social self-image, as we shall see, was often a destructive and homophobic one (resting on the work of such sexologists as Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis, and others). The image of lesbians in both literature and life was constructed around notions of illness, perversion, inversion, and paranoia. Natalie Barney dedicated her life to revising this prevailing image.

These interpretations of homosexual character traits among women of the Paris community still persist, even among lesbian feminist critics who rightly insist on the need for reexamination of the women in this time and place. Not only did Barney's salon operate as a support group for lesbian women; Barney herself spent a lifetime trying to revise the public and private images held by the larger community and lesbian women themselves. She provided a role model in her own behavior, she wrote poetry in the tradition of Sappho (a tradition that had been systematically suppressed over the more than two thousand years separating Barney from Lesbos), she made a pioneer effort to rewrite lesbian history and experience, to deny that guilt, self-recrimination, drug abuse, suicide, unhappiness, and psychological torment were part and parcel of the lesbian's commitment to an alternative life.[5] While Barney welcomed to her home women of all kinds (including writers, artists, musicians, and dancers, as well as music hall performers and courtesans), never discriminating on the grounds of social class or religious, political, or sexual persuasions, Barney herself objected to modes of lesbian behavior that seemed to confirm the scientific theories then prevalent. In particular, she objected to any form of dress or behavior that suggested homosexual women were really men trapped in women's bodies. Therefore, she objected to cross-dressing, to the anger, self-indulgence, and self-pity that marked the behavior of many of her friends, and to the need to mime the male in dress, speech, and demeanor.

Barney may not have realized the extent to which such forms of behavior were determined by the attitudes of a parent culture that despised evidence of sexual difference, defining it as perversion, but she fought against the effects of such attitudes with extraordinary energy. For reasons discussed at greater length below, Barney remained untouched by the prescriptions of the parent culture, her life marked in every aspect as *different from* the lesbian image ordained by society: that is, Natalie

Barney's life was significantly (and purposely) different from the lives of lesbians of her time, different most apparently from the lives of her many lovers. Importantly, the educational process Barney undertook directed itself to women and men of all sexual orientations. Although she organized a community of women in Paris (perhaps an effort to recreate Lesbos), she clearly saw the danger of forming separatist groups and made her salon an eclectic, international, and multisexual meeting place.

Important distinctions between Barney's experience and that of other women who formed her group remain unobserved, however. Crucial differences of social class and economic status are overlooked; Barney's feminism is rarely acknowledged to extend beyond the context of her lesbianism; if recognized at all, her contributions to restructuring the lesbian self-image are usually limited to the effort to rebuild Lesbos in Paris. Barney is still viewed, even by feminist critics, as the representative Paris lesbian, as though all lesbian women of the time lived out the effects of their sexual orientation in the same way, regardless of social class, religious heritage, intellectual interests, or political persuasion. The difference of sexual orientation continues to be read as sameness within the group, much as it was in Paris during these years; the expatriate community itself made a definite distinction between "the girls"—as lesbian women were referred to outside their hearing—and their heterosexual compatriots, especially those whose lives abroad reflected the conventions of middle-class life in America.[6] We assume differences in the living circumstances between heterosexual and homosexual Paris women, but we must also be attentive to differences within these two groups. For members of each group the question so frequently asked back home—"Why Paris?"—often had special significance.

Gertrude Stein reacted strongly against the American puritanism of the early years of this century and frequently addressed the issue of her residence abroad. Her stated reasons for preferring life in Europe concerned her writing: "America is the mother of the twentieth century civilization, but she is now early Victorian," claimed Stein in a questionnaire for *transition* magazine. For Stein, America was provincial, restrictive, and belonged—like Queen Victoria—to another century. Stated differently, "a parent's place is never the place to work in." Gertrude Stein found in Paris the place where she wanted to work; although her literary subject was often America, she felt the need to be distanced from it in order to write about it, believing that a writer looking at his own civilization should have "the contrast of another culture before him." (The use of masculine pronouns in this description has telling importance: Stein saw serious writing as a male activity, one to which she made claim by playing the role of the male, by seeing only male Modernists as her colleagues and competitors.) Finally, she hinted at an attitude of constraint, of forfeiture,

in American culture: "It was not what France gave you but what it did not take away from you that was important."[7] The latter statement suggests a whole subterrain of resistance to having things "taken away" that Stein shared with many of her compatriots, especially women. The expatriates resented the moral and psychological restraints of America—evidenced in prohibition laws and a staunch middle-class Protestantism inherent in the work ethic—and wished for the freedom of self-determination that was provided by Europe.

Among the expatriate women of Paris was a black American writer and journal editor, Jessie Fauset, whose reasons for expatriation reveal the narrow limits of American life during these years: "I like Paris because I find something here, something of integrity, which I seem to have strangely lost in my own country. It is simplest of all to say that I like to live among people and surroundings where I am not always conscious of 'thou shall not.' I am colored and wish to be known as colored, but sometimes I have felt that my growth as a writer has been hampered in my own country. And so—but only temporarily—I have fled from it" (*Paris Tribune,* 1 February 1923). What Jessie Fauset experienced as a black woman in America was confirmed by Josephine Baker, another woman who discovered that "the French treated black people just the way they do anyone else" (Cody, *Women of Montparnasse,* 33). These women felt, to greater or lesser degrees, the continued reminders that certain forms of behavior were expected of them and certain modes of personal and professional conduct were unavailable to them: "in order to offset criticism, the refined colored woman must not laugh too loudly, she must not stare—in general she must stiffen her self-control even though she can no longer humanly contain herself" (*Paris Tribune,* 1 February 1923). One was more in need of a "stiffened self-control" in America than in Paris, where life was economically, psychologically, and politically easier.

Gertrude Stein's expatriation from America constituted an escape from a life that, rather than being constricted, seemed directionless. Even before she left America for the last time, Stein knew herself to be seeking a purposeful life; and she knew that writing was somehow a part of that purpose. Paris provided a creative stimulus not available anywhere in America, not even in New York (a city Stein hated). Prior to her arrival in Paris, she had apparently established a pattern of dependence on her brother Leo, allowing his decisions—and frequent indecision—to direct her actions. (In fact, Leo had established a prior and even more powerful dependence on his sister.) In 1903, Leo decided to take up an artistic career in Paris, and Gertrude, trying to extricate herself from a disastrously unhappy first love affair with an American woman, followed him to 27, rue de Fleurus, where they set up housekeeping. It was here that she began writing in earnest. She had found both a place and a subject that

suited her. Taking her own biography as her artistic subject matter, she analyzed two important factors in her own personal development: the effects of her national identity as an American and the consequences of her sexual orientation toward women.

While it is true that Stein's most autobiographical and sexually explicit works were not published until after her death, making her lesbianism clear and her relationship with Alice B. Toklas specifically detailed, Paris nurtured the writing of these works. In October 1903, she completed *Q.E.D.* (later published as *Things as They Are*, 1950), a novella that explores an unhappy lesbian relationship; it is based on Stein's similar experience just prior to her arrival in Europe earlier that year, while she was still living in Baltimore. Exploration of such relationships occupied her at various times in her writing career, particularly in the early years of the Paris experience and in the formative years of her relationship with Toklas. Stein's own biography and the experiences of her daily life are everywhere available in her writing because for Stein *everything* in her adult life became a subject for and was subjected to her art. So when she speaks of her own experience living in Europe, of the need to distance herself from America in order to write about it, she is also suggesting the need to distance the facts of her personal life in such a way that she can reapproach them through her writing.

