The Literature of Information Overload: Modernism and the Encyclopedia

By

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For Mike

il migliore fratello.

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It was difficult to know who to mention in that last paragraph. Coming to study here put a lot of distance between me and most of my friends, and I have not been much good at closing that gap. I want to take a few lines to affirm my love for some people who have been less a part of my life as I have been writing this, but whose friendship nevertheless means the world to me. Marco Barone, Anthony Bider-Hall, Alex Cartier, Adrienne Connelly, Catherine Evans, Sky Goodden, Nina Maness, Padraic Scanlan, Cee Lavery, Yonah Lavery, Samara Leibner, Omar Rahman, Rob Wringham, and any of the dozen or two other friends I could name here: if you happen to read this, know that you are in my heart even if you have not been hearing from me much.

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INTRODUCTION

A FIFTEEN-PAGE ENCYCLOPEDIA,
OR: THE GENRE OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD

My subject here is modernist literature's complicated involvement in the history of the encyclopedia. By *encyclopedia*, I mean something other than what the word normally means in everyday use: not the shelf-sagging, studiously neutral sort of A-Z reference work which was once sold door-to-door; nor the ideal of a completely complete compendium of knowledge, a book that knows everything, that the *Britannica*, the *World Book*, *Encarta*, and Wikipedia strain toward. I am not referring to the more historically specific icon of epistemic confidence that Michel Foucault and other theorists of modernity invoke when they use the encyclopedia as a metonym for the project of Enlightenment. I will not be using *encyclopedism* or *the encyclopedic* as a name for the world-writing tendency in scripture and epic that survives the desuetude of those genres into modernity, the way that Northrop Frye, Edward Mendelson, and other modern literary critics do. What I want to foreground in adopting *encyclopedia* as the key term for this dissertation is related to all of those uses, but none of them matches my emphasis. I am mainly interested in the encyclopedic "style of reading and thinking"—"broad, fast, informational, fragmentary, and networked"[1]—evinced and encouraged by encyclopedists from Pliny to Denis Diderot to James Joyce and in the multiplicity of literary forms it has engendered over that history. In situating the encyclopedic turn epitomized by Joyce's big books in the long history of the encyclopedia and centering my analysis on the habits of mind encyclopedism sustains and the reading practices encyclopedic form affords, I aim to bring out an essential facet of literary

modernism that has special relevance to a present moment that is in many respects defined by supersaturation with information.

A comparison of two recent books, and a personal digression, may clarify my meaning. The books are for the most part strikingly similar but antithetically different in one respect. That difference goes to the heart of my understanding of the encyclopedic. *The Complete Poems of Philip Larkin*, edited and with notes by Archie Burnett, was published in 2012, when I was conceiving the earliest version of this project to pitch in my Ph.D. applications.[2] *The Poems of T.S. Eliot*, *Volume I: Collected and Uncollected Poems*, edited and annotated by Christopher Ricks and Jim McCue, appeared in 2015, as I was shaping my thoughts about two years of doctoral study into a plan for a dissertation.[3] I have been intermittently thinking about these books in connection with my dissertation the whole time I have been writing it. One always reminds me of the other—for three reasons.

First, the two books look very much alike. I strongly suspect that either both were designed by the same person—Mark Swan, who is credited under the pseudonym Kid-ethic on the jacket for the *Complete Larkin*—or the uncredited designer of the *Collected Eliot* was given the earlier book to imitate.[4] (For a side-by-side comparison, see Figure 1 at the end of the chapter.) The books are bricks of roughly equal dimensions, about nine and a half inches by six and a half, and two and a half inches thick. Each book weighs close to five pounds. Both dust jackets overlay greenish-purplish abstract paintings with white text in what appears to be the same typeface, one that is suggestive of the inscriptions on certain stone monuments. (Neither colophon lists typefaces, but both credit the same typesetter.) In writing this introduction, I have picked up and opened one book meaning to refer to the other countless times.

Second, both books share a peculiar project and structure. They monumentalize the poetic oeuvres of unprolific poets using annotation. In each one, primary text is dwarfed by notes and other apparatus. The *Complete Larkin* also appends a couple hundred pages of poems Larkin did not choose to publish. His published work comprises only 121 of its 729 pages, and that count includes a collection some would consider juvenilia. In the even more lopsided *Collected Eliot*, which includes some posthumously published poems as part of Eliot's corpus but reserves his light verse for a second volume, the poems make up 346 of 1311 pages, with secondary text set in type that is roughly two-thirds the size of that used for primary text. Going by word count, the ratio of apparatus to poetry is about twelve to one.

The third, more personal reason I think of these books as a matched pair is that they are deluxe, jumbo versions of two others that lived in my backpack when I was a teenager. Faber's compact Eliot and Larkin *Collected*s are the books I reread most as I was learning to read poetry. At first, I read them in the excited, repetitive way that I listened to records when I did not understand them but recognized they had something I wanted to absorb. I did not apply myself to reading them with any kind of self-improvement or education in mind. I fastened on Eliot and Larkin because they are perfect for ridiculous bookish kids who want to gild their melancholy, the same as with Leonard Cohen and The Smiths.

Nevertheless, I could not help taking from those books a foundational lesson about how poems work and what they are for. Reading "Prufrock," "Church Going," "Preludes," "First Sight," "The Hollow Men," "The Whitsun Weddings," and a dozen or so other favorites over and over inculcated a sense of poetry as something you take in. I would get a handle on a poem's rhythm, meter, and cadence, and the outlines of its form, none of which I could have named or specified, the way I would get to know a song I was playing on repeat, attuning myself to it with

my body. As with a song I was getting to know by repeated listening, I would let a poem's meaning come into focus over many readings. If something was opaque to me, I might look it up or try to figure it out later, but I would never disrupt my reading to try and better comprehend it. Sometimes I would realize that I knew stanzas or whole poems by heart; other times, I quietly worked at memorizing. The poetry I knew well, I palpably *had*. Whether or not I memorized it, I took a kind of possession of it. It became something I could call on, turn over, think or feel with.

Soon after, I learned from Eliot another, markedly different way of reading and understanding poems. *The Waste Land* demanded it. That poem had not been one of my favorites in the *Collected* I carried around. Although I liked its opening section and some other parts, I could not settle into reading it. The trouble was not merely that it was more difficult than other poems by Eliot; it felt like a different, much more thwarting type of difficulty. There was a way in which I could not understand what it was that I could not understand, and I kept running aground on it. Reading "The Hollow Men" might at first have felt a bit like standing against the stage listening to something weird and dissonant, willing myself to enjoy it until I did. Reading *The Waste Land* made me feel like I was too dumb to be at the show. I thought it was cool that Eliot had written his own notes, but they were no help to me. I decided I just did not like the poem—then I felt that I needed to.

I had known *The Waste Land* was famous and important, but as I started to piece together a real picture of the literary canon, I came to appreciate the degree to which it was *the* canonical poem of the period that most interested me. When my older brother Mike took the final class in the great books sequence at the liberal arts college we would both ultimately attend, simply titled The Twentieth Century, he signed up to give his first-semester presentation on *The Waste Land* as if accepting a challenge. He said it seemed to him the ultimate modernist text to master.

My brother is brilliant, and I had never seen him work so hard trying to understand something. I got the message—like it or not, *The Waste Land* is essential—and returned to the poem. This time, I proceeded more as Mike had done, making it my priority to figure things out as I went.

I swapped my slim *Collected* for an old *Norton Anthology*. It had explanatory notes from the editors, along with Eliot's unhelpful notes, and I could also use it to look up many of the texts the poem refers to. I would read fluidly for stretches, but I spent at least as much time flipping around, making connections, and following references, using the anthology's apparatus and archive or searching online. (Everyone had just started using Google.) I might have supposed I would eventually glean enough that I would be able to switch to reading and rereading the whole thing through, comprehending and absorbing it, as I had learned to read poems before. But before long, it became obvious that I would not be done looking things up and puzzling things out anytime soon. I grew to understand that sort of extensive, annotative, poem-enlarging alternation between primary and secondary reading to be the pleasure of *The Waste Land* and the point of it. Here was another foundational lesson: that reading a poem and coming to know it well could be, not a matter of getting a feel for the text and gathering it to your inner resources but of centering a portion of your reading and thinking on the poem's problems and rewards. With a poem as difficult and rich as *The Waste Land*, these are so abundant that although you might hold moments from the text close, you could never fully take the poem in.

The style of reading I learned from *The Waste Land* had closer affinities with the Internet browsing habits I had developed over the preceding several years than with the sort of music listening that felt so intimately connected to how I had mostly read poetry before. I was (and still am) an inveterate binge-clicker, the sort of Web browser who can go to look up a date and watch hours disappear in a haze of research for its own sake, the sort of hypertextual divagation

that might (to rehearse a recent Chrome history) range over literary trivia, old-time machine politics, menus from bygone restaurants, foreign subway maps, failed bids for the Olympics, nineteenth-century chess players (for some reason, one of the best-written sections of Wikipedia), and a dozen other glancingly related subjects. I came to *The Waste Land* as the convergence of the Internet and everyday life was decisively taking hold. Even then, I felt my core reading habits becoming less reflective of the education in reading I had received from my parents and at school and more, of the training (some would say the programming) I had unwittingly been giving myself in Web-wandering stints of distraction and divided attention. By the time I was taking The Twentieth Century, four years after my brother, the shuttling, information-gathering type of reading *The Waste Land* calls for felt perfectly normal to me. Nowadays it almost seems normative.

The Internet's profound effect on reading habits and on habits of attention more generally has been widely noted and lamented by many. I have apprehensions about those changes, but I am more inclined to look for the potential in them than to take the declinist view. N. Katherine Hayles convincingly argues that we have lately developed an unprecedented capacity to manage multiple information streams "as a strategic response to an information-intensive environment."[5] She calls the type of reading this enables *hyperreading*. There is evidence to suggest that its emergence involves a widespread neurological adaptation as well as a behavioral one.[6] Information technology has, of course, quickly evolved to make the most of our new training or wiring. This began with additions to Web interfaces we may already take for granted, such as select-and-click search, which gives searching something like the quickness of thought, and tabbed browsing, which allows readers to manage continuous parallel attention spatially, and it accelerated with the turn to ubiquitous computing about a decade ago. The habits typically

identified with the smartphone were already long on their way to becoming widely adopted when the iPhone launched in 2007. It hardly seems a coincidence that a major reconsideration of the traditional centrality of close reading in literary studies has been afoot for the better part of twenty years.[7] Less consideration has been given to how the ways we read now might converge with reading practices fostered by older varieties of literary form, how that convergence might make aspects of old works newly available to readers, and how those works might speak to our information-saturated moment.

The Waste Land, like a number of later Eliot poems, is available to hyperreading in ways that none of Larkin's poetry is. The massive scale of the recent editions magnifies this difference. Burnett's hundreds of pages of notes mostly amount to a diffuse critical biography and variorum. He details the genesis of each Larkin poem, tracking mentions of his work on it in letters, giving a full rundown of drafts and variants, and explaining any editorial choices he has needed to make. He situates each poem in Larkin's notoriously uneventful biography and collects his public and private comments about it. He explains just about anything that might need explaining, records even the faintest echoes of other texts, and canvasses the existing criticism for explication. The *Collected Larkin* will deepen its reader's knowledge of Larkin and enrich their reading of his poetry. But most of Burnett's annotation is fundamentally unnecessary. His notes rarely add anything integral to understanding the poems or lead much of anywhere further. In the few instances where a gloss supplies or specifies an important piece of a poem's meaning, annotative reading stops at the gloss.

Larkin's longest and most firmly canonized poem, "The Whitsun Weddings," ends with an uncharacteristically obscure reference. After describing over seven and a half ten-line stanzas a journey on a train that gradually fills with new married couples on a hot holiday Saturday, the

poem's speaker registers an urgent, complicated feeling among the passengers that gathers with the lurch of the train's stopping:

> We slowed again,
> And as the tightened brakes took hold, there swelled
> A sense of falling, like an arrow-shower
> Sent out of sight, somewhere becoming rain. (77-80)

Larkin borrowed the final image from the Agincourt scene in Laurence Olivier's 1944 film of *Henry V*. A line of archers raise their bows to an overcast sky, the clouds darken sharply, and they shoot. The connection would not be obvious even to someone who knows the film well, and it is an interesting thing to find out about the poem. Burnett's note about it might send a reader to YouTube. That reader would likely have their sense of the closing lines colored by the mood and period feeling of the scene and the timing and ingenuity of the moment Larkin adapts to his purposes. They would take it in and file it away. This might give the poem a somewhat different complexion on future readings. Yet while in another kind of poem, the connection with that scene might be used to say something involving Shakespeare or wartime English patriotism or Anglo-French differences, Larkin's lines are self-sufficient. Burnett's notes can, at most, provide something like the click into focus or added definition that comes when you look up an unknown or fuzzily understood word in the dictionary. The Olivier connection is not widely known—Larkin's poems are rarely published with notes—but that does not seem to be an obstacle to appreciation. In 2003, "The Whitsun Weddings" was chosen as England's most beloved poem by 800 visitors to poetry festivals, occasioning the immortal *Times* headline LARKIN'S DISMAL VERSES VOTED NATION'S FAVOURITE.[8]

With Eliot, in contrast, we get poetry as an engine of annotation. Ricks and McCue's 162 tightly packed pages of notes to *The Waste Land* in the new *Collected*—I am not including their twenty-five-page "editorial composite" of drafts to the poem in that count—are the latest

and most profuse entry in a ballooning sequence of annotation projects. Michael North's 2001 Norton Critical Edition undoubtedly sets the record for ratio of secondary to primary text in that venerable series. It is at least thirty to one. North's footnotes add a thick explanatory underbrush to the poem and to Eliot's notes. After the annotated primary text and authorial paratext comes a hundred pages of sources and a hundred and fifty of critical commentary—exponentially more than the series has ever devoted to a poem of similar length. Of the Norton Critical Editions currently in print, North's *Waste Land* is the only one devoted to a single poem that is not a normal-size book in itself. The next-shortest is their *In Memoriam*, and, secondary material and all, it is a slimmer volume. The fifty-seven pages of endnotes plus fourteen pages of related historical photographs in Lawrence Rainey's *Annotated Waste Land* make North's direct annotation look restrained. Rainey also includes seventy pages of critical prose by Eliot contemporary with the poem, suggesting that Eliot's self-annotation goes far beyond his notes. For its part, Ricks and McCue's edition is extravagant but the opposite of exhaustive. As they extend their reading into the poem's referential surround, ranging farther and wider than North and Rainey do, their notes continually suggest subjects for further research. Their book already solicits the multi-volume annotation that will someday supplant it.

The Waste Land is "characterized by a principle of endless generation," as one critic says of the later chapters of the work that typifies the turn to the encyclopedia in the modernist novel as surely as Eliot's poem does the same for modernist poetry, James Joyce's *Ulysses*.[9] Annotators cannot give a full survey of the textual world the poem projects, only fit it to the practical limitations of their editions. Another Joyce critic, who could be writing about Eliot: "Notes by nature look resultative, not explorative. They pretend that the goal has somehow been reached, when, usually […] the goal itself is in question. Notes must end, inquiries never do."[10]

The Waste Land creates an organizing context, exerts a gravitational pull, that makes other reading function as annotation. (Compare the *Complete Larkin*, whose fat sheaf of notes reads overwhelmingly like a separate book *about* Larkin rather than part of a book by him.) The joke in David Lodge's campus novel *Small World* about the scholar writing a book about Eliot's influence on Shakespeare is astute.[11] Rainey's inclusion of Eliot's contemporary essays as part of what is primarily an annotated edition seems right. C.D. Blanton makes a compelling argument that the entire seventeen-year run of the *Criterion* under Eliot's editorship was effectively a diffuse, collaborative annotation of *The Waste Land*. Blanton takes the poem to be the germ and formal center of an immense effort on Eliot's part to index all of interwar culture on his terms.[12] Certainly, Eliot spurs intertextual reading so extensive and interminable, it can be hard to determine where, and whether, the poem ends.

That is clearly his intention. Eliot's notes to the poem complicate more than resolve or explain. He makes it clear from the start that the notes are not there to help in the usual ways by declining to gloss the ancient Greek, Latin, and German phrases the reader will encounter in their first minute with the poem (epigraph, 12-13). Where he does provide glosses, he tends to hint at interpretive possibilities rather than clear up difficulties. A "Cf." before nearly every note instructs the reader to go to the source and figure out connections. Also, beginning with the first two notes, which gloss references to Ezekiel and Ecclesiastes in the same sentence (n20 and n23), the notes often encourage comparison between intertexts—"Cf." squared. As the reader works through the text with the notes, begins to appreciate how very many references Eliot is not glossing—this will be extremely conspicuous to readers of any of the critically annotated editions—and tries to figure out why some references get notes and others do not,[13] they are likely to have two revelations. One: that the notes, far from being a guide for the perplexed, are a

puzzle in their own right and compound the poem's perplexities. And two: that every moment in the poem, just about every word, might want annotation.

To look at just one moment: forty-three lines into Part I, "The Burial of the Dead," Eliot introduces "Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante," who

> Had a bad cold, nevertheless
> Is known to be the wisest woman in Europe,
> With a wicked pack of cards. (43-46)

This is his note:

> I am not familiar with the exact constitution of the Tarot pack of cards, from which I have obviously departed to suit my own convenience. The Hanged Man, a member of the traditional pack, fits my purpose in two ways: because he is associated in my mind with the Hanged God of Frazer, and because I associate him with the hooded figure in the passage of the disciples to Emmaus in Part V. The Phoenician Sailor and the Merchant appear later; also the "crowds of people," and Death by Water is executed in Part IV. The Man with Three Staves (an authentic member of the Tarot pack) I associate, quite arbitrarily, with the Fisher King himself. (n46)

If the reader can untangle for themselves this private and arbitrary combination of Tarot taken at face value, ultra-universalizing Victorian cultural anthropology, and Arthurian legend, *and* determine how seriously to take Eliot's claim not to know the traditional meanings of the cards, it only remains for them to work out how the note bears on the lines glossed and on the 429 more that are about as obscure and crowded with references.