Paris offered Stein the privacy and personal freedom to live and write as she pleased, and it provided this valuable freedom for other members of the expatriate community as well. It was only in France that Stein was able to develop a "personal life" in which she could express her sexuality. The American experience with lesbian sexuality had led to painful self-doubts and psychological isolation. In the months prior to her arrival in Europe, she had essentially avoided the personal, directing her energies away from herself, becoming ever more lonely. James R. Mellow comments in his biography of Stein that her early life in San Francisco and her years at Radcliffe and later as a medical student at Johns Hopkins record a young woman's efforts to find friendship and emotional security: "Aside from the companionship of Leo, her adolescent years in California had been interior and introspective. . . . In Baltimore, confronted with the large and busy Stein and Keyser clans, she began 'to lose her lonesomeness.' But she felt a certain strangeness, after the 'rather desperate inner life' she had been leading in California, on moving into the 'cheerful life' of her numerous uncles and aunts" (*Charmed Circle*, 42). There is little in Mellow's portrait of Stein's psychological development to suggest the ego-ridden determination of her adult years. In fact, the ego seems underdeveloped, and there is an obvious lack of purpose and direction to her life in these early years. A definite change of personality occurred after her arrival in Paris, perhaps born of her efforts to shed the protective shell

Leo had provided for so long and to achieve a measure of independence. Initially, however, Paris offered a place in which Stein could fill the emptiness of her life.

This space was filled most obviously, and very quickly, with the dozens of people from various cultures who wanted a glimpse of the art work that Gertrude and Leo Stein were beginning to collect. Although in these early Paris years Gertrude was less in the forefront of the aesthetic discussions that took place on the rue de Fleurus than Leo, she is remembered, as is Natalie Barney, as the head of an important artistic salon. The two salons could not have had less in common: Barney's was formal, old-fashioned, almost stuffy, while the Steins' was casual, unassuming, and open to virtually anyone. Nor could these two women have seen their place in the Paris community less similarly. Natalie Barney never used her salon to further her own career as a writer, nor did she set herself up as the center of the salon. Her purpose was to bring people together, to foster the work of other artists (many of whom were women), and to embrace the cultural life of the Left Bank community. Barney's was a feminist effort that would eventually become an endeavor on behalf of lesbian literature and art. Gertrude Stein's role was quite different. She very soon displaced her brother as the spokesperson on art and literature, placing herself at the center of the Saturday evenings at home, gathering the men around her while consigning the "wives" to other rooms, where they entertained themselves or were entertained by Alice Toklas. Stein began promoting herself as the resident genius of the Left Bank. The Paris setting was soon important because Gertrude Stein was there—and she amply filled the space she had created for herself.[8]

Stein's adopted status among the men of this community reveals much about her artistic aims and psychological motivations. She instinctively realized that these men were creatively productive and intellectually powerful. As such, they were her colleagues, her rivals, and—as in the cases of Ernest Hemingway and Sherwood Anderson—her disciples. Stein wanted a place among the men of this community, and she accepted the implicit patriarchal belief that women were isolated and domesticated precisely because they were weak and nonintellectual. Stein was not able to escape the fate she feared. In fact, the militant and fiercely independent strategy she adopted ensured the very isolation she had come to Paris to escape. Stein's Paris years record her struggle to prove that she was stronger, more talented, and intellectually superior to the men. She purposely defined her literary project as separate from Modernism and superior to it; eventually, she accepted as callers to 27, rue de Fleurus, only those who swore absolute loyalty to her, men who agreed to become followers in her literary school. To understand Stein's place in Paris, then, one must understand her position among male Modernists. Specifically, it

is necessary to examine the conspicuous competition and often brutal hostility that Stein felt for Joyce, an expatriate whose reasons for being in Paris were not really so different from her own. Stein thought of herself as a genius and regularly proclaimed herself to be one. Although less vocal on the subject, Joyce clearly also saw himself as a genius and set out to be the most important writer of the twentieth century.

When Joyce arrived in Paris to embark on a career as a medical student at the Ecole de Médecine in 1903, Gertrude Stein had just arrived in Paris, having given up the prospects of a career in medicine at Johns Hopkins University. Joyce also quickly abandoned his efforts in order to take up literary ventures; by the time of his return to Paris in 1920, he had published poetry, a collection of short stories, a play, and an important first novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* By 1920, Gertrude Stein had published a collection of short stories, a volume of poetry, and some word portraits (much of her writing during these years, however, remained unpublished at the time). She had become in the intervening seventeen years a defender and explicator of her own experimental literary forms, something of an expert on avant-garde painting, and a well-respected if not often read writer of the Left Bank. The period of her great public renown was still ahead of her, as was Joyce's, reaching its zenith in the next two decades, after the publication of *The Making of Americans* and *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas.* But the Left Bank community already belonged to her: she discovered it, founded it, cultivated it, and enjoyed whatever measure of *la gloire* it provided her. By now, Paris was her "hometown," and she jealously guarded her home territory. In *Ulysses,* whose publication in Paris in 1922 was, according to Janet Flanner, the great literary event of the decade, a young Stephen Dedalus—just returned from the Left Bank—comments to his Dublin contemporaries: "You suspect . . . that I may be important because I belong to the *faubourg St. Patrice* called Ireland for short. . . . But I suspect . . . that Ireland must be important because it belongs to me" (*Ulysses,* 645). Whether the *faubourg St. Germain* belonged to Stein or to Joyce in the twenties and thirties was of crucial importance to Gertrude Stein. While she worried constantly about her position among the expatriates, Joyce abstracted himself from such local concern, more worried about whether Dubliners were adequately aware of his achievements.

By 1920, Gertrude Stein had been in Paris so long that hardly anyone remembered when she had not been there. She had sunk roots deep into the city. But despite the fact that she was a public figure—written about, talked about—she kept very much to herself. Writing in remembrance of those years, Matthew Josephson comments that "Gertrude Stein in all her years in Paris lived within her own walls so to speak" (Ford, *Left Bank Revisited,* xxiii). He seems to mean by this that she showed little interest

in the French writing of the period (indeed, she read little in French, claiming that it was a language to be spoken) and that she mixed rarely with French artists and intellectuals. It is true that she showed little interest in literary experimentalism other than her own and that her relationships with other writers were often stormy, since she cast herself as a teacher among apprentices. But a long-standing relationship with Picasso developed from her quite genuine interest in modern art. This relationship had its difficulties too, as the two strong egos worked out their aesthetic premises in conversation with each other over many years. Here, however, the friendship appeared to rest on neutral ground: since Picasso and Stein worked in different media, there was no inherent competition and they met on equal terms. Stein acknowledged and supported Picasso's genius, while he often said to her "*expliquez-moi cela,*" giving Stein her lead. Like her brother, she loved to explain, and Picasso's methods and hers actually seemed almost equivalent to her at a certain point in her career. She once commented: "Well, Pablo is doing abstract portraits in painting. I am trying to do abstract portraits in my medium, *words*" (*Charmed Circle*, 202).