A reader might reasonably go looking for clarification. In two brief notes, North gives Aldous Huxley's 1921 novel *Crome Yellow* as the source for the name "Madame Sosostris," mentions Eliot's acknowledgment that he does not know anything about the Tarot, and then points suspiciously to the section on the Tarot in Jessie L. Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*, one of the sources Eliot drew on most heavily in writing the poem.[14] In two longer notes, Rainey dismisses the relevance of Tarotology, taking Eliot at his word, despite "vast amounts of ink [scholars have

expended] on establishing precise connections between the tarot cards and Eliot's use of them," and argues that "Madame Sosostris" cannot possibly derive from *Crome Yellow*. He suggests Eliot might, rather, be playing on the phrase *so so* (Madame S.'s equivocation) or on the Greek *soteros* (holding out a promise of salvation).[15] Over two pages, Ricks and McCue cite Huxley ambivalently, as well as Coleridge, Thomas Lovell Beddoes, the Fowlers, Frazer, Henry James, Rudyard Kipling, and F. Scott Fitzgerald, but they lead with the suggestion that Eliot is borrowing heavily from a little-read Mina Loy poem. They are agnostic about the claim to ignorance in Eliot's note but compile a hefty paragraph of his comments about the Tarot from almost forty years of letters.[16]

Even the pivotal, climactic lines of Larkin's most celebrated poem, which derive from a surprising source that is a rich cultural and historical palimpsest, do not gain much from annotation; seemingly any lines of *The Waste Land* unfold endlessly into sources that sometimes seem to include much more than Eliot could have personally read. Those lines about Madame Sosostris might appear to be a special case, because the Tarot presents a symbolic system that could, if Eliot is being misdirective in asserting his ignorance of it, make sense of everything. But Eliot continually proffers clues that promise to unlock to the poem's total meaning. Introducing his notes, he says that "not only the title, but the plan and a good deal of the incidental symbolism of the poem" come from Weston's book on the Grail legend, and that Frazer's *Golden Bough* is his other crucial source. Further down, he claims Tiresias, not any figure out of Weston or Frazer or Madame S.'s deck, is "the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest" (n218). Still further, when he quotes Augustine alongside the Buddha, he glosses it: "the collocation of these two representatives of eastern and western asceticism, as the culmination of this part of the poem"—the central part—"is not an accident" (n309). And

those are only the most conspicuous examples of a penchant for big-picture overdetermination that leaves the reader janitorially freighted with keys to the poem.

What to make of a poem of twelve or fifteen pages that inexhaustibly accrues meaning by sending readers out the text to gather it from other sources, that extends intertextually to include what can seem like the whole written world, and that maps itself so multiply there can be no end to exploration and also no avoiding getting lost? It is a funny thing to say about such a short work, but my answer is: *The Waste Land* is an encyclopedia.

Over this dissertation's four chapters, I develop two lines of argument. First, I argue that modernist writers rework the encyclopedic tradition's formal innovations in order to construct expansive, variously traversable networks of text, intertext, and paratext capable of comprehending a world that literature otherwise can no longer represent as a totality. Modernist renovations of the encyclopedia encourage reading practices that both parallel the tactics needed to navigate the modern city and anticipate the ways we read, think, and distribute attention in today's superrsaturated information culture. Second, I argue that other modernist writers respond critically to encyclopedic modernism by making subversive use of its formal repertoire. For these writers, the encyclopedia monumentalizes dubious tendencies in modernism and modernity: excessive investment in the authority of the archive, overconfidence in the efficacy of language, a turn from the material to the purely textual, and dependence on cultural resources and institutions that reinforce hegemony. Some break encyclopedic form, others repurpose it to devise alternatives. At issue both for modernism's enthusiastic encyclopedists and those modernists who engage with encyclopedic tradition while defining their work against it is the question: how best to manage information overload when it seems to threaten the coping strategies of literary form?

Although the term *information overload* dates only to 1962, the complaint that there is too much to know goes back to antiquity. It persists among scholars and clerics through the Middle Ages and grows more emphatic and widespread with the spread of print culture in the early modern period. (In somewhat anachronistically calling this information overload, for the sake of clarity and focus, at the cost of some historical simplification, I am following Ann M. Blair, whose history of pre-modern encyclopedism is definitive.)[17] As long as readers have felt overwhelmed by the abundance of books, authors have worked to put immensities of information in their grasp, reinventing the book so that it might have the cultural compass and availability to browsing of a library. *Encyclopedia* becomes a household word in the Enlightenment with the success of the French *Encyclopédie*, but the genre that it names had already been evolving for almost two millennia. As information overload subsequently becomes more prevalent and then inescapable, with the proliferation of media and the emergence of the modern metropolis in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, encyclopedic form increasingly mediates ordinary experience. This has lately culminated in the deep integration of the Internet and the everyday. Google's stated mission, "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful,"[18] is a more businesslike version of Denis Diderot's mission for the *Encyclopédie*,

> to collect all the knowledge scattered over the face of the earth, to present its general outlines and structure to the men with whom we live, and to transmit this to those who will come after us, so that the work of past centuries may be useful to the following centuries, that our children, by becoming more educated, may at the same time become more virtuous and happier, and that we may not die without having deserved well of the human race.[19]

My dissertation offers a reading of literary modernism from that point of convergence.

That reading turns on four observations about the encyclopedia.

First of all: much, often most, of the formal architecture of encyclopedias is not embodied in primary text. This is the radical difference between encyclopedic form and every other type.

The genre's recourse to extrinsic form disturbs basic assumptions about the immanence and unity of form that are widely held and substantiated by most writing. The complete form of a sonnet is right there on the page, in the line lengths, the line endings, the shifting weight of the words, and the pattern they make. A reader takes it in or susses it out. Encyclopedias organize information on a scale incommensurate with that sort of recognition. Because its readers cannot be expected to assimilate or even notice everything, an encyclopedia needs to continually declare and signpost its form. Most do that with paratext such as formally descriptive titles, prefaces, notes, catchwords, cross-references, and indices; diagrams and illustrations; and explanatory epitext—for example, d'Alembert's *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopédie* or Joyce's schemata for *Ulysses*.

Consequently, the encyclopedia troubles and in many cases obviates the conventional distinction between text and paratext. Matter that would would normally be considered supplementary is often integral to encyclopedic projects. (The next chapter, which characterizes *Ulysses* as an encyclopedia mainly through close readings of its paratexts, should clearly demonstrate this.) By glossing profusely, editors and authors of encyclopedias equip boggled or bewildered readers with a jumble of ways to apprehend the whole work formally and find their way in it. Other writers continue where that self-annotation leaves off—as, for example, with Charles-Joseph Panckoucke's five supplements to the *Encyclopédie* or Don Gifford's *Ulysses Annotated.* Readers effectively join in, reading annotatively, as described above in connection with *The Waste Land*. The sprawling, proliferating apparatus is never enough, though it would be incomprehensibly excessive in any other genre.

Second, and closely related to the first observation: encyclopedic form is multiple, overdetermined, incoherent, *impossible*. Form typically presents a stable, determining principle.

A sonnet cannot also be a sestina. Even a Dadaist cut-up embodies a complete formal idea, however chaotic. Encyclopedias, in contrast, are written on a scale at which total coherence cannot be thought, let alone embodied. Information overload is an epistemic problem, but the encyclopedic tradition has to address it as a practical one. A perennial solution is to agglomerate a superabundance of form. Because encyclopedic form tends to be largely extrinsic, formal cues, principles, and structures can be multiplied endlessly and overlaid in complicated, contradictory ways. That sort of formal overdetermination affords more and more possibilities for construing and mapping the work and charts manifold paths for reading.

In ancient and medieval encyclopedias, this multiplication is relatively modest. Pliny organizes the excerpts that comprise his *Natural History* associatively but also, unusually if not uniquely for his time, prepends a booklong table of contents which abstracts a more systematic work from his fairly jumbled primary text.[20] Vincent de Beauvais' *Great Mirror*, perhaps the most important encyclopedia of the Middle Ages, is primarily organized according to the Biblical sequence of creation but made navigable by an overlapping combination of lower-order, secular forms.[21] Encyclopedic overdetermination becomes wildly profuse in the Enlightenment. Ephraim Chambers uses an elaborate tree diagram and matched thematic index to plot a methodical, pedagogically orthodox itinerary through his *Cyclopaedia*, the preeminent English encyclopedia before the *Britannica*. He does this, he says, so the reader will not have to "be bandied from one part of the Book to another: To say nothing of the Interruptions which may frequently happen in the Series of References"—that is, the unprecedentedly extensive set of cross-references that he includes.[22] D'Alembert's *Preliminary Discourse* and Diderot's article "Encyclopedia" figure the *Encyclopédie* as a hierarchical tree and circular chain of knowledge; a labyrinth seen from above and explored from inside; a school for philosophers; a complicated

double map of the ideal and the empirical; and a naturally developing landscape. Though its frontispiece is an emblem of synoptic order, their famous tree of knowledge, Diderot claims that his mazy, at times ironic or otherwise irreverent cross-references are "the most important part of [their] encyclopedic scheme."[23] More generally, as co-editors, D'Alembert and Diderot—respectively, the genre's arch schematizer and leading proponent of formal messiness, plasticity, variability, and openness—personify the encyclopedia's traditional basis in multiple, conflicting approaches to form.

Third observation: encyclopedias are thoroughgoingly intertextual. The term *intertextuality* comes from a 1966 essay by Julia Kristeva in which she argues that literature is always rewriting received cultural texts, rearranging its archive, changing the meaning of its sources even as those referents constitute its meaning. As such, "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations."[24] This is a provocative statement of a broadly poststructuralist philosophy of language and a straightforward description of how encyclopedias have been written since antiquity. Ancient and medieval encyclopedias are effectively compendia of excerpts. They are palpably made of pieces of other books, and they often map their archives formally. About half of every page of Pliny's long, schematizing table of contents consists of catalogues of sources corresponding to pages outlined. The *Great Mirror* is carefully pegged, point by point, to the Biblical verses upon which it ostensibly enlarges. Eighteenth-century encyclopedic writing typically looks less like compilation, more like composition, but the genre remains deeply citational. At every phase, it metabolizes immensities of reading. In consolidating libraries into books, encyclopedias index as they digest. References to other texts, which are sometimes explicitly indicated, sometimes implied, entoil their primary text in intertextual networks whose shape and dimensions they can

only partly suggest. Encyclopedic form extends into this referential surround, enabling works to encompass more than they include and opening them onto the archives they organize.

Fourth: encyclopedias are read differently than other books. Ordinarily, reading a book means reading every word from the first page to the last in stints of uninterrupted absorption. You finish it. Though other readers might interpret it variously, you will all have seen the same words in the same order. Encyclopedias manage too much information for ordinary reading to be feasible. People do sometimes read them all the way through, but it is a stupendous feat of perversity and endurance. Consultation reading and browsing have always been the norm.[25] Most new form that has emerged in the encyclopedic tradition evolved to afford those kinds of reading—as with alphabetical ordering, tables of contents, indices, cross-references, and the extrinsic formal definition and overdetermination described above. Encyclopedias consequently afford abundant choice. They so overload readers with information, only partial readings are possible; to compensate, they also overload readers with possibilities for reading. Extraordinary mobility in an open, plentiful reading environment gives readerly subjectivity a special temper. That description, taken from Daniel Rosenberg, of the encyclopedic "style of reading and thinking" as "broad, fast, informational, fragmentary, and networked" the right idea,[26] but the list could also include *through-lining*, *desultory*, *meandering*, *cohesive*, *fanciful*—a lot else. So much is up to each reader on each reading.

The dissertation's first chapter defines and historicizes the encyclopedic tendency in literary modernism by locating the definitive modernist encyclopedia, Joyce's *Ulysses*, in the long history of the genre. As I do in reading *The Waste Land* above, I fasten on annotation as an index to the novel's encyclopedism. Building from an analysis of Joyce's abstruse, telegraphic notes to *Ulysses*, I describe how he uses extrinsic, impossible, and intertextually extensive form

to write an unprecedentedly encyclopedia-like encyclopedic novel and in doing so, changes how novels can be read. With this keystone description of Joyce's encyclopedism, the dissertation diverges from most studies of encyclopedic literature, which tend to define the encyclopedic ahistorically, without reference to specific reference encyclopedias, and to emphasize literary encyclopedists' epistemic claims far more than the special formal architecture and possibilities for reading that most consequentially distinguish the encyclopedia from other genres. The chapter goes on to give an original account of the reciprocal evolution of form and genre; develop formal comparisons with encyclopedias from every earlier phase of the genre's evolution, from antiquity to the Enlightenment; and extend its initial analysis of Joyce's self-annotation to take in a variety of scholarly annotations of *Ulysses*, as well as the primary text. In all of this, I argue to the conclusion that by giving *Ulysses* a deep basis in a genre whose business is large-scale information management, Joyce reinvents the novel for a moment at which information overload has become an inescapable fact of everyday life.

In relating Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project* to the evolution of public space and media over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, my second chapter considers how encyclopedic modernism reflects broadly encyclopedic aspects of modernity. Although he does not explicitly make the connection, I argue Benjamin recognizes that over that period, the built environment and media ecology of the metropolis take on key formal characteristics of the encyclopedia and come to require a kind of encyclopedism of metropolitan subjects. He discerns complicatedly multiple, sometimes impossible, spaces in the commercial arcades, streets, public buildings, and archives of modern Paris and privileges a type of flânerie defined by a talent for perceiving and navigating them. He sees grave danger in coercively overwhelming modern media, which seem to him supremely adaptable to the imperatives of fascism, and he posits flâneurial subjectivity as

an answer to the threat. With his idiosyncratic, critical, creative encyclopedia of nineteenth-century Paris, he translates into literary form what he takes to be the version of modern urban encyclopedism most conducive to freedom, individual flourishing, and humane collective life, which he associates with the city's arcades and the culture that grew around them in their heyday in the 1820s and 30s. Thus he aims to foster the mobility and perspicacity of the flâneur, as he complicatedly understands that protean figure, among readers as they immerse themselves in that world. The chapter fills in the background to this project, and to encyclopedic modernism's presentation of encyclopedic modernity more generally, by analyzing canonical encyclopedic spaces (the arcade, the exhibition, the Haussmannian boulevard, and the department store), literary precedents (Baudelaire, the urban physiology), and subject types (the flâneur, the collector, the reader, and the researcher) that are important to Benjamin's thinking. Having established that context, I show how he draws on those models to train denizens of his unusually city-like city text in a rich, multiplex, flâneurially mobile reading of modernity.

The dissertation pivots in its third and fourth chapters, shifting its focus from constructive engagement with the encyclopedic tradition by modernist writers to their subversive uses of encyclopedic form. Although even the most enthusiastically encyclopedic of modernism's encyclopedias include immanent critique of encyclopedism, such reflexive self-scrutiny being fundamental to the genre, there is a counterstrain of modernist literature that uses the encyclopedia's traditional resources against its usual aims. My third chapter develops a reading of William Carlos Williams's anti-encyclopedic long poem *Paterson*. With *Paterson*, I argue, Williams begins a modernist encyclopedic project on the model of *Ulysses* or *The Waste Land*, erecting the same sort of formal architecture and announcing his world-writing ambitions, and then painstakingly undermines that project, making a mess of it formally, liquidating his poetic

authority, and repeatedly imagining encyclopedic space being obliterated and encyclopedic reading thwarted. *Paterson* is generally considered a failure, but, I argue, its apparent failing looks purposeful, given the refusal of totalizing abstraction and vehement antipathy toward forms and institutions that encourage it that run through the poem. Rather, I read it as a kind of controlled demolition or destruction in effigy of the modernist encyclopedia. I take that refusal to be rooted in the poetics Williams's lifelong friend and poetic mentor Ezra Pound's earliest poetics, which favor radical reduction as a response to the information overload that comes with trying to keep all of literary history in view and the basis of an ethic for the care of language. The chapter unpacks that poetics by developing a reading of Pound's first major critical essay, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," then shows how Williams remains committed to it even after Pound turns to encyclopedism in service of an increasingly reactionary politics—in his vehement denunciation of Eliot, his curious refusal to acknowledge Pound's encyclopedism in reviewing *The Cantos* as it appears in installments, and finally in *Paterson*.

My fourth chapter examines how, with the poem "Marriage," Marianne Moore uses encyclopedic forms and practices to write a profoundly unencyclopedic work that obliquely indicts a culture that excludes women from its most important traditions. I begin by taking stock of that exclusion, first considering Virginia Woolf's eschewal of encyclopedism before turning to consider Moore's more complicated attitude. In the first half of the chapter, I describe her unconventional use of encyclopedic apparatus. I argue that the index she appends to *Observations*, the book in which "Marriage" first appears, is useless as a finding aid, but makes a sort of poetry of the most prosaic of all reference forms and in doing that crystalizes her intensely private, materializing poetics, and show how wildly irreverent her use of quotation turns out to be upon close inspection of the sources for her utterly un-Eliotic notes to the poem. Over the second half

of the chapter, I analyze the strategies she employs in devising an unencyclopedic alternative to the sort of expansive, annotation-soliciting encyclopedic extension I have described in writing about *The Waste Land*. Moore makes spurious or non-intertextual use of documentation to position herself as a poet and to avail herself of documentariness as an immanent effect. In manipulating or inventing sources, she uses imposture to circumvent women's exclusion from cultural archives and approximate encyclopedic polyphony. She preempts readings that would undermine those strategies by cannily using encyclopedic apparatus to guide readers away from them. All of this enables her to cultivate privacy as a core personal and poetic principle, protecting herself from the hostility and condescension she would surely face if her ambitions for her work were more overt, and to affiliate her work with other writing without undertaking the metonymic synopsis of culture and canon-making that are typical of encyclopedism and central to the encyclopedic tradition's exclusion of women. Where Williams would destroy the modernist encyclopedia in protest, I argue, Moore repurposes its resources to quietly cut at its deep roots in patriarchy.

Finally, in a brief coda, I dilate on one of the dissertation's key terms, *plenitude*, mainly by developing a close reading of Jorge Luis Borges's story "The Library of Babel." This is not meant to be a summation of my project. The idea is, more, to take a final glance back, from a new angle.

NOTES

[1] Daniel Rosenberg, "The Enlightenment Encyclopedia Today" *Eighteenth-Century Life* 36, No. 3 (Fall 2012): 128. Rosenberg is writing about a raft of recent historical work that reconsiders the encyclopedia in light of the Internet and its transformation of culture and everyday life. With this dissertation, I aim to extend that emerging conversation to modernist studies.

[2] Philip Larkin, *The Complete Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 2012). References will be made in the text by line number.

[3] *The Poems of T.S. Eliot: The Annotated Text*, ed. Christopher Ricks and Jim McCue, Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015). References will be made in the text, by line number for poetry and following Eliot's idiosyncratic last-line numbering practice for his notes.

[4] That his portfolio at kid-ethic.com includes the Larkin cover but not the Eliot one argues for the latter possibility, but it could be that he does not want to be seen repeating himself.

[5] Hayles, "How We Read: Close, Hyper, Machine," *ADE Bulletin* 150 (2010): 66.

[6] Hayles points to Nicholas Carr's book *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains* (New York: Norton, 2010) as a valuable synopsis of research to this effect, though she goes over the primary research he cites and raises some questions about how he construes it.

[7] Hayles, "How We Read," 63-65. See also, for example, Michael Warner, "Uncritical Reading" in *Polemic: Critical or Uncritical*, ed. Jane Gallop (New York: Routledge, 2004), 13-38, Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus, "Surface Reading: An Introduction," *Representations* 108.1 (Fall 2009), 1-21, and Franco Moretti, *Distant Reading* (London: Verso, 2013).

[8] "Larkin's Dismal Verses Voted Nation's Favorite," *The Times* Oct. 15 2003.

[9] Derek Attridge, *Joyce Effects: On Language, Theory and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 81.

[10] Fritz Senn, Review of *Ulysses Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's "Ulysses*,*"* 2nd ed. *James Joyce Quarterly* 27.3 (1990): 653-662.

[11] David Lodge, *Small World* (1984; rpt. London: Penguin, 1995), 51-52.

[12] C.D. Blanton, *Epic Negation: The Dialectical Poetics of Late Modernism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 22-85.

[13] The likely possibility that there is no good reason is highlighted by several whimsical or seemingly pointless notes. Preeminently, on the "dead sound" of the bells at St. Mary Woolnoth: "A phenomenon which I have often noticed" (n68), but see also n199 [the Australian ballad],

n210 [the cost of the currants], n264 [his thoughts on Wren's interior to St. Magnus the Martyr], n356 [the hermit thrush he has heard in "the Quebec province"], and n359 [the arctic explorers].

[14] T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, ed. Michael North, Norton Critical Edition (New York: Norton, 2001), 6.

[15] T.S. Eliot, *The Annotated Waste Land with Eliot's Contemporary* Prose, ed. Lawrence Rainey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 79-80.

[16] Ricks and McCue in T.S. Eliot, *Collected Poems*, 609-11.

[17] Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information Before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 2-5. Blair warrants her choice to talk transhistorically in terms of information overload, rather than using an array of actors' categories (*res et verba*, knowledge, etc) with a panoply of examples, throughout the book but especially in the first chapter (11-61).

[18] "Our Company," https://www.google.com/about/our-company/.

[19] Denis Diderot, "Encyclopedia," 1755, trans. Ralph H. Bowen, in *Rameau's Nephew and Other Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001), 277.

[20] Pliny, *Natural History, Books 1-2*, 78 A.D., trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 330, ed. G.P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 23-168. Blair cautions that although the *Natural History*'s table of contents is the earliest we know of from the west, we should not assume it is the first ever, as the outermost layers of papyrus scrolls are the most vulnerable to damage and loss, and there is some evidence to suggest use the form was more widespread (18).

[21] Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 44; Mary Franklin-Brown, *Reading the World: Encyclopedic Writing in the Scholastic Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 97-111.

[22] Ephraim Chambers, *Cyclopaedia: Or an Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, 1728, 2 vols. (London: self-published, 1928), ii.

[23] Diderot, "Encyclopedia," 295.

[24] Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," 1966, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980) 64-69.

[25] Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 59-60.

[26] Rosenberg, "The Enlightenment Encyclopedia Today," 128.

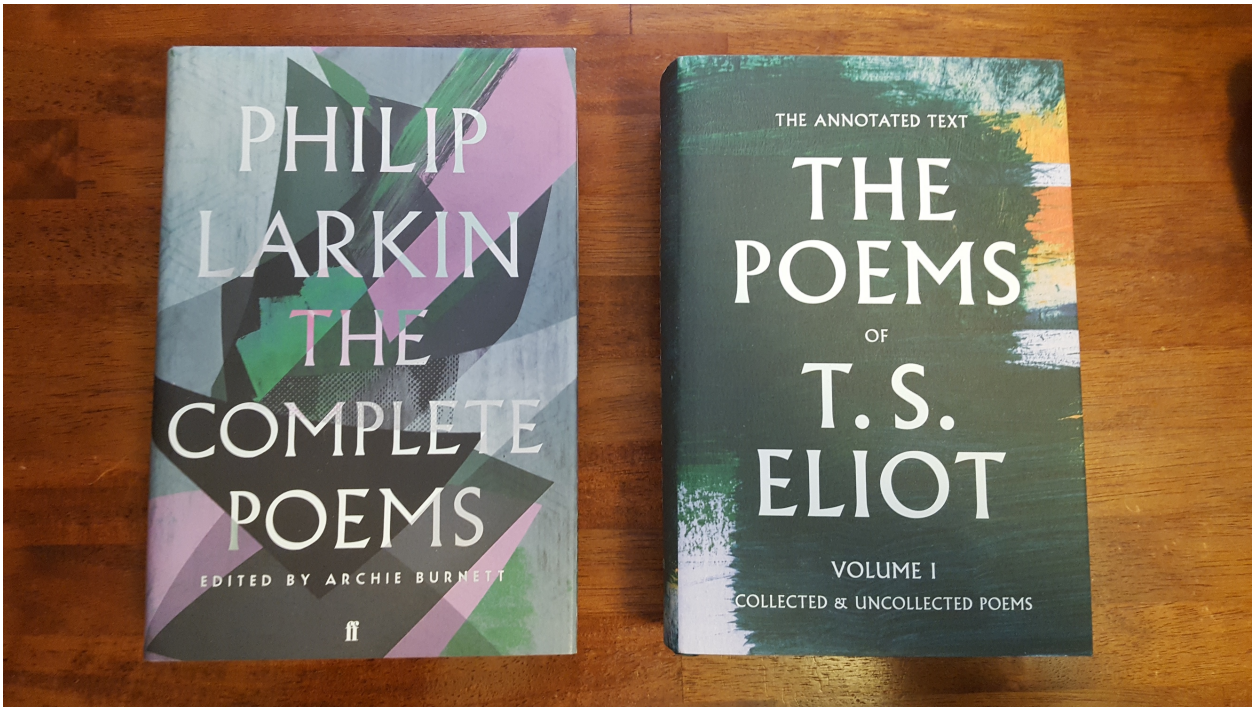

Figure 1 The *Complete Larkin* and the *Collected Eliot*

CHAPTER I

ULYSSES UNLIMITED:

ENCYCLOPEDIC FORM, ANNOTATION, AND READING

That *Ulysses* is a kind of encyclopedia would go without saying had James Joyce never said so. Yet he did say it, and it was an unusual thing to say when he did. Although the genre we know as the encyclopedic novel is most closely identified with books from the early modern period and the Enlightenment, there are few recorded instances of novels being characterized as encyclopedic before the mid-twentieth century. The rare times that it does happen—in connection with, for example, works by Gustave Flaubert, Thomas Wolfe, Arnold Bennett, and Marcel Proust—"encyclopedic" is clearly used for its plain meaning in ordinary language, without invoking an established literary-critical category or positing a new one. The same is true with regards to "encyclopedic poem" and related descriptions (which, perhaps surprisingly, given how strongly literary encyclopedism has come to be identified with the novel, turn up a little more often.) The encyclopedic only gains currency as a category for construing literature after Northrop Frye and, more influentially, Edward Mendelson adopt it in the 1950s and 70s.[1] (This rhymes with the history of the encyclopedia as we know it, which takes more than a millennium to be recognized as a distinct literary genre and given a name.) When Joyce characterizes *Ulysses* as encyclopedic in the 1920 letter to Carlo Linati that encloses the earliest of his schemata for the novel, he is grasping after terms to capture what he is trying to do:

> I think that in view of the enormous bulk and the more than enormous complexity of my damned monster-novel it would be better to send [you] a sort of summary—key—skeleton—scheme (for home use only). Perhaps when you have the text my idea will appear clearer to you. [...] It is an epic of two races (Israel—

> Ireland) and at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life). […] It is also a kind of encyclopaedia.[2]

"Monster-novel"…"epic"… "encyclopedia." Making an unorthodox connection that will one day become a commonplace, Joyce thinks of the genre of information overload as he strains to put a contour on the enormity and more than enormous complexity of *Ulysses*, the multiplicity of overlapping designs and extratextual referents and contexts that he maps in his "summary—key—skeleton—scheme."

It is telling that Joyce makes that connection when, well before he has finished writing the novel, he begins to annotate it. Annotation becomes unprecedentedly important, for authors, readers, and critics, after modernism turns to the encyclopedia, and it proliferates as never before in literary culture. Encyclopedic modernism's annotations—and, Joyce being the definitive encyclopedic modernist, Joycean annotations in particular—are something strikingly new that points up how literature and the world that it emerges from and addresses have been made new. Those annotations are a major focus of this dissertation for two reasons. First, they are essential engines of and indices to the encyclopedic response to modernity, analyzed here as the convergence of formerly disparate currents in literary history (reference encyclopedism and the novel), and in the next chapter situated in more proximate, non-literary historical contexts (modernity's cities and media ecologies, and the political and economic orders that shape them). Second, annotation is at the heart of the critiques of encyclopedism I will discuss in chapters three and four.

Joyce discreetly circulated two schemata for *Ulysses*, explanatory charts densely packed with glosses, one in Italian and one in English, to help condition the novel's reception. This was after versions of the first fourteen chapters had been published serially in *The Little Review* in 1918, 1919, and 1920.[3] The first of these, the Italian one, is the schema that he sent to Linati in

1920. In 1921, he gave copies of what would become known as the Gilbert schema to Valery Larbaud and then, after some hesitation, to Jacques Benoist-Méchin. Throughout the 20s, Sylvia Beach passed Benoist-Méchin's copy to select readers with Joyce's tacit approval. Joyce gave Stuart Gilbert permission to publish that schema in his 1930 book *James Joyce's Ulysses: A Study*.[4]

Although in the accompanying letter Joyce says the Linati schema is "for home use only," the efforts he made to limit the schemata's circulation early on were plainly intended to maximize their influence rather than curb it. It is in rebuffing Benoist-Méchin's initial request for a full copy of the schema he had given Larbaud that he memorably protests: "If I gave it all up immediately, I'd lose my immortality. I've put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of insuring one's immortality."[5] Soon after saying that, he tells Harriet Weaver that he gave the Gilbert schema to Larbaud to "help him to confuse the audience" of a lecture he was preparing.[6] Joyce appears to have quickly figured out that making his annotations widely available would only vex and busy the professors more.

Joyce scholarship as we know it begins with the *Ulysses* schemata, and to some readers that is a kind of original sin. Edmund Wilson's complaints about the Gilbert schema in *Axel's Castle* run to three and a half pages. "The trouble," he argues, is "that, beyond the ostensible subject and, as it were, beneath the surface of the narrative, too many other subjects and too many different orders of subjects [are] being proposed to our attention."[7] Vladimir Nabokov thinks that Joyce must be playing a joke on Gilbert and other "scholarly and pseudoscholarly bores."[8] He purports to have flunked a student for using the Homeric chapter titles the schemata supply.[9] In "The Schemata: A Caveat Lector," Phillip Herring warns of their "troublesome"

"power to suggest eccentric possibilities."[10] Cheryl Herr finds so much missing from the conspectus they give that she regards them as indices to "the futility of the encyclopedic enterprise."[11] Declan Kiberd suggests that

> by offering different schemas to men like Carlo Linati and Stuart Gilbert, [Joyce] may unwittingly have impoverished future interpretations of his book. It became 'a text to be deciphered, not read'. Henceforth, scholars would work, scoffed Leo Bersani, with 'a kind of affectless busyness' within those rigid grids which the author had laid down. They would elucidate textual references rather than face the more challenging question of what Joyce was actually saying.[12]

Kiberd, a bluff traditionalist and common-sense demystifier who invokes "the common reader" and a bygone "common culture" fourteen times in that book's opening pages, makes common cause with Bersani, a bomb throwing partisan of the theory wars whose specific objection to the schemata is that Joyce, refusing to die as an author should, sends his readers on an endless round of exegetical errands, distracting them from the irredeemable emptiness of all language and identity. Even Jeri Johnson, whose facsimile edition of the Shakespeare & Company *Ulysses* foregrounds the schemata in its apparatus and includes the most complete presentation of them now in print, has lately insinuated that they are more bother than they are worth.[13]

Certainly, the schemata do not make *Ulysses* any easier to read, if we hope to read it as we ordinarily read novels. Understood as instructions for ordinary reading, their most salient quality is an almost satanic unhelpfulness. A reader of a difficult-to-bewildering novel such as *Ulysses* might find it useful to be shown that the text they are puzzling their way through has a total design that is hard to discern from the limited perspective of close reading. Knowing to look for that design, bringing it into focus as they see facets of it, and developing a coherent impression of the work as a whole, reading and referring to the author's outline, could help them get their bearings in the text and make the more demanding parts less daunting. But the schemata do not just correlate *Ulysses* with the *Odyssey* or the human body or the color spectrum or a

curriculum. They say that the novel somehow incarnates all of those things and more, much more, all at once. And they say it twice, in contradictory ways.

Each schema formulates an exponentially mixed metaphor, a raveled mesh of indeterminately related eighteen-part analogies that are convoluted further by historical and intertextual correspondences specific to particular chapters and characters.[14] The variously glossed chapters are grouped in sections, according to a different elliptically indicated intratextual or intertextual logic in each schema, adding another layer of complicating organization.[15] The Linati schema includes cryptic interstitial notes in between rubrics and sections and, mysteriously, ends with a final section that comes after the novel's last chapter. Even disregarding the ways that being entangled in that snarl of abstruse higher-order schematizing complicates their meaning, Joyce's glosses tend to be polysemous if not baffling. What does it mean, what use is it to know, that "Nestor" is brown or that "Eumaeus" corresponds to the nerves in Joyce's anatomy of the novel? How often can it help a reader to learn that Joyce's designated symbol for "Lotus Eaters" is either "Host, Penis in the Bath, Froth, Flower, Drugs, Castration, Oats" or "Eucharist," depending on which schema they follow?

And why should the reader choose? We have both schemata, and there is no decisive reason to privilege one over another. The Gilbert was written after the Linati, but the Linati is more detailed and arguably more sophisticated. Joyce strategized about the Gilbert's circulation and apparently did not mind that the Linati stayed in Beach's desk through the 20s and 30s; and yet he did choose to give it to Beach, who was taking care of circulating the Gilbert to the right people, after Linati returned it to him in 1922. In any case, we would not be bound by Joyce's intentions if we could say what they were. We have both schemata and cannot pretend otherwise.

Comparison compounds the confusion they make separately. As well as being sectioned differently, their rubrics are not all the same, and where those match, the glosses for particular chapters differ about half the time. The Linati's "Persons" column gives a thorough rundown of the novel's parallels to Homer. "Correspondences" in the Gilbert constellates a wide-ranging set of connections in less detail. The Gilbert has nothing like the weird, oracular explication under "Sense (Meaning)" in the Linati. (The meaning of "Scylla and Charybdis": "The Two-edged Sword." "Oxen of the Sun"? "The Eternal Herds.") The glosses under "Symbol" in the Linati are promiscuous lists of three to twelve terms; in the Gilbert they are all single terms, except for "Stratford, London." Only three of the nineteen symbols given in the Gilbert overlap with the Linati's eighty-two. These discrepancies pose questions that point the way to readerly derangement. Is the technique of "Nausicaa" better described as "Retrogressive progression" or "Tumescence, detumescence"? Does "Lotus Eaters" have no color, or is it dark brown? If it is dark brown, does that indicate a special relationship to "Nestor," whose unqualified brownness both schemata agree on? Is the art or science proper to "Cyclops" politics or surgery? For "Circe," is it dance or magic? Perhaps most importantly, is the organ that corresponds to "Ithaca" "Skeleton" or "Juices"?

Or how about a tougher one: does the numbered section of the novel composed of the final three chapters embody a "[f]usion of Bloom & Stephen," "Ulysses & Telemachus," as Joyce's interstitial note in the Linati has it or does it recenter the novel and its schematics on Molly/Penelope, completing the sequence suggested by the Gilbert's strong tripartite sectioning? *Or* could it be that for Joyce both possibilities somehow, no doubt problematically, amount to the same thing? This is a proxy for the sort of big question a critic might spend a whole book, even a whole career, building up to answering: *in broadest outline, what is* Ulysses *about? How does its*

structure signify? With those stakes, can the choice between schemata really be referred to chronology or augury about Joyce's intentions? At a crucial moment in *Ulysses on the Liffey*, Richard Ellmann refers to a peculiarity of the Linati's sectioning as support for an argument characterizing Stephen's development over the course of the whole novel. The Gilbert's sectioning seems to tell against it.[16] Ellmann may or may not be right about Stephen, but it seems self-evidently wrongheaded to try and decide that by adjudicating which schema is more authoritative. If, as it seems, there is no choosing between the two when they conflict, the answer to the initial question about Joyce's sectioning must be "both, but not necessarily both at once," which ought to give a sense of the kind of trouble we are in.