But Stein chose carefully those with whom she shared her views, and the scene of such exchanges was nearly always her home, where she felt comfortable among her paintings and manuscripts. She was rarely, if ever, seen in Montparnasse cafes; she seldom attended the literary occasions arranged by others. The one time she appeared at someone else's salon, she attended an evening in her own honor, arranged by Natalie Barney. An evening at Shakespeare and Company at which Edith Sitwell was asked to honor Stein by reading Stein's work nearly foundered when Sitwell began reading her *own* work. By the early 1920s, Stein's relationship with Shakespeare and Company was severely strained, because Stein could not understand or forgive Sylvia Beach for her support of James Joyce. In the early years when both Stein and Joyce were frequent visitors to the rue de l'Odéon, they managed never to encounter one another. Stein and Toklas stopped visiting the bookshop, transferring their membership to the American Library on the Right Bank when it became known that Beach would publish Joyce's *Ulysses*. Later, after Beach broke with Joyce, Stein renewed her friendship with Shakespeare and Company.

It is not surprising, then, that Stein and Joyce did not meet until 1930—and then only once. The accounts of the meeting vary, Sylvia Beach and Alice B. Toklas offering separate versions. Beach claims to have introduced them at the home of sculptor Jo Davidson, where she watched them "shake hands quite peacefully" (*Shakespeare and Company,* 32). Toklas says they met at the home of Eugene and Maria Jolas and that Joyce commented to Stein, "how strange that we share the same *quartier* and have never met," to which Stein doubtfully replied, "yes" (Ellmann, *James*

Joyce, 529; *Charmed Circle*, 300). Stein seems to have brooded over the fact that Joyce never took the opportunity to meet her, feeling that her position as the literary experimentalist was the more senior: "Joyce is *good*. He is a *good* writer. Let's not say anything about that. But who started the whole thing? My first great book, *The Making of Americans*, was published in 1905. That was long before the birth of *Ulysses*."[9]

Implicit in this defense against Joyce is anger at his intrusion on territory that Stein considered her own: she was his elder, the precursor, and assumed it to be his duty to call upon her. Whatever Joyce thought of Stein (whose work he had not read, just as she probably had not read his) was carefully hidden by his consummate concern with his own writing. Although they were both published in the same little magazines, the *Little Review*, *transition*, and *This Quarter*, Joyce remained aloofly disinterested in Stein's work, as he was in the work of any other writer except himself. Like Stein, he fought tenaciously to have his writing published; although he never published it himself at his own expense, as Stein did, he suffered tremendous difficulties in finding publishers. Stein and Joyce shared a total commitment to their artistic ventures, enormous confidence in their own abilities, and egos sufficient to support years of hard work with little recognition or recompense. Also, their writing compulsively reexamined cultures they had left behind: the locus of Stein's writing was always America just as Joyce's was always Ireland. She was escaping a Protestant cultural ethic, as he was escaping a Catholic puritanism. Even their lifestyles, especially during the Paris years, were similarly bourgeois. In some sense, it matters little that hers was a homosexual union and his a heterosexual one, or that he had twenty addresses in as many years and she had one for nearly forty. The settings were similar; both were served by spouses who protected the time and energies of their mates, who preserved an intimate and private home life, who allowed these two writers to work quietly within their own walls. Their lives were exceedingly private, almost secret. They were not personally available to the public at large and were rarely seen except by close friends. Their "public" images were shadows of the real lives that were spent at home, at work.

Critics have had a particularly difficult time assessing Stein, because much about her personality, behavior, and mental attitude is uncongenial even to those who admire her creative work.[10] She presents particular problems for feminist critics because, although an important woman in twentieth-century literature and culture, she remained absolutely uninterested in supporting the work of other women or even in acknowledging herself as one of them. As a lesbian, her relationship with Alice Toklas duplicated the imbalance apparent in many heterosexual unions to the extent that Natalie Barney was shocked on feminist grounds by Stein's

treatment of Toklas. In a review of the links between lesbianism and the cultural tradition, Blanche Wiesen Cook describes the Stein-Toklas marriage: "Heterosexist society is little threatened by a relationship that appeared so culturally determined. Stein wrote and slept while Toklas cooked, embroidered, and typed. Few feminist principles are evident there to challenge the ruling scheme of things. Then there is the matter of Stein's politics. And her politics, though not simple, seem on balance simply impoverished. She was not a radical feminist. She was Jewish and anti-Semitic, lesbian and contemptuous of women, ignorant about economics and hostile toward socialism" ("'Women Alone Stir My Imagination,'" 730).[11] But heterosexist society *was* threatened by this relationship, one of the best known of its kind in the Paris community (indeed, a "model" for what heterosexuals thought lesbian alliances were like), and the extent to which heterosexuals saw their own relationships mirrored in it is of central concern to this study. The indictment that Cook makes of Stein, however, extends beyond what some may consider the narrow boundaries of "feminism." It assumes in Stein an impoverished humanity.

It is important to situate Stein among the women writers of this community, even though she would argue against such an alignment. While this study focuses on how expatriate women thought of themselves as *women* Modernists, for Stein the question may be: to what extent did she think of herself as a male, and how did that self-perception affect her writing? Evidence from both her personal life and her writing suggests that she saw herself playing roles traditionally assigned to men, adopting a male persona against the feminine weakness to which her womanhood apparently consigned her. This psychological tactic has most often been read in the context of her sexual orientation (commentators note that she employed the male pronoun in her relationship with Toklas, for instance). But the implications of Stein's alliance with the masculine are more complex and more extensive than have so far been suggested. An examination of Stein's use of the adopted masculine identity sheds light not only on the ways she lived her lesbianism but on the ways in which she wrote about that experience. A careful analysis of this living/writing experience unsettles expectations about Stein's relation to women writers of the community and her place among the male Modernists. It also upsets conventional notions of the heterosexual woman writer's experience as distinct from that of the homosexual woman, revealing the extent to which Stein's presence threatened attitudes about lesbian behavior among both homosexual and heterosexual women.

Women's contributions to the Modernist literary movement have been doubly suppressed by history, either forgotten by the standard literary histories of this time or rendered inconsequential by memoirs and literary biographies. Gertrude Stein, the best known of these women, was more

important in her historical context than her place in literary history suggests. Hugh Ford has commented, "Although Miss Stein continues to hold a formidable place in accounts of the Paris years, and will obviously continue to do so, she was but one of many talented American exiles of her sex who collectively comprised an extraordinary group of entertainers, artists, and writers" (*Left Bank Revisitied*, 45). Until very recently, when her writings were recovered by feminist critics, Gertrude Stein's literary reputation rested on anecdotal (and often incorrect) information about her life in Paris. Before feminist deconstructive practice provided a means of discussing Stein's writing, her works remained unread, beyond the comprehension of devoted scholars and of little interest to literary raconteurs. Considered the *doyenne* of literary Paris, Stein was a formidable presence in the expatriate community. But she was also a laughingstock, the butt of jokes that mocked her looks, her lifestyle, her relationships with her brother and with Alice B. Toklas, even her art collection; the term *doyenne*, one suspects, was as often applied in disparagement as in praise. One cannot resist the conclusion, then, that Stein's struggle to be taken seriously as a writer would have been less pronounced, her literary reputation more secure, her work more often read and taught had she been a man.