Whether or not they want it, readers of *Ulysses* have the cribs Joyce gave them: three pages that encapsulate a library of explications and intertexts, fraternal-twin diagrams of dense hermeneutic grids, clues upon clues upon clues. The survey is mind-boggling, the categories are mostly arbitrary and esoteric, and few of the clues lead anywhere useful. Joyce's schemata make the novel a version of the Chinese encyclopedia described by Borges, which divides animals into:

> (a) those that belong to the emperor; (b) embalmed ones; (c) those that are trained; (d) suckling pigs; (e) mermaids; (f) fabulous ones; (g) stray dogs; (h) those that are included in this classification; (i) those that tremble as if they were mad; (j) innumerable ones; (k) those drawn with a very fine camel's-hair brush; (l) etcetera; (m) those that have just broken the flower vase; (n) those that at a distance resemble flies.[17]

The complainers are not wrong: the schemata engender and authorize intolerable demands on attention, excesses of scholarly elaboration, errant readings, and in-groupishness; they make reading interminable; and they leave out a lot more than they include. Still, their complaints are complaints about the novel. As Bersani observes, contemplating a reading of *Ulysses* that is innocent of knowledge divulged in the schemata amounts to imagining a different work than the

one we know.[18] They tell us umpteen things and one big thing: *Ulysses* is too much for us. Like our ancestor who accepted the baleful fruit, like the too-curious kid in the Stephen Leacock story with the Christmas dinner compacted in a rehydratable pill,[19] the reader of *Ulysses* bites off more than anyone could chew. A good word for that appetite is *encyclopedism*.

Introduction: The Writer of Encyclopedic Life

If it goes without saying that *Ulysses* is a kind of encyclopedia, the vexed question is: what kind of encyclopedia? *Encyclopedia* has, over centuries of usage, been a watchword for comprehensive education, western modernity's name for the reference genre that consolidates information on the largest scale, and metonymic shorthand for the cultural project of knowing and writing the world. Fittingly, but at times confusingly, it contains multitudes. When we specify what we mean by *encyclopedia* or the encyclopedic, we define an interest in the immense: in forms, works, and literary and epistemic ambitions so big they overwhelm the ways we normally construe and categorize, read, and understand. Encyclopedism begins where differences in scale become differences in kind, requiring something different of us. This chapter is principally interested in the peculiar kinds of literary form and reading that develop in genres defined by the challenge of managing information on a massive scale. It locates *Ulysses*—and, with it, a characteristic type of modernist novel—in the encyclopedic tradition, which is to say, in the long history of enormous and enormously complex form that is marshaled to cope with immensities of information. Its argument's basis in the whole breadth of that history sets it apart from other treatments of encyclopedic modernism. The focus on Joyce could not be more typical.

Joyce's work is at the heart of every substantial treatment of literary encyclopedism that centers on or extends to the twentieth century. Up to a point, this may be canonicity perpetuating itself. Since it shook loose its censors in the first couple of decades of its reception, *Ulysses* has been read more widely and with greater reverence than nearly any other work that might, from one angle or another, be taken as definitive of modernism's encyclopedic turn, such as Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End*, Ezra Pound's *Cantos*, Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, or Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans*. *The Waste Land* is the other foundational work of encyclopedic modernism that has always enjoyed similar popularity and prestige, but it is a poem of just 434 lines. Calling it encyclopedic is counter-intuitive. *Ulysses* is a lot easier to construe and understand as a kind of encyclopedia. *Finnegans Wake* is considerably (and understandably) less popular than *Ulysses*, but it has long had a wider readership than any other long modernist work of comparable difficulty, and its encyclopedism is likewise self-evident. Joyce's long novels present a singularly useful basis for defining encyclopedism because so many readers know them and recognize them as being encyclopedic, though they might not be able to say exactly what that means. And critics writing about encyclopedic literature after Frye and Mendelson have a further incentive to focus on Joyce: it allows them to enter the existing conversation about encyclopedic modernism on established terms. The connection between Joyce and the encyclopedic turn in twentieth-century literature is so entrenched that, going back as far as the 80s, critics wanting to theorize something like encyclopedism on the basis of other modern writing have tended to develop alternative categories, as with Frederick Karl and *the mega-novel*, Tom LeClair and *the systems novel*, Stefano Ercolino and *the maximalist novel*, and Scott McCracken and Jo Winning and *the long modernist novel*.[20]

But if Joyce's centrality in the literature on encyclopedic literature may be partly explained as a snowballing effect of canonicity, it also reflects real preeminence. (So does the fact of that canonicity.) Joyce's reinvention of the encyclopedic novel for modernity proved definitive. It fundamentally shapes encyclopedic modernism and the broader understanding of literary encyclopedism that gains currency in modernism's aftermath. Extravagant complication and the containment of contradictory multitudes being in the nature of encyclopedias, no single explanation of this major innovation can be sufficient, and divergence between definitions of the encyclopedic as exemplified by modernism's big books and between characterizations of Joyce's encyclopedism is likelier to come down to difference in emphasis or interest than to outright disagreement. With this chapter, I am not aiming to refute or supplant the accounts of Joycean and modernist encyclopedism given by Frye or Mendelson, Hilary Clark or Paul Saint-Amour. Rather, by focusing on what the encyclopedic novel as Joyce reinvents it has in common with reference encyclopedias as they have historically been written, I am accounting for that reinvention from a new perspective, bringing out aspects of it that the existing literature passes over and making an argument for their importance to our understanding of *Ulysses* and the encyclopedic turn in modernism that, more than any other work, it inaugurates and epitomizes. That reading is the bedrock of the dissertation's treatment of modernist encyclopedism.

My approach to the subject requires that I pay special attention to annotation. Annotation materializes latent possibilities for reading that help us apprehend form. The *Ulysses* schemata reveal the depth and strangeness of the novel's encyclopedism as no exhibit from the novel's primary text quite does. In adumbrating such an immensity of form of many kinds, all together, Joyce's doubled annotation also presents the novel's clearest convergence with earlier strains of encyclopedic writing. To draw out elements of encyclopedic form that elude close reading, I

return to the schemata and a number of other annotations of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* to show how Joyce consolidates and extends into the world of 1904 and 1922 a process of formal evolution that goes back to antiquity. Most of the close reading in this chapter is of paratext, because the ultra-profuse formal overdetermination and intertextual extension that defines encyclopedism as I am describing it here is most evident in the novel's paratext.

Bringing that kind of encyclopedism to the modern novel, I argue, Joyce writes a new kind of encyclopedic novel. The books that are usually considered foundational encyclopedic novels are humongous satires of excessive reading and writing that revel in those excesses. The genre is typified by Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. Though *Gargantua and Pantagruel* is not typically counted as a novel, François Rabelais' giants loom man-mountainously over the founding of the genre as another defining example. Quixote's poetical, rampaging bibliomania and Tristram's Zeno's-paradox reflexivity are the butt of their novels' constitutive jokes but also the impetus to comic invention that each novel thrives on. Cervantes and Sterne take the utmost pleasure in new literary and intellectual possibilities they do not fully approve of. There is a similar balance of ridicule and relish in Rabelais' satire of the book-mad scholasticism that, centuries earlier, reintroduced the encyclopedia to Christian Europe. But although these books share a lot of common intellectual ground with early modern and Enlightenment encyclopedias and are encyclopedic in some everyday senses of the word, they do not have much in common with the encyclopedia formally. By *encyclopedia*, I mean the familiar reference genre and the multifarious literary tradition that produced it. Although the former is a useful reference point, I will mainly be discussing the latter. Although the kind of encyclopedic form that interests me here does, for example, still operate in the resolutely orderly

and neutral classroom encyclopedias that were a fixture of many twentieth century childhoods, it tends to show more clearly in older, less straightlaced iterations of the genre.

Encyclopedias are books composed of shelves of books, books made to approximate libraries. The history of the encyclopedia is the history of formal solutions to the perennial problem of information overload, which in the strain that originates in Europe runs, roughly, from Pliny to Wikipedia. There are other encyclopedic traditions, most notably the Chinese, which is older and by many reckonings richer than any other, but the barriers to the reception of non-western encyclopedias are so great, they do not have any place (except as an idea) in the lineage that includes the *Encyclopédie* and *Ulysses*.[21] Thus when I refer to the encyclopedic tradition here, I mean the western encyclopedic tradition, only because it is the relevant one in this context.

The encyclopedia's history in the west breaks down roughly into three phases. Prodigious note taking done in great libraries and monasteries gives rise to ancient and medieval compendia such as Pliny's *Natural History* and Vincent of Beauvais' *Great Mirror*. Forms that emerge early in the evolution of the encyclopedia in Europe include alphabetical ordering, the concordances and indices, extrinsic formal descriptions, catchwords and headings used as finding aids, cross-references, formal diagrams such as trees of knowledge, and supplements by other authors and editors.[22] With the burgeoning of print culture in the eighteenth century, early encyclopedias become models for large-scale information management as it evolves in more formally sophisticated projects, preeminently Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopaedia* and the *Encyclopédie* edited by Diderot and d'Alembert. This phase of the encyclopedia's evolution mostly sees more elaborate uses of older forms: the wild multiplication of formal descriptions, labyrinthine and "poetic" cross-referencing, recourse to increasingly complex metadiscourse in self-reflexive

entries, supplements, and diagrams.[23] The Enlightenment's singularly innovative and influential encyclopedias provide formal and intellectual groundwork for culture's reckoning with the deepening flood of information that comes in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries.

There are precedents for Joyce's more formally encyclopedic literary experimentalism, but none that are nearly as encyclopedia-like or, consequently, as expressive of the deep connection between encyclopedism and modernity that *Ulysses* embodies. Charles Dickens comes to the novel by way of a popular encyclopedic genre, the urban physiology, and opens the novel up to its brand of narrative geography and comprehensive city portraiture in a way that anticipates Joyce's detailed mapping of Edwardian Dublin.[24] *Moby-Dick* is an argosy of miscellaneous learning, which Herman Melville works into the novel using a wide array of genres whose heterogeneity is suggestive of encyclopedic compilation, and it includes stretches of pure reference encyclopedism (the sub-sub-librarian's anthology of cetological extracts, "The Whiteness of the Whale"). Gustave Flaubert's unfinished last novel, *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, incorporates a complete reference work, the satirical *Dictionary of Received Ideas*, and synthesizes Flaubert's vast research—he claimed to have read 1500 books—about the subjects to which his hapless non-heroes serially devote their attention chapter by chapter.[25] These books, among others from the nineteenth century, include borrowings from the encyclopedic tradition, which taken together indicate that the culture, media ecologies, and built environment of modernity are becoming increasingly encyclopedic and that mediating and negotiating them requires some of the encyclopedia's resources. What sets *Ulysses* apart from earlier experiments in syncretizing the two genres, and makes it the canonical exemplar of the big change they hint at in different ways, is how deeply he absorbs the formal logic of the encyclopedia and, crucially, how decisively this changes how a novel can be read.

At length, the encyclopedic tradition evolves a repertoire of distinctive forms, many of which are adapted by other genres to their purposes (as, for example, with the index) but which begin as extensions of the exorbitant, mainly extrinsic sort of formal architecture that Joyce's schemata epitomize. Encyclopedic novels before *Ulysses* are encyclopedic in their heft, the compass of their subject matter, and their engagement with the literary and intellectual ambitions of the encyclopedia. Some later draw on the encyclopedia's formal repertoire in substantial and significant ways. But more than any earlier novel, *Ulysses* uses form the way an encyclopedia does. In doing so, it affords special types of reading that encyclopedias make possible. This renders the immensities of information it incorporates manageable to its readers and makes the novel available to exploration and divagation in something like the way that a modern city is. *Ulysses* shares the early encyclopedic novel's combination of freewheeling comic enthusiasm for information overload and satirical skepticism about it, but Joyce's thoroughgoing, adaptive and mimetic adoption of encyclopedic form makes the enthusiasm and the skepticism signify something new. He repurposes that received ambivalence about an aberrant kind of bookishness or infomania as an attitude toward information-saturated everyday life, presenting encyclopedism as a canonical, complicatedly rewarding way of being modern.

Encyclopedic Literature and the Encyclopedia

Critical definitions of literary encyclopedism typically posit the encyclopedic as a substitute for modes of writing the world that are no longer available, and they hardly ever have much to do with what actual encyclopedias are like. This begins with Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*. On Frye's account, the ideal form of encyclopedic writing is scripture, which

provides an unimprovably authoritative, complete, and socially unifying world-picture. Encyclopedic literature supplies imperfect equivalents to scripture when "the god has retreated to the sky."[26] Though it lacks the authority of the divine word, it embodies "exhaustive erudition" and encapsulates "a total body of vision" (311, 55). *The Waste Land* and *The Cantos*, Marcel Proust's *Recherche* and Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts*, and, preeminently, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* are, for Frye writing in 1958, the latest cluster of representative works to emerge along a continuum of "increasingly human analogies of mythical or scriptural revelation" that includes classical and Christian epic, Menippean satire in its ancient and modern forms, and Romantic mythological-psychological long poems such as Goethe's *Faust* and William Wordsworth's *Prelude* (59-60).

In Frye's conceptually busy taxonomy, Greek and Roman epic are early phases of the encyclopedic mode's secularization, on its way to its iteration as "encyclopaedic farrago[es]" such as *Gargantua and Pantagruel* and, eventually, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. For Edward Mendelson, in contrast, epic is the ideal that encyclopedic literature on the Joycean model tries to recover. In "Encyclopedic Narrative: From Dante to Pynchon"— a nine-page essay but, forty years later, still the single most influential treatment of literary encyclopedism—Mendelson argues that writing epic becomes impossible after the focus of western culture shifts from the heroic past to the everyday present, starting in the late Middle Ages, but that later narratives in other genres can play an equivalent social and literary-historical role.[27] These are exceedingly rare: he identifies just seven, worldwide, between the 1320s and the 1970s, though he allows there are probably some others in national traditions that he does not know enough about to include in his analysis. Such works appear as nations are first taking shape or becoming something new. They tell the citizens of emerging or changing nations who they are, inventory

their cultural inheritance, and give a prospect of their world that is, if not complete, then representative of the whole. They are the focal texts that all subsequent national literature refers to, defines itself against, adapts, or annotates. Mendelson defines encyclopedic narrative in relation to encyclopedias, but only by very broad analogy. Whereas Frye refers to the history of the encyclopedia here and there, Mendelson does not mention, let alone analyze, any specific encyclopedias. The encyclopedia is for him a figure for how a world that has outgrown the possibility of being contained by a text might yet be organized by one.

Franco Moretti prefers the terms *world text* and *modern epic* to *encyclopedia* because their connotations better fit his argument, but at the outset of *Modern Epic* he makes clear he is writing about the same basic category Frye introduces in the *Anatomy*.[28] Of the trio of critics who were, until recently, those most often cited on the subject of encyclopedic literature, he is the clear outlier. For Moretti, modern epics are the white elephants of world literature, ultra-prestigious big books no one really reads except for paid participants in scholarly industries mustered to preserve their reputations. As Frye does, he argues that *Ulysses* and books like it are not altogether equal to an inherited social role that, being institutional, nevertheless needs filling. Like Mendelson, he develops a great man theory of large-scale literature in which *Ulysses* is a prime example. But he takes that inadequacy to be almost comically extreme, and he argues that although Joyce's greatness ostensibly wins him an honored place at the heart of culture, in practice it lands him on its carefully tended margins.

Frye, Mendelson, and Moretti's arguments are all answers to an enduring declinist argument about modernity, the classic version of which is made by Georg Lukács. The modern world, Lukács contends, has so overwhelmed our capacity to make experience cohere that literature that can no longer give "form to the extensive totality of life."[29] Understanding the

encyclopedic as voluminous writing that restores an idealized access to totality is traditional. It is also perennially groundless. Medieval and early modern encyclopedism was habitually figured as a way of rebuilding the Library of Alexandria, cultural memory's archetype of a comprehensive archive, or a way of preventing another catastrophic epistemic loss like its destruction.[30] D'Alembert makes the latter claim about the *Encyclopédie*.[31] As Seth Rudy shows, hope that the encyclopedia could pick up the mantle of epic was integral to the genre's rise in eighteenth-century England. (That aspiration, he argues, is the specific target of *Tristram Shandy*'s satire of overweening encyclopedism.)[32] Our received idea of the encyclopedia includes traces of all this. We tend to talk about the encyclopedia as having sometime in the past afforded the prospect of totality we have always wanted from it. It never has. Most critics writing about encyclopedic literature work from that received idea, rather than from an understanding of what encyclopedias really are.

Two exceptions stand out. Hilary Clark anatomizes the modern "literary encyclopaedia," making special reference to *Finnegans Wake*. She specifies the resources that encyclopedic fiction and poetry gather from a range of genres, taking in several phases of the encyclopedia's evolution, and delineates the effects, tensions, and paradoxes that arise from their complicated combination. Ultimately, Clark describes the encyclopedic enterprise in modern literature as a kind of rich epistemic impasse.[33] Paul Saint-Amour, whose recent book *Tense Future* is beginning to rival Mendelson's essay for influence,[34] argues that Joyce's modern, colonial *Odyssey* avoids the "bellicose holism" epic shares with total war discourse by adopting the formal instability and contradictoriness of the *Encyclopédie* and with it, its ambivalence about what it knows. As such, encyclopedism enables Joyce to present, as Diderot and d'Alembert do, a vision of his world that is synoptic but not totalizing.[35]

Clark and Saint-Amour both ground their accounts of modern literary encyclopedism, and of Joyce's encyclopedism in particular, in the history of the encyclopedia. In markedly different ways, they show that we can deepen our analysis of encyclopedic literature by more rigorously historicizing it. Yet both of them draw on the encyclopedia's history quite selectively. Neither of their projects call for the sort of wide ranging treatment of encyclopedic modernism's relationship to the encyclopedic tradition offered here. Also, they both mainly consider modernism's encyclopedic turn from a higher altitude than I do. Clark characterizes the literary encyclopedia in relation to a huge swath of genres. She does not so much make an argument about encyclopedic literature's relationship to the encyclopedia as take stock of how it relates to all relevant literature, including the encyclopedia. Saint-Amour argues that a broad, longitudinal approach to the subject overextends Mendelson and critics following his lead. To give his argument the precision and specificity he finds lacking in theirs, Saint-Amour zeroes in on two especially important coordinates in the encyclopedia's evolution. Thus for divergent reasons Saint-Amour and Clark are mostly concerned with the big picture of Joycean and modernist bigness: how *Ulysses* and the *Wake* are and are not comprehensive, authoritative, and whole; what they make available to power and posterity.

In contrast, I focus on a more basic question: as readers, what do we do with a book like *Ulysses*? To put it another way, I emphasize the ground-level affordances of encyclopedic form. To analyze form and the genres that convey it through history it is useful to think in terms of affordance and iconicity. Caroline Levine borrows the concept of affordance from design theory to describe forms according to their uses.[36] Affordances are the possibilities for use latent in things. For example: the bowler hat has a form that affords cover and shade, doffing and cocking, advertisement inside the crown, and the concealment of mash notes. Sonnet form

affords lyric compression, dramatic rhetorical leaps and turns, circulation in manuscript, and memorization. The affordances of form constrain and guide writing. They determine possibilities for reading and make those possibilities legible. Formal creativity often pivots on the discovery of innovative affordances, as with Joyce's use of the catechism for literary exposition or Leopold Bloom's critical remediation of "Matcham's Masterstroke."[37]

But forms are also signs. They accrue and embody meanings. If the vocabulary that Levine uses to talk about form seems at times to fit her subject matter awkwardly, it may be because the theorists from whom she adapts it are narrowly concerned with visual perception.[38] Symptomatically, *shape* is the macro category they most often oppose to affordance. Transposed to criticism, that pair of terms fails to capture the ways that in literature and other artwork overall formal structure conveys meaning as well as describing shapes and constructing spaces. Accordingly, in talking about literary form, it is more illuminating to oppose affordance not to shape but to *iconicity*. The bowler hat's affordances (especially, the sturdiness and imperviousness to wind that made it popular with city workers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) and certain accidents of history (Charlie Chaplin's fame, the vicissitudes of fashion) make its outline mean something specific. It is mainly that connotative contour, to which the cultural memory of Bloom's "high grade ha" contributes, that René Magritte and John Cleese are reaching for when they use the hat in *The Son of Man* and "The Ministry of Silly Walks."

Affordance and iconicity are mutually constitutive and evolve together as genres evolve, and genre is literary criticism's most effective framework for the historical analysis of form. I am therefore not defining an encyclopedic *mode*, as critics writing about encyclopedic literature typically do. Modes are necessary-seeming, ahistorical categories such as *poetry* and *narrative*.

Genres are contingent, continually evolving configurations of form, such as *elegy* or the *novel*.[39] In Claudio Guillèn's words, a genre is "a problem-solving model" for "form-making" and "the matching of matter and form."[40] Genres accumulate distinctive forms, combinations of forms, and uses of form as their practitioners solve iterations of a constitutive problem or a cluster of problems.

The work of genre changes how form signifies, which can in turn change what particular forms are good for. On one account, the sonnet becomes the preeminent lyric genre in early modern England because more people than ever are writing poetry, and they need their poems to do a lot, rhetorically and socially, and to travel well through coterie exchange, commonplace books, memorization, and recitation. That iconic role at a key moment in literary history defines the genre. When Gerard Manley Hopkins, W.B. Yeats, and other modern writers revamp the sonnet, they play off that iconicity and in getting so much from it, discover a new affordance: adaptability to formal irreverence. By the time, say, of Ted Berrigan, messing with sonnet form is so prevalent, even traditional, that it has made the sonnet a kind of shorthand figure for poetic form itself. This type of productive, adaptive interplay between affordance and iconicity goes on as long as a genre is vital and evolving. By adopting affordances from the encyclopedia, Joyce changes the experience of novel reading, which makes the novel signify something new.

In the famous passage that begins *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault reads Borges's encyclopedia as a parody of the will to order, an absurd exaggeration meant to jolt us into recognizing the arbitrariness of all our categories with a burst of epistemologically unmooring laughter. He writes: "In the wonderment of this taxonomy, the thing we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that, by means of the fable, is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own, the stark impossibility of thinking *that*."[41] Yet the

strange, multiplex form of the *Encyclopédie* cannot be thought all at once either. Formal impossibility is basic to the encyclopedia. "John Wilkins' Analytical Language," in which Borges introduces his "unknown (or apocryphal) Chinese encyclopedist," is not a fable but an essay—one that begins by criticizing the new *Encyclopedia Britannica* for having become more boring.[42] The seminal eleventh *Britannica*—which, as Saint-Amour convincingly argues, is nearer the *Encyclopédie* in form and adventure than its regimentally buttoned-up reputation would suggest—was Borges's desert island book.[43] He probably knows the encyclopedic tradition is longer established and more sophisticated in China;[44] certainly, he understands that the encyclopedia is, to tweak Joyce's epithet for *Ulysses* in "Oxen of the Sun," a "chaffering allincluding most farraginous" impossible genre (14.1412).

What Joycean Annotation Reveals About Joyce's Encyclopedism

Or, The Form Our Glosses Bring into Focus

Over almost a century of reception, the form of *Ulysses* has been extensively defined by annotation. As we have seen, this begins even before Joyce had finished writing the novel. His schemata establish *Ulysses* as an encyclopedia much the way that d'Alembert's *Preliminary Discourse* and Diderot's article "Encyclopedia" do the *Encyclopédie*. Comprehensive explanatory annotation projects such as Weldon Thornton's *Allusions in Ulysses* and Don Gifford's *Ulysses Annotated* make the novel's intertextual surround and the relationship between its primary text and intertexts visible and, in some respects, palpable. They also make the basic spatiality of its form more immediately evident. The spate of efforts to annotate the novel using hypertext in the 90s and early 2000s, most notably Michael Groden's "Digital *Ulysses*" and

Heyward Erlich's "James Joyce Text Machine," reveal that the traditional expectation that the encyclopedia give access to totality is fatally impracticable, even given the effectively infinite extension of digital media.

The *Ulysses* schemata describe and advertise the novel's encyclopedism, activate it, authorize the unorthodox reading it affords. By adumbrating his designs in a few pages, making them legible together, Joyce gives the reader not merely a mass of discrete cues and clues but a synoptic picture of the novel's impossible form. Whatever a reader makes of that picture, it will surely be obvious that it is not a coherent image of totality like the trees of knowledge drawn by Chambers and Diderot and d'Alembert. The picture should be instructive as well as illustrative. By so profusely indicating specific possibilities for reading, Joyce makes clear that the novel affords the type of reading an encyclopedia normally does. That he leaves out so many more possibilities than he includes, as Herr notices, ought to be an encouragement. Encyclopedic impossibility frees readers to explore the multiform textual spaces it sustains. The gaps that it cannot help showing tell the reader they are not stuck in rigid grids or consigned to running dead authors' errands. Concluding an essay about the type of reading I am characterizing as encyclopedic, Clive Hart observes "that *Ulysses* omits most things, that the observable part of the book is only a tiny fragment, and that most of it is, in fact, one huge gap to be filled by the reader."[45] The schemata reveal the futility of the encyclopedic enterprise only if we demand, ahistorically and unrequitably, that the encyclopedia give us literally everything.

Real encyclopedism is a more interesting kind of generosity. There is no quashing the perennial desire for access to totality, but the pleasure and rewards of reading an encyclopedia come from getting less than we want from it but more than we could ever take in. The schemata exemplify this. Each schema is a riot of formal multiplication, and the combined effect is

spectacular overdetermination. Joyce even overdetermines his description of the first schema when he sends it to Linati, calling it a "summary—key—skeleton—scheme" (*SL* 271). As Ezra Pound unusually but aptly puts it in an early review, it is remarkable how *much* form *Ulysses* has, and so much of it is what Pound elsewhere calls major form, the sort of higher-order framing structure that defines an ambit for varied interpretation.[46] With the schemata, Joyce reveals and supplies a surfeit of major form. He piles up totalizing descriptions (the novel as Dublin *Odyssey*, human body, liberal arts curriculum, and much more), outlines second-order comprehensive projects he incorporates (chapters that give an inventory of rhetorical tropes, an anthology of English prose styles, a commonplace book of clichés, etc.), and lists some of the intertextual connections (e.g. to Shakespeare, the Bible, early Zionist writing) that extend the work beyond its primary text. The volume and variety of other text the novel references and repurposes is so great that he can only hint at that dimension of its encyclopedism while keeping the columns of his matrices in proportion, yet it is enough to indicate that in its Kristevan patchworking, *Ulysses* organizes a compact archive of immense compass. In all these ways, the schemata make an overwhelming plenitude available to readers.

That is all partly to say what Saint-Amour already says: that "the *Encyclopédie* was always the Chinese encyclopedia out of Borges," a paradigm of comprehensiveness that eschews coherence; that *Ulysses* approximates totality with the same formal instability and epistemic ambivalence; and that Joyce's schemata manifest that encyclopedism.[47] But to return to ground level: how does that change how a novel can be read? What allies Kiberd with Bersani, and unites all the schemataphobes canvassed above, is the recognition that with the schemata Joyce abrogates the norm that privileges ordinary reading. The picture he gives of the novel's formal excess makes it unmistakably clear that only partial readings are possible. Including intertexts in

his diagram of the novel suggests those readings should involve external reference. Projecting the novel onto a grid teaches the reader to conceive it spatially as well as temporally and to attend to correspondences as much as consequences in developing readings. Everything is pegged to a time of day, but none of the columns develop sequentially down the grid. Joyce figures the hours of June 16 as containers or coordinates, and the profusion of contents and connections he includes encourages reading for through-lines other than plot. His multiplication and overdetermination of form, nowhere more pronounced than in the schemata, proliferates routes through the text, and in and out of it. It authorizes the reader to explore freely, making the novel variously inhabitable the way a world is.

Comprehensive explanatory annotation materializes the novel's form more diffusely. Where the schemata abstract telegraphically, projects such as *Allusions in Ulysses* and *Ulysses Annotated* dilate and detail.[48] In translating the novel from literature to reference matter, Joyce's scholarly glossators exhaustively spell out possibilities for intertextual and intratextual reading that it indicates or suggests. Though they do not purposely map its form as the schemata do, their notes can be like iron filings that show the lines of that magnetic field. We should, for a start, register how strange and telling it is that the canonical Joycean annotations are separate big books. Thornton and Gifford's supplements to *Ulysses* literally give external text equal or more-than-equal weight.[49] By being separate, they encourage a reading practice in which attention continually shuttles between text and intertext, training the reader to understand the work, or at least its meaning, as being substantially constituted beyond the primary text in ways that far exceed the usual functions of paratext or the ordinary referentiality of literary language. They show that C.D. Blanton's description of how T.S. Eliot uses intertextual form also applies to Joyce: like *The Waste Land*, *Ulysses* is "an index, a massive historical filing system" that

"intend[s] a larger totality than it mimetically holds."[50] Comprehensive annotation projects effectively miniaturize that archive.

Also, Thornton in 1968 and Gifford in 1974 give references by line, more than a decade before the first edition of the novel to mark line numbers, effectively measuring it out vertically. It would not be practical to indicate as many notes as they do just by page number. Even careful readers would continually lose their place. Line numbers add a necessary affordance, and meeting that need signifies. Having to count along the margin to look up notes prompts the reader to recognize the text as a space at a micro level. That habitual recognition and the habit of continual reference should help a reader see that, at every point, the novel extends formally in myriad directions and that straight linear progress from *S* to *Yes* is merely one path among many.

The other standard big book of notes for Joyce, Roland McHugh's *Annotations to Finnegans Wake*, presents an even more elaborate exposition of Joyce's encyclopedism, which gives readers a fresh angle on the form of *Ulysses* and the reading practice that it fosters. Joyce's two monster-novels are profoundly different in many respects, but with regards to the features of encyclopedism that comprehensive explanatory annotation most conspicuously foregrounds—hyperreferentiality, intertextual extension, and their complication of reading—what Joyce does with the *Wake* is largely an amplification what he does with *Ulysses*. McHugh does more in annotating the *Wake* because its extreme density of reference necessitates that greater effort. Inventing a new form of annotation to cope with the tremendous number of references per line, he places telegraphic glosses roughly in the place that each glossed word appears on the page.[51] This spatializes the novel vertically, as Thornton and Gifford do with *Ulysses*, and horizontally. Because McHugh leaves the rest of each page blank, if you look at the book without focusing in and trying to use it, you see something like a page-by-page scatter plot or abstract picture of the

Wake's referential surround. These pages vividly picture a near-limit case of the syncretism of the encyclopedia and the modern novel that *Ulysses* iconically inaugurates: the substance of a novel as a dense smear of recondite, miscellaneous information. What is more, a reader using McHugh needs to parse those pages as they puzzle and sound their way through Joyce's world-historically obscure prose. Following two ultra-abstruse texts stereoscopically is a more forbiddingly difficult, more Wakean, version of the sort of intertextual reading that *Ulysses* encourages and its annotators facilitate. It amounts to a performance of how totality is unavailable to encyclopedic modernism because of an excess of information, on one hand, and, on the other, not only the limited capacity of even the biggest books, but also the limits of even a diligent and receptive reader's attention.

Leslie L. Lewis's diagram of the *Wake*—the oft-reprinted one that is usually, mistakenly attributed to Lázló Moholy-Nagy, for whom Lewis made it as a teaching aid—likewise suggests an instructively exaggerated overall gloss on *Ulysses* in reckoning with Wakean excesses. In adapting the form of the *Ulysses* schemata to the *Wake*'s exponentially greater complication, Lewis pictures the unresolvable formal overload that both novels muster.[52] She blocks out a five-column-by-seventeen-row schema relating figures in the *Wake* to hermeneutic categories and overwrites it with a pair of schematic figures that thwart and jar with the grid but complement each other: sectioned concentric rings charting the books, cycles, etc. of Vico's *New Science* and a starburst whose rays signify miscellaneous formal principles, emanating and radiating from the initials J.J. The composition is busy and scrambled, with schematics colliding everywhere, drawing the eye in multiple directions and the three totalizing designs combining and canceling each other indeterminately, but its thrust is centrifugal. It makes extreme formal incoherence look venturesome. The diagram ought to evoke whatever feelings a reader has facing the

impossibility and wild excess of Joyce's encyclopedism—maybe vertiginous excitement, maybe bafflement or panic.

The earliest digital annotations of *Ulysses* show with particularly clarity that the novel's formal impossibility is not a problem that might be solved. They create frustrations that are proof against the possibility that the traditional encyclopedic aspiration to totality is merely stymied by the sorts of physical limitations hypertext obviates. Because the seams-bursting extension and overdetermination that Lewis pictures must be reconciled with the reader's capacity for attention, and because of intractable limits to how much their interface with the work can be complicated before that capacity is exhausted, Joyce's approximation of modern information overload cannot be contained and overcome by making more room for information. Impossibility is an essential feature of encyclopedism, not an accident of its medium's inadequacy. The deep trouble scholars immediately got themselves into when they proceeded as if it were points this up.

For a little over ten years, from the early 90s to 2003, when Joyce's estate put a sudden freeze on the enterprise, producing an exhaustive hypertext annotation of *Ulysses* was a major focus of Joycean scholarship.[53] This is a particularly interesting moment because of how early it comes in the Internet's history. Scholar-programmers such as Groden and Erlich were not adapting *Ulysses* to the familiar forms of textual presentation, networking, and reading that typify digital culture, as, for example, Amanda Visconti has lately done with "Infinite Ulysses."[54] For the most part, those paradigms and habits had not yet evolved. Rather, Joyce's first digital annotators were extrapolating new kinds of digital textuality from the formal logic of the novel, using the same resources that, in a worldwide, jillion-dollar, decade-long churn of trial and error, were being used to produce the version of the Internet that has come to be known as Web 1.0.[55] Their projects never made it beyond the prototype stage, and their prototypes are rough and

fatally hindered by unsolved and likely unsolvable user interface issues; however, they translate *Ulysses* into the basic medium of our encyclopedic everyday on their own terms, which may no longer be possible, now that any digital remediation will inevitably be understood in relation to firmly established conventions and habits. As such, they are unusually pure products of the line of thinking that identifies Joyce's encyclopedism with utopian possibilities for our technological future.

The notion that *Ulysses* anticipates or implies hypertext predates the World Wide Web and even the first widely available platforms for making discrete, offline hypertexts, such as HyperCard and StorySpace.[56] In his keynote address to the 1984 International James Joyce Symposium, later published as "Ulysses Gramophone: Hear Say Yes in Joyce," Jacques Derrida describes *Ulysses* as a kind of Internet unto itself: "a hypermnesic machine capable of storing in an immense epic work Western memory and virtually all the languages in the world," whose adept reader "has at his command the computer of all memory" and "plays with the entire archive of culture."[57] This is criticism as science fiction, and hyperbolic unless one accepts the poststructuralist premise that reference is always endlessly deferred, but it gets at something about the novel that new technology was beginning to make more visible. Before long Joyceans set to work trying, more or less, to materialize Derrida's metaphor.[58] Years of experimentation and debate culminated in the early 2000s in a project that built on multiple smaller ones, "Digital *Ulysses*," directed by Groden and based primarily on his personal project "James Joyce's *Ulysses* in Hypermedia." It would have linked the text of the novel with some 5,000 pages of notes solicited from hundreds of scholars.[59] Erlich's "James Joyce Text Machine," which appeared in several versions between 1991 and 2002, is more idiosyncratic and self-consciously a limited

experiment. It hypertexualizes a sample passage from "Calypso" thirteen different ways, using an array of published sources.