Literary Midwifery

If the powerful influence that Stein presumably wielded during these Paris years seems not to have outlived her, what of those other women who now serve as filler on a large canvas dominated by men? The editorial work and publishing efforts of these other women, the literary *soirées* they organized, their appearances in court on behalf of the Revolution of the Word, the selling, advertising, and promotion of Modernism, are usually subordinated to the literary contributions of the men whose work they promoted. These women are viewed as the midwives to the birth of Modernism, women who served traditional female roles in aiding this literary *accouchement*. Their own descriptions of their contributions often appear naive, unconsciously dissembling, cloaked by metaphors in which they serve as attendants to this literary process. In the effort to find an American publisher for *Ulysses*, for example, Sylvia Beach tried to determine what her claims as first publisher of the work were. When she was advised by a friend that she probably had no claims on the book (despite the fact that she held a contract signed by herself and James Joyce assuring her of such rights), she abandoned her search. Commenting on this decision in her memoirs, Beach wrote: "And after all, the books were Joyce's. A baby belongs to its mother, not to the midwife, doesn't it?" (*Shakespeare and Company*, 205). One doubts whether Sylvia Beach,

who had risked so much on Joyce's behalf—nearly losing her bookshop because of the financial support she had given his work—really believed that she was merely the midwife to his literary creativity.[12] Even if the sentiment were true, the metaphor nonetheless reflects a strangely mixed response to womanhood. It is significant that Beach chose to describe her contribution in terms that are role-defined: even among women there appears to be an order determined by biological rights, in this case the mother's over the midwife's.

Although Joyce would surely have approved of Beach's metaphor, having often equated literary creativity with the birth process himself, it is more often assumed that it was men who created Modernism—that the event itself was a peculiarly masculine one. It was Eliot, Joyce, Proust, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Gide, Picasso, Pound, Stravinsky, and a half-dozen others whose genius overturned cultural history. But how crucial was it to the Modernist movement—as a movement—that Nancy Cunard or Caresse Crosby published and printed books that were sold by Adrienne Monnier and Sylvia Beach (themselves the publishers in English and French of Joyce's *Ulysses*); or that Maria Jolas worked steadily, as did Margaret Anderson, Winifred Ellerman, Jane Heap, Amy Lowell, and Harriet Weaver, to publish in little magazines work so radically experimental that it could have no other outlet; or that Janet Flanner, in her "Letter from Paris" in the *New Yorker*, announced each of these publishing events to an American public eager for news of the Paris literary scene? Modernism, we should not forget, was a literary, social, political, and publishing event. And these women saw to it that this message had its medium. Their contributions differed little from those of Ezra Pound, who is remembered for similar efforts on behalf of Modernism. (He is also remembered for important literary contributions—poetry, theoretical treatises, and translations—while the literary contributions of Modernist women have been overlooked or undervalued.) Pound provided letters of introduction to other writers, secured money for them, found publishers, revised manuscripts, wrote letters to the editors of the *Herald* and *Tribune* about these writers and their writings—in short, he marketed them. These activities have not been viewed as somehow tangential to Modernism: indeed, they may seem to define the very energy and intellectual force of Modernism itself, in recognition of which Hugh Kenner has termed this movement the "Pound Era."

At the center of the vortex whose "patterned energies" he controlled, Pound directed the intellectual energies of others, defining the kinds of poetry and prose that were to be called "modern," encouraging his friends to follow his prescripts in composing this kind of literature, convincing journal editors to publish the work once it had been written. From the vortex Pound directed what Wyndham Lewis called—in a fa-

mous eponym—the "Pound Circus." Except for a brief period in which Pound actively supported and publicized the work of H. D., whose very signature as "H. D., Imagiste" he created, his efforts were directed at promoting the literary careers of men—T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, William Carlos Williams, among others. Pound seemed incapable of not "taking over" the literary enterprises he encountered. After being appointed as "European" or "foreign" editor on several journals—*Poetry,* the *Little Review,* and the *Egoist*—Pound quickly moved to change or solidify the literary directions of these publications. For many, it is Pound's contributions to these journals that are best remembered, suggesting that the magazines published little of intrinsic worth prior to his assistance. Harriet Monroe (*Poetry*) was thought to publish only stodgy, out-of-date items; Margaret Anderson (*Little Review*) apparently had little notion what directions she wished her magazine to take prior to Pound's appearance on its masthead. Pound eagerly took on the role of literary impresario. Kenner reports that he solicited subscribers; provided lists of people to receive sample copies; forwarded items for publication; advised on questions of layout and production; cursed faulty proofreading of copy; fussed, fretted, and controlled in his usual energetic fashion (*Pound Era,* 281–282). A glance at copies of the *Little Review,* however, reveals the persistence of Jane Heap's critical opinions (which began appearing in 1916) and Margaret Anderson's literary contributions.

What is more important than speculation about which of the two women possessed the more reliable critical eye is the realization that Pound's relationships with all women were awkward and strained. In particular, he found friendships with highly independent and forceful women almost impossible to maintain, in part perhaps because such women—Jane Heap among them—refused to capitulate to his demands. With the single exception of his long friendship with Natalie Barney, who provided him some financial support over the years, it was impossible for Pound to maintain relationships with homosexual women. Both editors of the *Little Review* were lesbian; although for a while Margaret Anderson allowed Pound's enthusiasms to direct the journal, when they later met in Paris, she found him high-strung, agitated, and "over-elaborate" in his attitude toward women. Irritated at the way he treated women and the extent to which he used the *Little Review* to aggrandize himself, she dropped him from the masthead the following year. And thereupon, argue several male critics, the journal sank into eccentric mediocrity.

The *Little Review* has been particularly ill-treated by commentators on the period. Frederick Hoffman has stated that "Jane Heap obviously did not like *Ulysses*" ("Conversation and Experiment," 3). In Margaret Anderson's personal copy of this text, she penned a note of response: "*Why* these eternal inaccuracies? Jane *loved* 'Ulysses' from the first mo-

ment, as can be easily proved by reading her *L[ittle] R[eview]* comments." In response to Hoffman's comment that Heap "had little or no perspective for a judgment," Anderson wrote, "Just what she did have!"

Writing to Solita Solano on 11 November 1972, Anderson said, "I wish, when critics write of me, they would mention what E[zra] said: 'No editor in America, save Margaret Anderson, even felt the need of, or responsibility for, getting the best writers concentrated—i.e., brought them together—in an American periodical.' It was E[zra] who influenced me to publish 'Ulysses'—he simply sent the manuscript. I published it because I loved the 'Portrait of the Artist' and because of the magic words in the first chapter of 'U[lysses].'" In the early years of the *Little Review* Margaret Anderson was often depressed at the poor quality of material the journal published, and she saw herself as heavily indebted to Pound and Joyce for having "saved" the reputation of the journal. Later she revised her reading of the early years, giving credit to her own sense of what directions the journal should take and to Jane Heap for her fine literary judgment.