Groden provides layered annotations in nested pop-up windows. Each successive pop-up adds more specialized information or analysis, and readers can click through, piling windows up on the screen, until their interest is sated or they reach a dead end. They then have to close each window to get back to the text. This is intended as a way of meting out help to the reader at their discretion, without overwhelming them; they can, for example, decide whether or not they want to read an expert interpretation of the facts they have been given or find out about something that happens later in the novel.[60] In the most elaborate and prescient setting in the final version of his "Text Machine," Erlich likewise breaks up the targets of his links, but instead of parceling the parts out in a chain, he distributes them around the text, in a horseshoe pattern of five frames. This is a sort of early, single-screen version of the kind of tabbed browsing that would later become standard.[61]

The hypermnesic electronic *Ulysses* Derrida describes is a vision of encyclopedic totality. But it is a metaphor for Mendelsonian focality and intertextual extension that confuses the roles of book and reader, computer and user. If in theory the Joycean scholar "disposes of the totality of competences in the encyclopedic field of the *universitas*"—and that is debatable—there is nevertheless no reading except in practice. Derrida says that only an "*n*th generation," "as yet unheard-of computer," could keep up with the interminable, ultimately all-encompassing play of signification and proliferation of reference the novel instigates.[62] But, come the *n*th generation, what use would that be? The part of that processing that accrues comprehension can only be done by a person. However much readers are assisted by annotation, reading has to happen in their consciousness and field of vision. *Ulysses* is so crowded with references, its language is so

polysemous and hyperreferential, the literature on it is so extensive, and its readership is so wide and diverse, that, as with *The Waste Land*, nearly every word solicits annotation, and for almost every word, different readers will want different notes. That wealth of compacted possibility might seem to promise that if it were only supplemented or remediated adequately, it would become the book Lukács says we are missing, the one we have always wanted the encyclopedia to be. It can look like the basic problem is a lack of physical space: not enough room for notes at the back of the novel, too much information to fit in a realistically publishable, heftable reference volume. Yet as soon as it becomes possible to annotate without having to contend with that sort of material limitation and annotators try to substantially exceed the amount of glossing paper codices can normally hold, the whole enterprise becomes unworkable.

Taken as attempts to imagine digital culture before it has had the chance to take shape normally, Groden and Erlich's prototypes are impressively innovative; as presentations of *Ulysses*, they are ineluctably reader-hostile. In Groden's annotation, the primary text is continually blotted with chunks of paratext and reading is made to involve regular runs of picking and clicking across the screen, followed by an equal amount of picking and clicking away. Much more often than not, a reader would need to click through and scan multiple pop-ups just to see whether there is a note that addresses their question. Erlich's five-frame apparatus overloads the screen with information at all times. There is always the virtual equivalent of five reference books open in the reader's field of vision, along with the novel. It seems unlikely a reader could entirely ignore them when they are trying to focus on the primary text, and when they did turn to one of them, having the other four also flip to a semi-relevant page would be its own unwelcome distraction. And, as with Groden's prototype, the reader would continually be

taking in and dismissing distracting notes, albeit with glances instead of clicks. In each case, the only way to mitigate the problems is not to use the apparatus.

"Digital *Ulysses*" and the "James Joyce Text Machine" are nowhere near being the ideal literary-encyclopedic network that the most enthusiastic early exponents of hypertext's potential to revolutionize culture descry in *Ulysses*. Neither is "Infinite *Ulysses*," alongside which they look rudimentary. Yet the pratfalls into unreadability that come with Groden and Erlich's tentative first steps in that direction strongly indicate that *Ulysses* cannot be made much more like Derrida's notional supercomputer without becoming something only a computer would read. This is not to pick on them. Their prototypes are the best products of a concerted effort by a scholarly community working through these problems together. "Digital *Ulysses*" is the culmination of a years-long, international conversation Groden convened over the Joyce listserv; Erlich workshopped his "Text Machine" over a decade of conferences. But the best work by the best minds mainly demonstrates that small complications of the space in which reading happens make for big increases in the novel's demands on attention. Reading *Finnegans Wake* with McHugh's *Annotations* might be something close to a limit case of how much encyclopedic literature can tax the reader's attention without losing it. Yet two discrete books side by side, even when one or both are supremely difficult, make for a fairly simple interface. Groden and Erlich give the reader less information to consider, but in trying to design away formal impossibility, they run up against the limits of readerly attention. This speaks to the untenability of the broader project. Even given virtual space for text, intertext, and paratext that is exceedingly plastic and technically limitless, *Ulysses* cannot afford access to totality. The proof of this supplied by early digital annotations loudly signifies that Joyce's encyclopedism is not circumscribed or disappointed totalizing.

The Reader of Encyclopedic Life

Although he does it most emphatically and elaborately with the schemata, Joyce continually lets his reader know what kind of encyclopedia *Ulysses* is and what they ought to do with it throughout the novel. He seems to undertake this carefully and deliberately. New readers of *Ulysses* are sure to expect a challenge, but they are unlikely to know just what they are facing. Bersani must be right—a naïve, ordinary reading cannot be sustainable—but most will begin the way they normally begin a novel. Joyce steadily teaches them to read encyclopedically, and that education goes to the heart of the novel's treatment of modernity.

This starts from the very first word. *Ulysses* is so canonical we may need to squint hard to recover the strangeness of its title. Its opening gambit and most emphatic act of self-definition is to indicate a deep, complicated connection to an intertext. Even a reader who does not yet have the schemata to tell them the Citizen is Joyce's cyclops and to look for Scylla and Charybdis in the library chapter, or who has not had a preface or a teacher clue them in, should, if they take Joyce's cue, find that the novel's correspondences with the *Odyssey* are manifold, often obscure, and somehow constitutive. The Homeric parallels are just one hermeneutic frame among too many to hold in mind, as the schemata exhaustively establish if it is not already made clear by the primary text. But they are inciting and iconic. *Ulysses* being called *Ulysses* instructs the reader to refer to other books in reading, to puzzle out connections the novel makes, and to look outside the text in figuring how to construe it.

Although "Telemachus" and "Nestor" are relatively light on external reference, Joyce places the word in those chapters that most conspicuously solicits annotation on the first page. The esoteric, multivalent interpolation "Chrysostomos" (1.26) is likely to get the reader

consulting another text or several others (Gifford, say, or a page of search results). Fritz Senn remarks at the outset of a six-page essay about the word's significance that it makes for the first disruption of ordinary novel reading in *Ulysses* and is a "signal for increased complexity": "It has a privileged position; some shift has indubitably taken place."[63] "Chrysostomos" is enough of an enigma and a rich enough enigma that looking it up should help a reader understand that the novel's intertextual extension involves much more than posing questions whose answers can be decisively looked up. The giant spike in density of reference that comes with "Proteus"—that Alp littered with the bodies of first-time readers—and the obscurity of Stephen's strandentwined musing make for a chapter-long reiteration of the same lesson.

Joyce's training in encyclopedism later unfolds into higher orders. The more experimental chapters that come later are experiments in formally constitutive intertextuality and formal multiplication. With each one, the baseline authorial subjectivity established by the chapters in the novel's initial style is pervaded by or put in tension with other discourses or clusters of discourses (rhetoric and journalism, music, romance novels and Mariolatry, all of English prose, etc.), transforming the narration.[64] This should, eventually, transform the reader's understanding of what it is they are reading. If, as some claim, Joyce is showing off, one of the things he is showing is how encyclopedically polymorphic, open, and enmeshed with the archive he has rendered novel form. The interpolations in "Cyclops" parody this method by making it a kind of dial twiddling. They also test the reader's adjustment to Joyce's encyclopedism after the ramp-up in complexity from "Aeolus" to "Sirens," preparing them for chapters that are less available to ordinary reading.

The return to the initial style and Bloom's interior monologue at the end of "Nausicaa" may feel like another review of early lessons. In focalizing Stephen and Bloom, Joyce gives the

initial chapters over to encyclopedic subjectivities that model styles of reading the novel specially affords. This seems more directive with Bloom than with Stephen, who is, from any angle, an unlikely person to emulate. Bloom sportively personifies encyclopedism as a demotic negotiation of modernity: "Good puzzle would be cross Dublin without passing a pub." "They have no. Never looked. I'll look today." "Do fish ever get seasick?" (4.130, 8.930-31, 13.1162). His restless, roving, seeking intelligence is a counterpart to the authorial presence at play in the novel.

The encyclopedic novel and the encyclopedia converge in a book about everyday life as the experience of information overload. What had been the peculiar complaint or aberrant pleasure of scholars and monks, then of learned men philosophical and hobby-horsical, is by 1904 a normal part of living somewhere like Paris or New York or even Dublin. By 1922, conventional wisdom is that the world has become "altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting" and people "are not equipped to deal with so much subtlety, so much variety, so many permutations and combinations."[65] Yet already, plenty of people had learned to deal with all that. As I explain in the next chapter, broadly encyclopedic practices, habits, and subjectivities emerged in tandem with the increasingly supersaturated physical environments and media ecologies of major cities as they evolved over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In modernity, the encyclopedia's constitutive problem comes to characterize urban life, and that requires a kind of encyclopedism of those living it. Bloom is one of those who has learned to deal with the scale, complexity, variability, and variety that democratize information overload in the new metropolis. Wandering and thinking, Bloom browses and annotates, makes cross-references, follows leads and fills in gaps, speculating, referencing from memory, wiping his glosses with what he knows (cf. *FW* 304n3). He thrives on his world's power to suggest errant

possibilities. His complicated enjoyment of information overload is not identical to Joyce's or that afforded the reader but is emblematic of both.

Embodying and engendering that pleasure makes Joyce's translation of the encyclopedic novel into a kind of encyclopedia signify. The schemata that epitomize his encyclopedism are, as we have seen, preposterous. Yet they are not a joke at the expense of those who would use them, as Nabokov sourly supposes. Nor are they a version of the joke Foucault thinks Borges is making, though they may exaggerate Joycean impossibility with some of the encyclopedic novel's traditional epistemic skepticism. As well as being useful and instructive, they are a comic extravagance, like the genre-torquing fantastical turn in Borges's essay or the six-page catalogue of unnecessary but probably wonderful books ("The Thread-ball of Theology," "Of Peas and Bacon, *cum commento*," etc.) in Rabelais' Library of St. Victor,[66] with its suggestion that information overload can be an inexhaustible joy.

Joyce's encyclopedic presentation of modernity is iconic. Writing at a time and place in which information overload has become an ordinary part of everyday experience, he draws deeply on the encyclopedic tradition's resources for managing immensities of information, furnishing the novel with the affordances of impossible form, opening it out intertextually, annotating it and spurring annotation, to make his "little story of a day (life)" inexhaustibly big and hospitable to a huge multiplicity of readings. To Lukács's lament that "our world has become infinitely large and each of its corners is richer in gifts and dangers than the world of the Greeks, but such wealth cancels out the positive meaning—the totality—upon which their life was based,"[67] *Ulysses* supplies the answer: *Yes, and we should prefer that fruitful, unencompassable plenitude to a smaller, stiflingly determinate, knowable world.*

NOTES

[1] To give a rough idea: a Google Books search for "encyclopedic novel" or "encyclopaedic novel" turns up just ten scattered results from before 1950, not counting reprints. An Ngram for the searches shows a small spike and a big one, roughly corresponding to when Frye and Mendelson published their work on the subject. On that evidence, the term seems to have really become commonplace over the 1980s.

That "encyclop(a)edic poem" is slightly more common early on may be happenstance, a consequence of the novel being the younger genre, or a reflection of the preeminence of Dante and Goethe's arguably encyclopedic long poems in Italian and German literature.

[2] James Joyce, *Selected Letters* (New York: Viking, 1975), 270-71. The letter is dated September 21, 1920.

[3] I favor the term *chapter* over *episode* in talking about *Ulysses*, except when specifically discussing Homeric parallels, because using *episode* strongly privileges that framework for understanding the novel when, as I will argue, Joyce presents it as one of many among which there is no hierarchy and that leveling is an important part of what he is doing with the schemata.

[4] Stuart Gilbert, *James Joyce's Ulysses: A Study* (London: Faber and Faber, 1930), 30.

The Linati schema was first published, as a facsimile, in *A James Joyce Miscellany: Second Series,* ed. Marvin Magalaner (Carbondale: *Southern Illinois University Press*, 1959), between 48 and 49. It became familiar to many more readers after Richard Ellmann included an English translation in *Ulysses on the Liffey* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), between 188 and 189. Tidy transcriptions of both schemata, with the Linati translated to English, are given as an appendix to *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*, ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 734-39. Those transcriptions are included as figures 2 and 3 at the end of the chapter. Joyce also provided what might be described as a very simple schema, effectively a list of chapter titles, to John Quinn in 1920.

[5] Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce*, second ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 521.

[6] Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 519. He is quoting an unpublished letter dated November 25, 1921.

[7] Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle*, 1931 (New York: Norton, 1984), 211-14.

[8] Vladimir Nabokov, *Lectures on Literature*, ed. Fredson Bowers (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), 288.

[9] Vladimir Nabokov, *Strong Opinions*, 1973 (New York: Vintage International, 1990), 55. From a 1965 interview.

[10] Philip Herring, *Joyce's Notes and Early Drafts for* Ulysses*: Selections from the Buffalo Collection* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1977), 123.

[11] Cheryl Herr, "Art and Life, Nature and Culture, *Ulysses*," in *Joyce's* Ulysses*: The Larger Perspective*, eds. Robert D. Newman and Weldon Thornton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), 30-33.

[12] Declan Kiberd, *Ulysses and Us: The Art of Everyday Living* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), 347. Kiberd is quoting Bersani's essay "Against Ulysses" from *The Culture of Redemption* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 174.

[13] Jeri Johnson, "'footnotes nonpareil': Ulysses, Authority, Error, and Annotation" *JJQ*, 50, no. 4 (Summer 2013): 1088 n22. After mentioning that in his annotated edition for Alma Press Sam Slote "gives no account of the episodes' Homeric parallels, nor does he even approach the 'schemata'," she adds in an endnote: "Slote is perhaps not alone in thinking them now more obstructing than elucidating."

[14] Joyce's use of the matrix, with its parallel structure, as the basic structure of the schemata suggests some homology or equivalence between the Homeric, anatomical, chromatic, and pedagogical designs detailed under his more precisely defined rubrics ("Title," "Organ," "Colour," "Art" or "Science, Art"). (For Herr, such homologies are the most important thing the schemata indicate (29-30).) However, it does not seem possible that the structure signifies consistently, since Joyce slots a hodgepodge of references (to Hamlet and the life of Shakespeare, the Parnell affair, Zionism, the Iliad, the Bible, Greek and scholastic philosophy, archetypes and isms, etc.) under catchall rubrics ("Symbol" and "Sense (Meaning)" in the Linati schema, "Symbol" and "Correspondences" in the Gilbert) alongside those stronger categories.

[15] The Linati organizes the novel's chapters chronologically and quasi-dialectically in a progression or cycle of six sections labeled "Dawn," "Morning," "Day," etc., preserving but overwriting the novel's sections I, II, and III. The Gilbert gives the numbered sections clearer emphasis and adds their now-familiar Homeric titles ("Telemachia," "Odyssey," and "Nostos").

[16] Ellmann, *Ulysses on the Liffey*, 88

[17] Jorge Luis Borges, "John Wilkins' Analytical Language," 1942, trans. Eliot Weinberger, *Collected Non-Fictions*, ed. Eliot Weinberger (New York: Viking, 1999), 231.

[18] Bersani, *The Culture of Redemption*, 155-56.

[19] Stephen Leacock, "The New Food" in *Literary Lapses* (New York: John Lane, 1915), 62-64. "And when they gathered the little corpse together, the baby lips were parted in a lingering smile..." (64).

[20] See, Frederick Karl, "American Fictions: The Mega-Novel" *Conjunctions* 7 (1985): 248-260; Tom LeClair, *In the Loop: Don DeLillo and the Systems Novel* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987); Stefano Ercolino, *The Maximalist Novel: From Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow to Roberto Bolaño's 2666* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014); Scott McCracken and Jo Winning, "The Long Modernist Novel: An Introduction" *Modernist Cultures* 10.3 (November 2015): 269-281.

[21] In *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information Before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), Ann M. Blair emphatically makes the point that is that although the encyclopedic tradition as it reaches us is basically European, many of its formal innovations appeared earlier in, among other places, China and the Islamic world (see, especially, 22-33).

[22] Blair's history of pre-modern reference works is definitive. The formal analysis in Mary Franklin-Brown's study of thirteenth-century encyclopedias and encyclopedic literature, *Reading the World: Encyclopedic Writing in the Scholastic Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), makes for a valuable complement.

[23] The encyclopedia is a major subdiscipline of eighteenth-century studies. There is a lot of material—more that has been useful to me than I can sketch here. A couple of sources I have found especially helpful are Wilda Anderson's article on the purpose of form in the *Encyclopédie*, "Encyclopedic Topologies,=" *MLN* 101, no. 4 (September 1988): 912-929 and Frank A. Kafker's edited volumes *Notable Encyclopedias of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Nine Predecessors of the Encyclopédie*, SVEC 194 (London: The Voltaire Foundation, 1981) and *Notable Encyclopedias of the Late Eighteenth Century: Eleven Successors to the Encyclopédie*, SVEC 315 (London: The Voltaire Foundation, 1994).

[24] See the second chapter of Estelle Murail, "Beyond the Flâneur: Walking, Passage and Crossing in Paris and London in the Nineteenth Century" (doctoral thesis, King's College London and Université Paris-Diderot, 2013), 67-106.