Harriet Shaw Weaver's editorship of the English journal *Egoist* (formerly a feminist journal titled the *New Freewoman* edited by Dora Marsden) was virtually controlled by Pound, who devoted space to avant-garde writing. Male writers (Pound, Lewis, Eliot, and Joyce) dominated the pages of the *Egoist*, while women writers (such as Rebecca West) made fewer appearances as Pound extended his control over the magazine. In 1922, despite the legal proceedings brought against the *Little Review* for serial publication of *Ulysses*, Harriet Shaw Weaver—the woman who financially supported Joyce for more than twenty years—undertook an Egoist Press edition of *Ulysses*, disregarding the danger of police raids that threatened confiscation of the book. By that time Pound had left London (in spring 1920), having already declared in 1913 that "the important work of the last 25 years has been done in Paris." Within two years he would leave Paris for Rapallo, apparently having determined that the promise of Paris as a center of literary activity had not been fulfilled. Perhaps it is true, as Kenner contends, that "there were no more capitals" and that "the Paris decade" was one of "facilities but no city" (*Pound Era*, 387).

Kenner also argues that Pound assumed Modernism to be a thoroughly masculine enterprise because the women had no talent (or very little). Writing of the change of terminology from "Imagism" to "Vorticism" effected by Pound in the first issue of *Blast* (June 1914), Kenner states: "A Movement in part defines one's company, and Imagism, invented to launch H.D., soon entailed negotiating with dim and petulant people: Fletcher, say, or Flint, or Aldington, and eventually Miss Lowell. It is folly to pretend, in the way of historians with books to fill, that they were

of Pound's stature. Vorticism implied his alliance with his own kind: Gaudier, Lewis" (*Pound Era,* 191). It is certainly open to question whether Henri Gaudier and Wyndham Lewis were of Pound's stature, just as it is open to question whether, in leaving H. D. behind with the Imagists, Pound had decided that her work was not up to his standards. His reasons for leaving her and the movement associated with her remain far more complex than definitions of literary movements might suggest. Pound's early publicity efforts on behalf of H. D.'s writing and his later silence on that writing have affected the ways in which H. D. has been read and remembered as a Modernist poet. She is still most often remembered for her early poetry, written when she was 25 years old and supposedly under his direction. Literary historians have until recently been content to leave her in the poetic cocoon in which Pound wrapped her in April 1912, "H. D., Imagiste." Retrospectively, it seems fortuitous that Pound did not continue directing Hilda Doolittle's writing. In *End to Torment,* published after her death, H. D. admitted that his presence had been restrictive, that she feared his censure, and that her fear of failing to meet his severe standards produced a writing block. What she did not seem to realize was that her mastery of Imagist forms threatened Pound, that he found her poetic practice superior to his own.

Two Modernist Interpretations: Linguistic Routes and Postwar Despair

In reading a literary movement, asserts Kenner, we give it definition. And in making Modernism a product of the "Pound Era," its theory and practice contained in the thinking and writing of a single figure who dominates all aspects of the literary scene, we render Modernism monolithic. In Kenner's definition, the literary practice of Modernism is that defined by Pound as Vorticism—a literary movement that (both Pound and Kenner agree) was brought to an untimely end by the Great War. Like many other of the "isms" that collectively comprised Modernism, Vorticism was particularly short-lived and, except as a continuing metaphor for a certain narrowly defined literary practice around which Kenner plots *The Pound Era,* the literary effects of this movement died with the second—and last—issue of Wyndham Lewis's *Blast.* In writing the story of certain Modernists within the context of such a brief literary phenomenon, Kenner's analysis points up the very real problems in trying to define a complex literary movement or to fit that movement neatly into an historical period.

For Kenner, the crucial concepts that underlie Modernism were born in the years just prior to World War I. And it was the war, in Kenner's view, that drained the energies of these early efforts, that rendered them useless,

that altered the political and historical backdrop against which literature was written. Much of *The Pound Era* is deliberately anachronistic, from the Jamesian prose of the opening chapter that invokes "Ghosts and Benedictions" and follows the shade of Henry James in a Chelsea street in a year before the outbreak of the war, to its elaborate exegesis of the linguistic roots of Modernist poetry in Greek and Latin. *The Pound Era*, like Modernism itself, seems to be about language—the history of words and the principles by which sentences construct themselves. Kenner's work constructs a grammar for this literary event, interests itself in the syntax and diction of the modern. Indeed, an interest in language would seem to define the modern, and certain linguistic practices (evident in the work of Eliot, Joyce, Pound, and Williams) would characterize Modernism. The men of 1914 were schooled in the classics, shared a knowledge of Greek and Latin; men of the previous generation, of Henry James's era, had participated in the "Classics Renaissance" that began in the 1870s with Heinrich Schliemann's discovery of Troy. Pound, Eliot, and Joyce shared—as Kenner points out—a knowledge of these ancient languages and cultures, and although Pound complained that his Latin was weak and Joyce learned some Greek on his own, these men participated in an educational process that presumably demanded knowledge of the Greek and Roman cultures whose classical languages would be addressed by Modernist linguistic experiments. (Need it be noted that knowledge of Latin and Greek was not to be taken for granted among women educated in these years? H. D., Natalie Barney, and Renée Vivien learned Greek on their own in order to read the fragments of Sappho that became available in the 1890s, and the one woman Modernist whose writing consistently turns on classical sources of English words is Djuna Barnes, who received no formal education at all and who learned etymology by reading the *New English Dictionary*.)

Kenner's reading of Modernism uncovers its classical roots and recovers in the contemporary word the echoes of an historical and patriarchal past. It is noteworthy that Kenner invokes Sappho, celebrating the discovery of her work made possible by a chemical process that revealed hidden layers in the parchment copies produced thirteen centuries after her death. He reminds us that her work, like that of Catullus, had been lost because "men [could] find no way to relate their interest in it to other interests" (*Pound Era*, 557). This loss cut women off from their literary heritage; initially it was men who created a modern text from this ancient one, created a palimpsest that simultaneously revealed and rewrote the literary past. Existing under erasure in this modern text was an ancient woman, whose literary forms were barely visible under the modern chemicals used to decipher them (*Pound Era*, 5).

There is another reading of the historical situation of Modernism,

however, that defines it specifically as a post–World War I phenomenon, that emphasizes the role the war played in creating the psychology of despair in which the ensuing literary movement would ground itself. This definition takes as its controlling metaphor the No Man's Land between the trenches of World War I, viewing the modern world as a landscape in which the past is not recoverable and the future offers no hope. In this definition, Modernism is grounded in the ashes of burned-out rationalism and positivism. Against a bankrupt culture, argues Susan Stanford Friedman, only through the agency of language could culture be remade:

> The starting point of modernism is the crisis of belief that pervades twentieth-century western culture: loss of faith, experience of fragmentation and disintegration, and shattering of cultural symbols and norms. At the center of this crisis were the new technologies and methodologies of science, the epistemology of logical positivism, and the relativism of functionalist thought—in short, major aspects of the philosophical perspectives that Freud embodied. The rationalism of science and philosophy attacked the validity of traditional religious and artistic symbols while the growing technology of the industrialized world produced the catastrophes of war on the one hand and the atomization of human beings on the other. Art produced after the First World War recorded the emotional aspect of this crisis; despair, hopelessness, paralysis, angst, and a sense of meaninglessness, chaos, and fragmentation of material reality. In a variety of ways suited to their own religious, literary, mythological, occult, political, or existentialist perspectives, they emerged from the paralysis of absolute despair to an active search for meaning. The search for order and pattern began in its own negation, in the overwhelming sense of disorder and fragmentation caused by the modern materialist world. The artist as seer would attempt to create what the culture could no longer produce: symbol and meaning in the dimension of art, brought into being through the agency of language, the Word or Logos of the twentieth century. (*Psyche Reborn*, 97)