[25] Intertextuality in Flaubert is much less overt than in Joyce, such that it is less constitutive of form, but see Scarlett Baron, *Strandentwining Cable: Joyce, Flaubert, and Intertextuality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[26] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, 1957, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1971), 55-56, 311. Subsequent references will be made in the text.

[27] Edward Mendelson, "Encyclopedic Narrative: From Dante to Pynchon" *MLN* 91, No. 6 (1976): 1267-1275. He returns to the same ideas in a second, shorter, less often cited essay, "Gravity's Encyclopedia," which appears in the collection *Mindful Pleasures*, ed. George Levine and David Leverenz (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1976): 163-165.

[28] Franco Moretti: *Modern Epic: The World-System from Goethe to Garcia-Marquez* (London: Verso, 1996), 4n2. Subsequent critics seem to have noticed and agreed. He is the rare critic for whom *encyclopedia* is not a key term whose is consistently taken up in the conversation about encyclopedism.

[29] Georg Lukács, *Theory of the Novel*, 1920 (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1971), 34.

[30] Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 21.

[31] Jean le Rond d'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia of Diderot*, 1751, trans. Richard N. Schwab and Walter E. Rex (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), 122.

[32] Seth Rudy, *Literature and Encyclopedism in Enlightenment Britain: The Pursuit of Complete Knowledge* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 45-63, 122-136.

[33] Hilary Clark, *The Fictional Encyclopaedia* (New York: Garland, 1990), especially v-46 (her overview of the subject) and 47-88 (on *Finnegans Wake*).

[34] In "Encyclopedia Joyce," a special issue of the *James Joyce Quarterly* forthcoming in 2019, which I co-edited with Kiron Ward, Saint-Amour is easily the most often cited authority.

[35] Paul Saint-Amour, *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 185, 179-262.

[36] Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

[37] James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler with Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior, afterword by Michael Groden (New York: Vintage, 1986), 57. Subsequent references will be given in the text by chapter and line number. The passage just cited is 4.536-40.

[38] For the background to Levine's thinking about affordance, see, especially, J.J. Gibson, "The Theory of Affordances" in *Perceiving, Acting, and Knowing*, R.E. Shaw and J. Bransford eds. (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum Associates, 1977), 127-143, and Donald A. Norman, *The Design of Everyday Things* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 9-11.

[39] The line between mode and genre is sometimes sharper or fuzzier, or drawn somewhat differently, depending on who is using the terms. I like Michael McKeon's definitions in the first pages of *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), xiii-4. Frye and Mendelson consider encyclopedic literature a mode. Saint-Amour treats it as a genre. Clark, typically, says it is both, and it's complicated (3-16).

[40] Claudio Guillèn, "On the Uses of Literary Genre," *Literature as System: Essays Toward the Theory of Literary History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 107-134.

[41] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, 1966, translated anonymously (London: Routledge, 1989), xvi.

[42] Borges, "John Wilkins' Analytical Language," 229.

[43] Saint-Amour, *Tense Future*, 199-203. Borges answers the desert island question in an interview with Fernando Sorrentino collected in *Seven Conversations with Jorge Luis Borges*, Trans. Clark M. Zlotchew (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2010), 123.

[44] Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 28-33. Just for example: Blair notes that from its completion in 1773 until 2010, when it was surpassed by Wikipedia, a Manchu encyclopedia, the 800,000,000-word *Siku Quanshu*, was the biggest in the world (30).

[45] Clive Hart, "Gaps and Cracks in *Ulysses*," *JJQ* 30, no. 3 (Spring 1993): 436.

[46] Ezra Pound, "Paris Letter: *Ulysses*" *Dial* 72, No. 6 (June 1922): 623; and for his discussion of "major form," "Arnold Dolmetsch," *The Egoist* 7, No. 4 (August 1917): 104.

[47] Saint-Amour, *Tense Future*, 195 and more generally, 182-99; 222-36; and 228-229.

[48] Weldon Thornton, *Allusions in Ulysses: An Annotated List* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968) and Don Gifford, *Ulysses Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's* Ulysses, second ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988).

I am focusing here on separate books of annotations, rather than annotated editions, for two reasons. First, books of annotations are remarkably popular, while annotated editions tend to go through patches of being difficult to buy new. (Over the past ten years, I have noted this with the editions annotated by Johnson, Kiberd, and Slote.) Second, more notes mean more data to work with. That being said, interesting patterns do emerge show through in shorter notes sections. For example: to fit all of Sam Slote's assiduous annotation of the Odyssey Press *Ulysses* (Richmond: Alma Classics, 2012) at the back of a single easily liftable volume, the notes are arranged, suggestively, in double columns with major-minor numeration, like verses in a standard Bible.

[49] *Allusions in Ulysses* weighs a bit more (2.2 lbs.) than either standard edition of *Ulysses* (the corrected Random House is 1.8 lbs.; Gabler, 2.1 lbs.), though at just over 225,000 words, it is a bit shorter than the novel, which is around 265,000 words. *Ulysses Annotated* is significantly bigger: 3.2 lbs. and a little under 440,000 words in its second edition.

[50] C.D. Blanton, *Epic Negation: The Dialectical Poetics of Late Modernism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 76.

[51] Roland McHugh, *Annotations to Finnegans Wake*, fourth edition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016).

[52] The diagram appears, clearly attributed to Lewis, in Moholy-Nagy's book *Vision in Motion* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1947), 347. I have included it as figure 4 at the end of the chapter.

[53] For about a decade, starting when Congress extended their copyright on *Ulysses*, the estate aggressively quashed all kinds of work on or involving Joyce. New textual scholarship was blocked. Carol Loeb Shloss was forced to bowdlerize her biography of Joyce's daughter Lucia on account of legal action and denied permissions. Public Bloomsday celebrations that involved quoting *Ulysses* were shut down. By most accounts, the controlling trustee, Joyce's grandson Stephen, felt his family had been ill-used by the Joyce industry, and marshaled the estate's rights and substantial legal budget against perceived enemies. Groden got on that list by appraising a cache of manuscripts—those that would be bought by the NLI in 2002—without consulting him. When Stephen found out, he reportedly called Groden and said: "You should consider a new career as a garbage collector in New York City, because you'll never quote a Joyce text again." That was that for "Digital *Ulysses*," and understandably no other major projects arose in that environment. D.T. Max tells the story up to there in "The Injustice Collector" (*New Yorker*, June

16, 2006: 34-43). A détente between Stephen and the Joyceans has largely prevailed over most of the past decade.

[54] *Infinite Ulysses* is, or was, a public participatory edition on the model of the online community Reddit. Visconti published it online, as a sort of beta test, between March 2015 and May 2016, then withdrew it, and set about studying the data she had collected, making changes, and getting version 1.0 together. It is an extremely impressive project, and I am sorry not to have adequately documented it while it was up. (I did not realize it was going to be taken down.) I will not say much about it here, as I would have to rely on my memory of it, except that its success depends in large part on Visconti's deep recognition that the novel thrives on partial readings.

[55] Put another way, they belong to what N. Katherine Hayles has designated the first generation of electronic literature. This might best be described as print culture's attempt to invent digital culture before it evolved on its own. It is exemplified by "born digital" hypertext narratives such as Michael Joyce's *afternoon* and Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*. First-generation works introduce formal innovations that are meant to free readers and writers from the limitations of the printed page and the codex, but the page and the codex are still its primary frames of reference. See Hayles, "Deeper into the Machine: The Future of Electronic Literature" *Culture Machine* 5 (2003); and "Electronic Literature: What Is It?" *The Electronic Literature Organization*, January 2, 2007.

[56] HyperCard and StorySpace were both published in 1987. The Web went online in 1991. The hypertext systems developed at Brown University starting in 1967, including HES, FRESS, and IRIS, are another important precedent.

[57] Jacques Derrida, "Ulysses Gramophone: Hear Say Yes in Joyce," in *Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge, trans. Tina Kendall, revised by Shari Benstock (New York: Routledge, 1992), 281. The essay first appeared in English translation in *Post-Structuralist Joyce: Essays from the French*, eds. Attridge and Daniel Ferrer, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[58] George P. Landow makes the same broad point in more detail and with greater clarity (less panache, though) in his slightly later *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). *Ulysses* is his prime example of "implicit hypertext in nonelectronic form" and "page-bound text" that invites digitization and extensive hyperlinking (10, 67-68, 72).

[59] Suzanne Chamberlain, "Developing an Online Archive of *Ulysses*" *UB* Reporter, 6 February 2003.

[60] The last version of "Digital *Ulysses*," a full annotation of "Proteus," was shown around widely but never published. In discussing it, I am relying on Chamberlain's article, Marc C. Marino's essay "Ulysses on Web 2.0: Towards a Hypermedia Parallax Engine" (*James Joyce Quarterly* 44.3 (2007): 484-85), and material from Groden's "James Joyce's *Ulysses* in Hypermedia," which can still be tracked down via the Internet Archive. Chamberlain and Marino make clear that "Digital *Ulysses*" was made on the same model. I have included a screenshot from that slightly earlier project as figure 5.

[61] The last version of the "Text Machine" is still hosted on Erlich's Rutgers website, at http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~ehrlich/jjtm/demo/6index.html, still optimized for turn-of-the-millennium web browsers. Certain features do not work with newer web ones. I have included a screenshot as figure 6.

[62] Derrida, "Ulysses Gramophone," 305-08.

[63] Fritz Senn, "Metastasis," *Joycean Dislocutions: Essays on Reading as Translation*, ed. John Paul Riquelme (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 139.

[64] That is to say: at the level of narration, Joyce's encyclopedism works as a sort of archival-scale, author- or arranger-oriented Uncle Charles Principle (cf. Hugh Kenner, *Joyce's Voices* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 15-38).)

[65] Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922) 16.
[66] François Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, 1532-64, trans. J.M. Cohen (New York: Penguin Classics, 1955), 186-92.

[67] Lukács, *Theory of the Novel*, 34.

THE LINATI SCHEMA

	Title	Hour	Colour	Persons	Technic	Science, Art	Sense (Meaning)	Organ	Symbol
I.					DAWN				
1	Telemachus	8–9	gold, white	Telemachus { Mentor { Pallas Antinous The Suitors Penelope (Mother)	Dialogue for 3 & 4 Narration Soliloquy	Theology	The Dispossessed Son in Contest	— (Telemachus does not yet suffer the body)	Hamlet, Ireland, Stephen
2.	Nestor	9–10	brown	Nestor Telemachus Pisistratus Helen	Dialogue for 2 Narration Soliloquy	History	The Wisdom of the Ancients	—	Ulster, Woman, Practical sense
3	Proteus	10–11	blue	Proteus Menelaus Helen Megapenthes Telemachus	Soliloquy	Philology	Primal Matter (ΠΡΩΤΕΥΣ)	—	Word, Tide, Moon, Evolution, Metamorphosis
II.					MORNING				
1 (4)	Calypso	8–9	orange	Calypso (Penelope wife) Ulysses Callidike	Dialogue for 2 Soliloquy	Mythology	The Departing Wayfarer	Kidneys	Vagina, Exile, Kin, Nymph, Israel in captivity
2 (5)	Lotus Eaters	9–10	dark brown	Eurylochus Polites Ulysses Nausicaa (2)	Dialogue Soliloquy Prayer	Chemistry	The Temptation of Faith	Skin	Host, Penis in the bath, Froth, Flower, Drugs, Castration, Oats
3 (6)	Hades	11–12	black-white	Ulysses Elpenor Ajax Agamemnon Hercules Eriphyle Sisyphus Orion Laertes etc. Prometheus Cerberus Tiresias Hades Proserpina Telemachus Antinous	Narration Dialogue		The Descent into Nothingness	Heart	Cemetery, Sacred Heart, The Past, The Unknown Man, The Unconscious, Heart defect, Relics, Heartbreak
					MIDDAY				
4 (7)	Aeolus	12–1	red	Aeolus Sons Telemachus Mentor Ulysses (2)	Simbouleutike[1] Dikanike[1] Epideictic[1] Tropes	Rhetoric	The Derision of Victory	Lungs	Machines, Wind, Fame, Kite, Failed destinies, The press, Mutability
5 (8)	Lestrygonians	1–2	blood red	Antiphates The Seductive Daughter Ulysses	Peristaltic prose	Architecture	Despondency	Esophagus	Bloody sacrifice, Food, Shame
6 (9)	Scylla and Charybdis	2–3	—	Scylla and Charybdis Ulysses Telemachus Antinous	Whirlpools	Literature	The Two-edged Sword[2]	Brain	Hamlet, Shakespeare, Christ, Socrates, London & Stratford, Scholasticism & Mysticism, Plato & Aristotle, Youth & Maturity

Figure 2 The Linati schema as translated in *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*

Title	Hour	Colour	Persons	Technic	Science, Art	Sense (Meaning)	Organ	Symbol
				DAY Central point—Umbilicus				
7 (10) Wandering Rocks	3–4	rainbow	Objects Places Forces Ulysses	Shifting labyrinth between two shores	Mechanics	The Hostile Milieu	Blood	Christ & Caesar, Errors, Homonyms, Synchronisms, Resemblances
8 (11) Sirens	4–5	coral	Leucothea Parthenope Ulysses Orpheus Menelaus Argonauts	Fuga per canonem	Music	The Sweet Deceit	Ear	Promises, Female, Sounds, Embellishments
9 (12) Cyclops	5–6	green	Prometheus Noman (I) Ulysses Galatea	Alternating asymmetry	Surgery	Egocidal Terror	(1) Muscles (2) Bones	Nation, State, Religion, Dynasty,[3] Idealism, Exaggeration, Fanaticism, Collectivity
10 (13) Nausicaa	8–9	grey	Nausicaa Handmaidens Alcinous Arete Ulysses	Retrogressive progression	Painting	The Projected Mirage	Eye Nose	Onanism, Feminine, Hypocrisy
11 (14) Oxen of the Sun	10–11	white	Lampetie Phaethusa Helios Hyperion Jove Ulysses	Prose Embryo— Foetus— Birth	Physics[4]	The Eternal Herds	Matrix Uterus	Fertilization, Frauds, Parthenogenesis
12 (15) Circe	11–12	violet	Circe The Swine Telemachus Ulysses Hermes	Exploding vision	Dance	The Man-hating Ogress	Locomotor apparatus Skeleton	Zoology, Personification, Pantheism, Magic, Poison, Antidote, Reel
III.				MIDNIGHT (Fusion of Bloom & Stephen) (Ulysses & Telemachus)				
1 (16) Eumaeus	12–1	—	Eumaeus Ulysses Telemachus The Bad Goatherd Ulysses Pseudangelos	Relaxed prose		The Ambush on Home Ground	Nerves	
2 (17) Ithaca	1–2	— starry milky[5]	Ulysses Telemachus Eurycleia The suitors	Dialogue Pacified style Fusion		Armed Hope	Juices	
3 (18) Penelope	∞	starry milky *then* new dawn	Laertes Ulysses Penelope	Monologue Resigned style		The Past Sleeps	Fat	
				DEEP NIGHT—DAWN				
			Ulysses (Bloom)		Telemachus (Stephen)			

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[1] Simbouleutike, Dikanike, and Epideictic are the three branches of Classical Rhetoric: deliberative, judicial, and public oratory.

[2] Joyce uses the phrase 'Dilemma Bitagliente'; *bitagliente* means a double cutting edge, hence 'two-edged sword'. The only other option for translation is 'double cutting-edged dilemma' which, as well as being tautologous, loses entirely the flavour of the metaphor.

[3] Joyce's handwriting is difficult at this point. Richard Ellmann reads Joyce as having written 'Ginnastica', or Gymnastics, while Claude Jacquet reads him as having written 'Dinastia', or Dynasty. I think the initial letter is an upper-case 'D', which lends credence to the latter. However, there is no question that if Joyce meant 'Dinastia' he misspelled it as 'Dinnastia'. See Richard Ellmann, *Ulysses on the Liffey* (1972; corr. edn., London: Faber & Faber, 1974), Appendix, and Claude Jacquet, 'Les Plans de Joyce pour *Ulysses*', in Louis Bonnerot, ed., *'Ulysses': Cinquante ans après* (Paris: Didier, 1974), 66, 76.

[4] Joyce may have meant Physic or Medicine, but he wrote 'Fisica' which means Physics.

[5] As in the Milky Way.