Beautifully articulated, this description of the Modernist crisis is the one that underwrites virtually every study of the expatriate writing experience, that explains the presence of former ambulance drivers in Paris and explicates their literary practice.[13] This reading reconfirms earlier readings of the period by Malcolm Cowley and Frederick Hoffman, both of whom overlook (except for Willa Cather and Gertrude Stein) the very existence of women in this literary community. Their evaluations, moreover, consistently stress the masculine experience, in part because the evaluators are themselves men. Not unsurprisingly, there has as yet been no study of this period written by a woman, nor has there been a study that specifically looks at women's contributions to this literary renaissance. Of 134 entries in the biographical appendix to Hoffman's study, only 17 are women. He has effectively eliminated women from the Paris literary landscape.

Cowley and Hoffman both emphasize motives and impressions filtered through a male consciousness and take special care to protect the masculine identity in relation to the literary scheme. Hoffman places a male protagonist under analysis, consistently relying on the masculine pronoun when he poses such rhetorical questions as: "What could a young man do? . . . how could he hope to preserve himself, to keep his selfness pure?" (*The Twenties*, 13). He emphasizes the reactionary spirit of the "new man" against the Old Gang of writers, those men of late-nineteenth-century American fiction, while Cowley stresses a theme common to studies of postwar Paris, the effects of the war on male consciousness:

> It would be interesting to list the authors who were ambulance or camion drivers in 1917. Dos Passos, Hemingway, Julian Green, William Seabrook, E. E. Cummings, Slater Brown, Harry Crosby, John Howard Lawson, Sidney Howard, Louis Bromfield, Robert Hillyer, Dashiell Hammett . . . one might almost say that the ambulance corps and the French military transport were college-extension courses for a generation of writers. But what did these courses teach?
>
> They carried us to a foreign country, the first that most of us had seen; they taught us to make love, stammer love, in a foreign language. . . . They taught us courage, extravagance, fatalism, these being the virtues of men at war; they taught us to regard as vice the civilian virtues of thrift, caution, and sobriety; they made us fear boredom more than death. All these lessons might have been learned in any branch of the army, but ambulance service had a lesson of its own: it instilled into us what might be called a *spectatorial* attitude. (*Exile's Return*, 38)

The war became the subject of the literature of the 1920s, and women, who were assumed to be on the fringes of the war adopting a "spectatorial" attitude of their own, were thought to have experienced it at second remove. Gertrude Stein used her experience driving for the American Fund for French Wounded in some lyric poetry, and Edith Wharton wrote several books about the war: *Fighting France* (1915), *The Marne* (1918), *French Ways and Their Meanings* (1919), and *A Son at the Front* (1923). Of these, *A Son at the Front* met particular critical ridicule, but all of these works have been reviewed by men who suggest that Wharton's perspective on the war was too "removed" to be pertinent. Frederick Hoffman comments that Wharton "was but one member of an older generation that thought as she did about the war: non-participants, women for the most part, they saw the issues of the war more simply (and therefore more 'clearly') than did the writers of the so-called war generation" (*The Twenties*, 48). For Hoffman, women were unlikely raconteurs of the male war experience.

Whereas Cowley and Hoffman base the expatriate Modernist experience on a form of male bonding produced by the actual experiences of

World War I, Kenner and Friedman see the war as an apocalyptic revelation announcing the end of Western civilization in its pre–1914 form. The latter two critics see the problem of Modernism as an epistemological one that questions the relation of human experience to human knowledge. For them, Modernist writing was defined not by its use of the Great War as subject matter but by the larger issue of the cultural bankruptcy of Western civilization that the war seemed to confirm. While Cowley and Hoffman restrict their readings to American writers, Kenner and Friedman expand theirs to include English and Europeans. But the major difference in these sets of interpretations rests on the emphasis given to the role of language in Modernist writing. The common denominator among the writers Kenner and Friedman discuss is a concern with language, an exploration of the ways language constructs human experience.[14]

Both Kenner and Friedman focus on the role of the *word* in Modernist writing. For Kenner, the word is a curiosity whose ways of meaning can be explained by scientific research: first one applies to a dictionary and next one invokes grammatical systems. Friedman's Word is, rather, mystical and mysterious. Its power to shape and remake the world invokes the very power of God. This Word has powers beyond the scientific and against which the powers of scientific rationalism fail: Kenner's word can merely explain the world; Friedman's Word can remake the world.

That these two critics would generate significantly different descriptions of Modernism is not very surprising. More surprising is the extent to which the worlds they describe both exclude women. Women are denied access to Kenner's modern world because they have not learned the classical languages, Latin and Greek, on which that world is constructed. Such exclusion is not permanent, however: perspicacious women like H. D., Natalie Barney, Virginia Woolf, even the ridiculed Amy Lowell, undertook to teach themselves these languages. (There are other barriers to the Kennerian world for women, ones that will be discussed at some length later, but for the moment this problem of "classical education" suffices to remark woman's separate place in the Modernist hemisphere.) Friedman's definition denies women an experiential grounding in the world; that is, this definition in no way suggests the radical *difference* of women's experience. Claiming the war as the central factor in Modernist thinking, her definition is silent on the issue of woman's relation to that war. This silence is troubling, since it leaves the door open for agreement with another tacit assumption about postwar writing (an assumption held by Cowley and Hoffman)—that women could not participate fully in the writing of the postwar decade precisely because they had not directly experienced the war. A description of Modernism that emphasizes "despair, hopelessness, paralysis, angst, and a sense of meaninglessness, chaos, and fragmentation of material reality" excludes—for a variety of rea-

sons—many women Modernists. These terms do not describe the visions of Gertrude Stein, Djuna Barnes, Mina Loy, Marianne Moore, or Edith Sitwell, for instance. And if it can be said that H. D. and Virginia Woolf experienced despair, hopelessness, paralysis, and a sense of meaninglessness in the world as direct effects of the postwar condition, then their separate ways of experiencing loss of hope and fragmentation—different from the male experience and distinct from each other—must be acknowledged.

We must remind ourselves, for instance, that the "reality" of these years exists today as a set of *idées reçues* constructed largely by men. We read their fiction in the literary works that have collectively defined Modernism, in the assessments of such men as Cowley and Hoffman, in the biographies—of both men and women expatriates—written by men, and in the letters, notebooks, and diaries of such writers as T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, and William Carlos Williams and the memoirs of Morrill Cody, Robert McAlmon, and Ernest Hemingway. Frederick Hoffman, for instance, consistently employs metaphors of manliness to describe America's youth and vigor at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was a country founded on masculine values and virtues: "The American was an industrial giant, an emotional dwarf . . . he came through with ingenious inventions, processes, methods; he built bigger, better, and faster locomotives and was experimenting with automobiles and playing with airplanes" (*The Twenties,* 11). Such metaphors of experience are unhappy ones not because of their inappropriateness but because of their accuracy. In these years American men defined all that was the country's competitive (and boyish) best.

This apparent retreat to childishness was brought about by what Ann Douglas has called the "feminization of America" (*The Feminization of American Culture*). Men retreated to an earlier stage of their cultural development because women (and men associated with institutions women controlled) had become mothers to them, directing their energies toward limiting man's independence and self-will. Women were the force behind the two most powerful institutions of American life—the family, which served as a domesticating influence on men, and the church, which served to humble them. Alex Small refers to this notion of a "feminized culture" in a complaint that makes women responsible for all the worst ills of American life. Small lists as one of his reasons for preferring Europe:

> The inordinate influence in American life of public spirited women. Of course, the individual who is not poor and helpless may escape their pernicious benevolence, but the spectacle is always there and it is sickening. It is to be dreaded, too, for no one knows what forms it is going to take. These managing women (who may be of any sex) have no respect for liberty. They defend their tyrannies with the claim that all living in society is a restriction

> on liberty, which is perfectly true, but it is a sophistical excuse for their mischief making. (*Paris Tribune*, 10 July 1930)

All that was expansive, energetic, far-thinking, enthusiastic, and driving was attributed to the masculine; all that was meddling, restrictive, manipulative, and demeaning was attributed to the feminine. Small's commentary overlooks the ways in which patriarchal dominance and the American spirit of rugged male individualism had, by the very denial of the feminine, created a particularly subversive version of it. Small denies the inevitable link between the "feminine" and the "female" in his metaphor of "managing women," thus resisting any investigation of his own misogyny. Whereas men may have seen themselves in flight from a pernicious and powerful feminine influence, women expatriates read the American myth differently, seeing this feminization of culture as an effort to control dark forces that, given their lead, would destroy the Western world.

An alternative fiction—or set of fictions—creates this world from the woman's point of view. These fictions make a claim on our interest not because women wrote truer accounts of these years (if truth is understood in the empirical sense) but because they wrote *different* accounts. These records reveal women's relation to industrial and economic growth, to war, to the dominant institutions of society; they record the constraints on women's personal growth and provide evidence that documents women's emerging independence and deepened self-awareness; they examine the effects of a cultural exchange—of American puritanism for European worldliness. Women's writings in these years demonstrate the degree to which the twenty-two women of this study were culturally freed and fettered by the expatriate experience, their roles determined, in part, by the very transitional nature of exiled Left Bank society. These accounts rewrite the myth that expatriation was always an enabling and liberating act. Perhaps most importantly, a reexamination of women's experience in this community challenges received notions about and accepted definitions of Modernism, forcing us to revise the "modern" context for the "Modernist."

Alternative Modernisms

In a recent essay, Susan Stanford Friedman has elucidated the effects of World War I on certain Modernist women writers, most particularly H. D. She argues that the development of H. D.'s postwar Modernism emerges from an identification with all those who have been "dispersed and scattered after World War I" ("Notes on Recent Writing," 10). Friedman includes H. D. among all those marginal peoples who have fled the forces of history: blacks, Jews, Indians, homosexuals and lesbians,

women, and artists ("Modernism of the 'Scattered Remnant'"). Friedman argues that for H. D., as for Anaïs Nin, political activism seemed to "encode a critique of patriarchy and violence. . . . she feared that political organizations reproduce on a dangerously large scale the unresolved violence within the individual." The distrust of political activism is, as Friedman demonstrates, "part of a larger gender-based pattern that includes writers like Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, Dorothy Richardson, May Sinclair, Zora Neale Hurston, Djuna Barnes, and Jean Rhys." Like Nin, H. D. was to ground her political attitudes in personal experience—in particular her experience with the Harlem Renaissance—to develop a "political syncretism, a modernism of the margins rather than the reactionary center." For some women Modernists—in particular, Virginia Woolf, Natalie Barney, Sylvia Beach, Nancy Cunard, Janet Flanner, and Adrienne Monnier—World War I solidified a commitment to liberal causes and a fear of repressive and inhumane political power structures. For each of these women, an effect of the war was a strengthened feminism in awareness of the ways women—among other marginal elements of society—were vulnerable to patriarchal violence. And for some among them, this emergent consciousness of marginalism would lead to psychological collapse (in the cases of Woolf and Cunard) and to a reversal of values as evidenced in anti-Semitism and political reactionism (Gertrude Stein and Natalie Barney). One cannot argue, then, that Modernist politics divide along gender lines—the men reactionary and the women progressive. The political attitudes of these men and women were complex, often marked by contradiction and ambivalence, composed of varied attitudes toward questions of race, social class, and religious commitment, as well as gender. But it is true, as Friedman suggests, that the distinctions between a Modernist center seen to be dominantly reactionary and a marginal political liberalism are generally constructed along gender lines in patterns mapped by this study.

The attempt to define and describe a literary movement as complex as Modernism exposes the divisions and differences among its practitioners even as it plasters over the cracks in the walls in an attempt to create a smooth facade. Kenner calls the age of Modernism "divisive," and by this he seems to mean the ways in which the disaster of World War II (which most saw as the legacy of World War I) separated "the men of the Vortex" from each other, forcing them to work alone during the latter part of their lives. The sense of community and a communal project had been lost. But the age was divisive in other ways, in the sense that it was marked by the differences among individual practices and the differences of ideologies and aesthetics. Imagist Modernism differed significantly from Surrealist Modernism or Futurist Modernism; the Modernism of Paris was

quite different from that of London. And it is this troublesome relationship between the artist and the word, between the writer and the Word, that marks such differences in literary practice. Modernist experiments reveal divergent attitudes toward language, one marker of which is gender: women not only experience the world differently from men, they write that experience differently. Modernist writing by women is significantly unlike that of men, a condition that has often resulted in critical appraisals that denigrate this writing for not meeting the "standards" of Modernism set by and for men. But it would be a mistake to assume that gender distinctions produce writing by women that differs from that of men in predictable or homogeneous ways. Certainly the works of Hilda Doolittle and Djuna Barnes bear certain resemblances, because as homosexual women both were writing to some degree against the predominant patriarchal and heterosexual culture. Yet the writing of these women is also individualistic, "Modernist" in quite distinct ways.

The double effort to recover the experiences of expatriate women and to revise accepted notions of women's contributions to Modernism both invites generalizations and exposes the internal contradictions, differences, and divisions of this literary movement. This undertaking demands that the very suppositions supporting the investigation be put into question. The notion that Modernism is either monolithic or utterly chaotic, that it is either private and arcane or holds within its practice a model for social revolution, must be carefully examined. Certainly the assumption that sexual gender *alone* can explain differences in social behavior and literary practice of male and female Modernists requires rigorous inspection. Tempting as it might be, then, to oppose women Modernists to a parent culture defined as monolithic or to argue that a collective female experience resulted in a homogeneous women's literature, such arguments force the delicate network of female relationships and individual achievements of expatriate women into preconceived patterns. Indeed, such readings produce all too predictable results: individual experience (both male and female) is once again submitted to communal claims. For although Modernism constituted an overtly acknowledged literary movement (perhaps the first in history), one whose aesthetic principles and literary claims were codified in a series of manifestos, whose texts were printed in journals specifically dedicated to the propagation of Modernist literature, the *practice* of Modernism was highly individualistic, often anarchic, incorporating contradictory impulses under a single "ism."

One must note, for instance, that the term "Modernism" itself is of fairly recent invention (although Edith Sitwell was using it as early as 1930), a product of the critical heritage that codified the various avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century, placing them in relation

to one another and drawing together their presumed common elements under the rubric of the Modernist. What may have seemed highly individualistic and diverse, even divisive, in the living moment now appears to have participated in a larger—nearly encompassing—artistic movement. That there was a group of literary practitioners (most of them men) who assembled in London and Paris in these years, working in concert with each other, reading each other's manuscripts, talking and writing together about their literary efforts, is a fact of literary history. That women were rarely a party to these communal writing efforts (except to act as benefactors, publishers, and booksellers for that work) is also a fact of history. It is through the writings of Eliot, Joyce, and Pound and the critical commentaries on such writing that Modernism has been defined.[15] Although it was Ezra Pound whose commentaries on experimental writing spurred the work of his contemporary practitioners, it was the public speeches of T. S. Eliot and the editorial direction of the *Criterion* that introduced and explained what is now taken to be the expression of "High Modernism" to a larger reading public. Among his contemporaries, certain women writers—including Virginia Woolf and Edith Sitwell—took exception to Eliot's emphasis on tradition and the philosophic and moral ordering of experience. Peter Ackroyd comments that in *The Sacred Wood* (1920), for instance,

> Eliot provided literature with an order and certainty all the more potent because these were the qualities lacking in social and political life after the First World War: the older generation had lost its authority, and the younger had not found any way forward. His was not the first attempt to do so in England—T. E. Hulme had sketched out something of a similar kind, and in 1919 Clive Bell wrote a series of essays on "Order and Authority" for the *Athenaeum*. But Eliot's stance was, in the end, more influential. He reaffirmed the status of literature, as a way both of understanding the larger culture and of disciplining private feelings and experience. His own need for order reflected that which existed among his generation; his own fears of fragmentation and meaninglessness ("the Void") were also theirs. (*T. S. Eliot*, 107)

But Eliot's fears were not shared by all of his generation, nor was his obsessive need for order and discipline common to all of his contemporaries. Women especially might be expected to see in the call for order, authority, discipline, and moral certitude a further enforcement of patriarchal claims. In "Modernist Poets" (1930), Edith Sitwell made a quite different claim for contemporary writing, with special attention to women's concerns. Her views, although belated, seem to address precisely the claims made for poetry in *The Sacred Wood:* "Art is magic, not logic. This craze for the logical spirit in irrational shape is part of the present harmful mania for uniformity—in an age when women try to abolish the differ-

ence between their aspects and aims and those of men—in an age when the edict has gone forth for the abolition of personality, for the abolition of faces, which are practically extinct. It is because of this hatred of personality, that the crowd, in its uniformity, dislikes artists endowed with an individual vision" ("Modernist Poets," 78). Sitwell—and other women Modernists, including Djuna Barnes, Nancy Cunard, Natalie Barney, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf—argued an aesthetics of the individual and irrational (and perhaps even the eccentric) against Eliot's claims for tradition and logic.[16] One discovers that expatriate women participate in the Modernist enterprise often seeking to subvert and invert its cultural and aesthetic premises. This women's art is based in difference, in the difference *within* gender and genre, manifest through the inversions and diversions of Modernist logic.

Communities of Expatriates

Within the designated frames of time and place, it is the very definition of "community" that is under examination in this study. The extent to which the expatriates formed a community is, of course, open to speculation. It is not at all clear that among them there was ever a sense of community as such, or of a bonding. It is highly probable that the various relationships among these women developed haphazardly and at random. It is clear, however, that the expatriate residents of the Left Bank were intensely preoccupied with each other, living intellectually and geographically in close proximity to one another. Everyone knew about and was aware of everyone else: the Left Bank was a small town surrounded by an enormously vital large city. The American expatriates all read the same English-language newspapers, went to the same concerts and theater productions, drank and conversed in the same cafes. The privacy of Faubourg salons was replaced by the public setting of cafe life, where the rendezvous was observed and conversations overheard. Experiences were shared by the very fact of living in the same time and place.

It is important, therefore, to distinguish this Left Bank group of artists from the already well-established American colony across the river on the Right Bank. This other group was comprised of businessmen and is of little interest except as it distinguishes the peculiarly American monetary interests in Paris during these years and demonstrates the lengths to which American culture—of the middle-brow, affluent kind—could intrude upon a Paris much in need of American dollars. At the high point of activity, ten thousand Americans resided in Paris (although there seemed at the time to be more than a "mere" ten thousand), the large majority of them among the business community of the Right Bank. Moreover, this

community brought with it a support group of other Americans who worked in the banks, schools, real estate agencies, bars, grocery stores, and bowling alleys established for the expatriates. Most of these people attended the American Church, joined American fraternal organizations, and used the American Library. They were on the "overseas payroll" of American businesses with European branches, and members of this group were not really expatriated—they were in residence in France for shorter or longer periods of time, but they remained staunchly American. Few could speak French even passably; a fairly decent French accent was rare.

The expatriate community of the Right Bank was served by its own newspaper, the *Paris Herald,* which kept track of its comings and goings, recounting the adventures of even the most obscure members of that community, precisely because this publicity attracted more American business and sold newspapers. While showing little interest in the Paris cultural scene, the newspaper nonetheless reported items about the "Young Intellectuals" in residence across the river. This nod to the Left Bank was due in part to the necessity for some of the Young Intellectuals to support themselves financially as journalists, working for the *Herald.* The paper considered them "earnest" (a word that would not have been used to describe the Right Bank community) and spoke of their efforts as the "Literary Revolution." That revolution was taking place in Montparnasse and in the *quartier* St. Germain, and those who participated formed a group of no more than two hundred men and women who had neither money nor business interests in Paris. But this community had a newspaper that took undisguised interest in the literary upheaval, and the *Paris Tribune* (an extension of the *Chicago Tribune*) created something of a "community" identity for the Left Bank. It devoted columns to the activities of the Young Intellectuals, the titles of which reveal the journalistic perspective: "La Vie de Bohème," "Rambles through Literary Paris," "Latin Quarter Notes," "What the Writers Are Doing."

These contributions provided a glimpse of the less earnest side of Left Bank life, made the literary revolution a human interest story. Thus some of these portraits are disquieting from the perspective of later history: Radclyffe Hall's sexual orientation is suggested by her "crisp-looking appearance" and the observation that both she and her friend Lady Troubridge wore monocles and used cigarette holders; James Joyce's painful eye illnesses became part of a local legend potentially embarrassing to this immensely private person; e.e. cummings's World War I memoir, *The Enormous Room,* was sold as a bestseller, described as "one of the topnotchers among books about the war." Nevertheless, the paper doggedly tracked the publication records of its readers, reviewed their works, provided them publicity, and paid attention to their literary experiments.

And it is here, in the pages of the *Paris Tribune*, that the women of the Left Bank play significant roles, often as the subjects of literary notes. In the daily record of these years we discover the evidence of the enormous contributions women made to the Modernist enterprise, efforts that have been largely overlooked or underestimated in retrospective evaluations of this community.