Figure 2 The Linati schema as translated in *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*

THE GILBERT SCHEMA

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Title	Scene	Hour	Organ	Art	Colour	Symbol	Technic	Correspondences
				I. TELEMACHIA				
1. Telemachus	The Tower	8 a.m.		Theology	white, gold	Heir	Narrative (young)	Stephen: Telemachus, Hamlet; Buck Mulligan: Antinous; Milkwoman: Mentor.
2. Nestor	The School	10 a.m.		History	brown	Horse	Catechism (personal)	Deasy: Nestor; Sargent: Pisistratus; Helen: Mrs O'Shea.
3. Proteus	The Strand	11 a.m.		Philology	green	Tide	Monologue (male)	Proteus: Primal Matter; Menelaus: Kevin Egan; Megapenthes: The Cockiepicker.
				II. ODYSSEY				
4. Calypso	The House	8 a.m.	Kidney	Economics	orange	Nymph	Narrative (mature)	Calypso: The Nymph; The Recall: Dlugascz; Ithaca: Zion.
5. Lotus Eaters	The Bath	10 a.m.	Genitals	Botany, Chemistry		Eucharist	Narcissism	Lotus Eaters: Cabhorses, Communicants, Soldiers, Eunuchs, Bather, Watchers of Cricket.
6. Hades	The Graveyard	11 a.m.	Heart	Religion	white, black	Caretaker	Incubism	The 4 Rivers: Dodder, Grand and Royal Canals, Liffey; Sisyphus: Cunningham; Cerberus: Father Coffey; Hades: Caretaker; Hercules: Daniel O'Connell; Elpenor: Dignam; Agamemnon: Parnell; Ajax: Menton.
7. Aeolus	The Newspaper	12 noon	Lungs	Rhetoric	red	Editor	Enthymemic	Aeolus: Crawford; Incest: Journalism; Floating Island: Press.
8. Lestrygonians	The Lunch	1 p.m.	Esophagus	Architecture		Constables	Peristaltic	Antiphates: Hunger; The Decoy: Food; Lestrygonians: Teeth.
9. Scylla and Charybdis	The Library	2 p.m.	Brain	Literature		Stratford, London	Dialectic	Rock: Aristotle, Dogma, Stratford; Whirlpool: Plato, Mysticism, London; Ulysses: Socrates, Jesus, Shakespeare.
10. Wandering Rocks	The Streets	3 p.m.	Blood	Mechanics		Citizens	Labyrinth	Bosphorus: Liffey; European bank: Viceroy; Asiatic bank: Conmee; Symplegades: Groups of citizens.
11. Sirens	The Concert Room	4 p.m.	Ear	Music		Barmaids	Fuga per canonem	Sirens: Barmaids; Isle: Bar.
12. Cyclops	The Tavern	5 p.m.	Muscle	Politics		Fenian	Gigantism	Noman: I; Stake: cigar; Challenge: apotheosis.
13. Nausicaa	The Rocks	8 p.m.	Eye, Nose	Painting	grey, blue	Virgin	Tumescence, detumescence	Nausicaa: Nymph; Phaecia: Star of the Sea.
14. Oxen of the Sun	The Hospital	10 p.m.	Womb	Medicine	white	Mothers	Embryonic development	Trinacria: Hospital; Lampetie, Phaethusa: Nurses; Helios: Horne; Oxen: Fertility; Crime: Fraud.
15. Circe	The Brothel	12 midnight	Locomotor apparatus	Magic		Whore	Hallucination	Circe: Bella.
				III. NOSTOS				
16. Eumaeus	The Shelter	1 a.m.	Nerves	Navigation		Sailors	Narrative (old)	Eumaeus: Skin-the-Goat; Ulysses Pseudangelos: Sailor; Melanthius: Corley.
17. Ithaca	The House	2 a.m.	Skeleton	Science		Comets	Catechism (impersonal)	Eurymachus: Boylan; Suitors: scruples; Bow: reason.
18. Penelope	The Bed	—	Flesh	—		Earth	Monologue (female)	Penelope: Earth; Web: movement.

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Figure 3 The Gilbert schema as transcribed in *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*

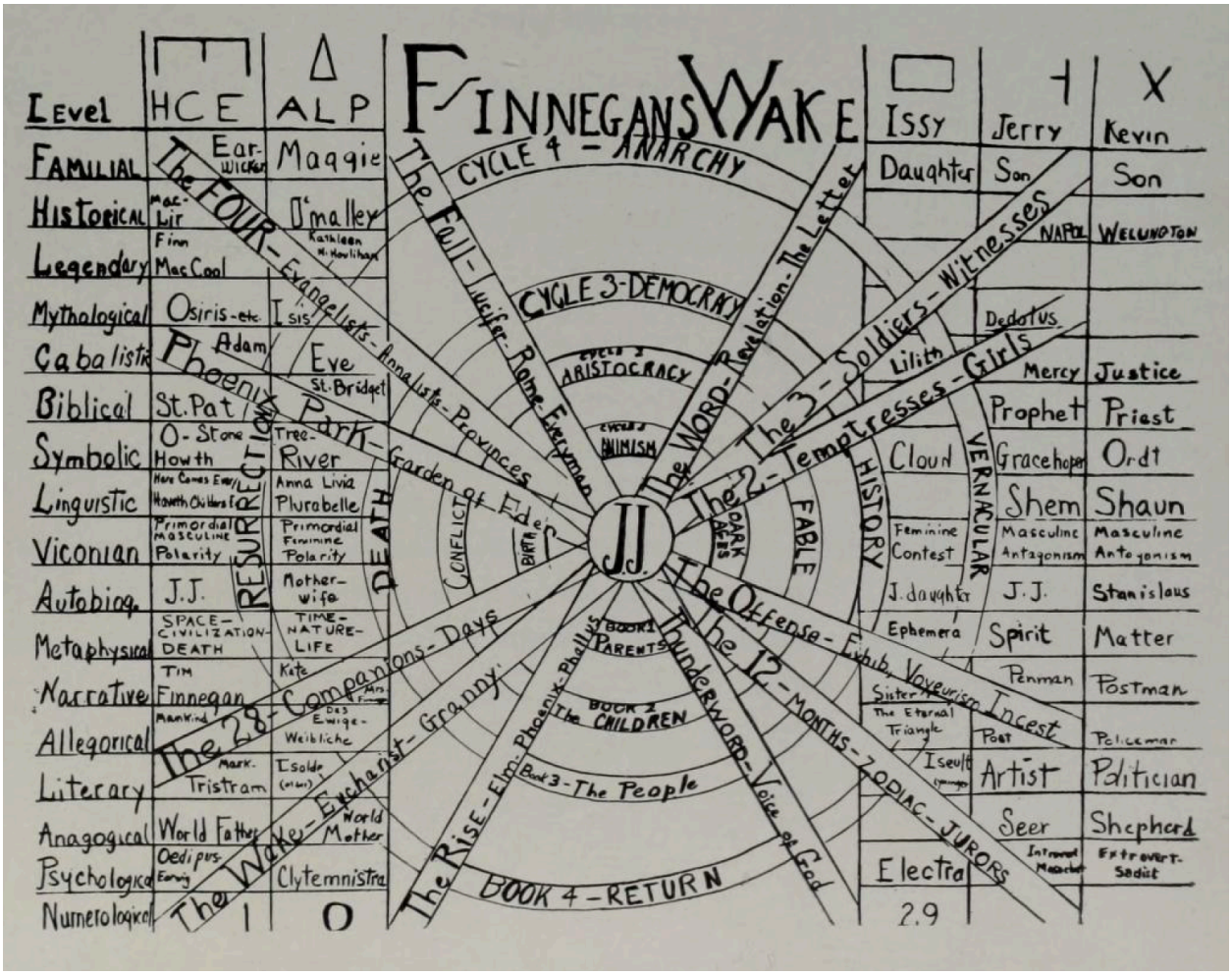

Figure 4 Leslie L. Lewis's diagram of *Finnegans Wake* as reproduced in *Vision in Motion*

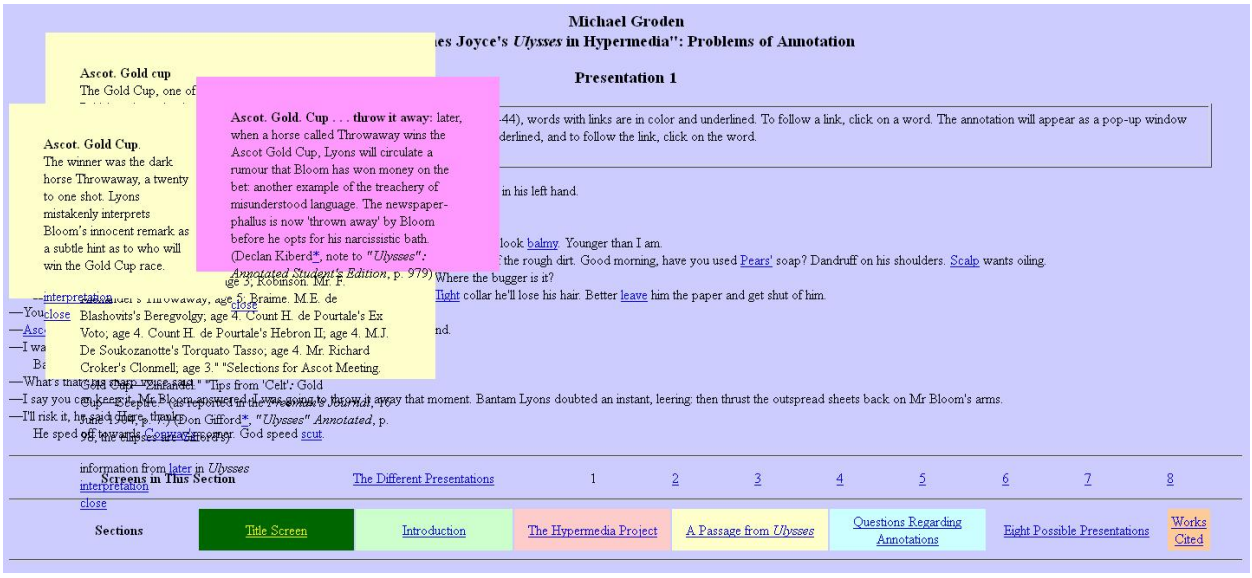

Figure 5 Michael Groden's "James Joyce's *Ulysses* in Hypermedia" prototype in "links highlighted, mouse-click, pop-up" mode

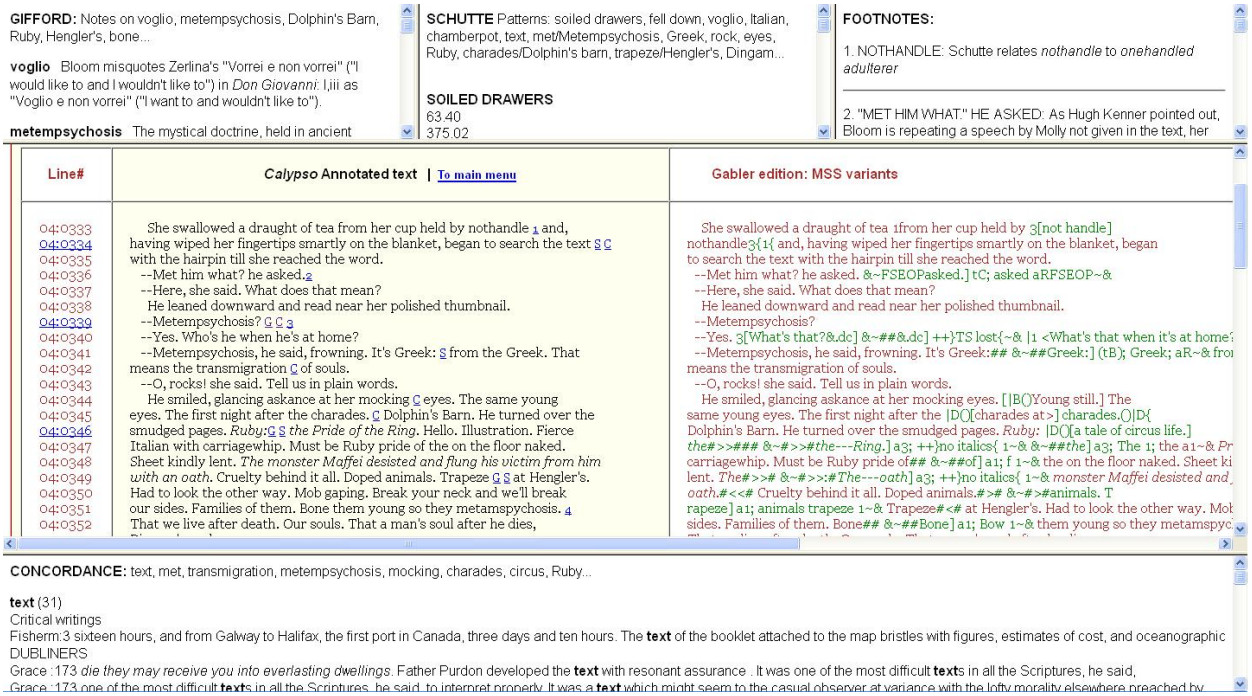

Figure 6 Heyward Erlich's *James Joyce Text Machine* in "synchronized multiple annotation" mode

CHAPTER II

BROWSING ON THE ASPHALT / BOTANIZING AT THE LIBRARY: THE ENCYCLOPEDIC SPACES OF *THE ARCADES PROJECT*

Deep in *The Arcades Project*—in Convolute N, the Theory convolute—Walter Benjamin lets the reader know that his encyclopedia, while defined by its focal subject, also has a setting in the ordinary literary sense. He writes:

> These notes devoted to the Paris arcades were begun under an open sky of cloudless blue that arched above the foliage; and yet—owing to the millions of leaves that were visited by the fresh breeze of diligence, the stertorous breath of the researcher, the storm of youthful zeal, and the idle wind of curiosity—they've been covered with the dust of centuries. For the painted sky of summer that looks down from the arcades in the reading room of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris has spread out over them its dreamy, unlit ceiling.[1]

This is a curious passage for several reasons. Although it reads like a valedictory reflection on the years Benjamin spent at France's national library compiling excerpts for the *Arcades*, it is among the first parts of it he wrote. He first conceived of the *Arcades* in 1927, as a fifty-page essay, which he planned to complete in a few months. When he gave the unfinished—by that stage of the project's evolution, perhaps unfinishable—manuscript to Georges Bataille as he prepared to flee the Nazis in 1940, he had the makings of about a thousand printed pages.[2] An earlier, slightly more purple-tinged draft of the passage above appears in an eleven-page draft of the intended fifty-page essay that dates to 1927 or 1928 (884).[3] Benjamin must, then, have carried this proleptic vision of the completed project with him as he wrote nearly all the *Arcades* material we have.

The passage requires some explication. The "open sky of cloudless blue" refers to trompe l'oeil skylights painted into the vaulting of the library's reading room. On first reading, it might sound as though Benjamin has come in from under the real sky, having thought of writing his book about Paris out in its streets, and then settled in under the library's painted sky to do the necessary research. But it is difficult to see how the first sentence can parse if that is the idea, and as tortuous as the syntax is in any case, it is unlikely Benjamin would have let a key passage pivot on an ungrammatical sentence or let a grammatical error survive the revision of the passage that we know he did. Thus Benjamin is contrasting, not the real sky and the indoor imitation, but before and after images of the latter, one azure-bright and the other fogged over with dust. Wonderfully, if unscientifically, he supposes that particles of countless books, "millions of leaves" making "the dust of centuries," have floated up as pages turned and darkened the paintings with a kind of encyclopedic grime.

Here, two referents blur together. Benjamin is portraying the library as an inhabited space, the site of a thriving information ecology in which the archive is swept up in the varieties of city life. Over time, he suggests, the illusory glass that rings the ceiling comes to reflect that messy mixture, and the reading room's skylit idyll takes on the shadowier, somewhat seedy appearance of a commercial arcade. He is also, simultaneously, figuring his research for the *Arcades*, which is no doubt impelled at different times by diligence, zeal, and curiosity. ("The stertorous breath of the researcher" sounds like self-deprecation.) As he pores over what might hyperbolically be described as "millions" of pages of research, reading everything he can find to read in connection with the Paris arcades in their mid-century heyday, the library and the arcades blend together for him. He looks up, and one has spread its sky over the other, though it is not quite clear which is which. This complex, overdetermined image plays on the double meaning of "leaves," which is

roughly the same in German as in English, and on an architectural similarity that he must figure goes without mentioning. The library, designed by Henri Labrouste, was one of the first permanent, monumental public buildings anywhere to use the sort of soaring iron construction typified by the arcades, and the resemblance is particularly striking in the reading room.[4]

Under its grimy, dreamy ceiling, the reading room reveals itself to Benjamin as a welter of coterminous spaces. Already, the famous painted skylights make it at once open and closed, indoors and outdoors, iron-solid and unreal. Labrouste's arcade-like vaulting combines with the fantastical ceiling to give the room's inside/outsideness a specifically urban aspect. The suggestion of an arcade in a fully enclosed room involves a more complicated multiplication of space than merely stacking binaries, arcades being (as Benjamin consistently argues) essentially liminal and double, a cross between interior and open street. For Benjamin, the numinous, transhistorical cultural space that a national archive constructs is also tangibly present and enmeshed with the lives of the people streaming through the building. The residue from that contact smudges the glass that shows above, changing the complexion of the room. Benjamin makes the contact palpable to the reader. (From a later convolute: "The painted foliage on the ceilings of the Bibliothèque Nationale. As one leafs through the pages down below, it rustles up above." (549)) Finally, the work that Benjamin comes to the reading room to undertake consolidates the multiplicity of spaces he apprehends there into an embodiment of his project, fusing the library, his archive and workplace, and the historical arcades, the heart of the world that he recovers and inhabits there.

It is significant that in a passage that is a kernel for the *Arcades*, at a rare moment at which he makes himself visible in the text, Benjamin situates himself and the reader in a space that is both impossible and real. An interest in spatial multiplicity shows throughout his oeuvre

and becomes a central preoccupation in the *Arcades*. His thinking about that multiplicity encompasses physical space and the space constructed by literary form. Often, he considers their intersection and blurs the lines that distinguish them. In his fragmentary early essay *One-Way Street* (written 1923-26, published 1928), he floats a number of arguments that find him puzzling about the strangeness of space and spatial practices, their relationship to reading and writing, and spatial form. He argues that "significant literary effectiveness" requires "a strict alternation between action and writing" that sends the writer out into their surroundings and gives their writing a basis and presence in numerous spaces.[5] That would seem to augur badly for the coming years of sedentary exploration under the sky of the Bibliothèque. On the other hand, anticipating that extravaganza of copying he is soon to undertake, he develops an extended analogy to distinguish reading texts from copying them, arguing that the former is like flying over a landscape while the latter is like covering it on foot (447-48). When he writes about his experiments with hashish intoxication a couple of years later, he fixates on the odd "architectures and configurations of space" the drug seems to conjure.[6] These become vehicles for explanatory metaphors about space he uses in the *Arcades*. There he writes that "street names are like intoxicating substances that make our perceptions […] richer in spaces" (518) and that the flâneur "resembles the hashish eater, takes space up into himself like" they do (841). In privileging flânerie as a paradigm for negotiating modernity, he posits the apprehension of complicated multiplex spaces as a definitive aspect of flâneurial subjectivity. At different points in the *Arcades*, he describes flânerie as "a phantasmagoria of space" (905) and associates it with the 'fabulous amplification' and "interweaving of spaces" that comes with the prevalence of mirrors in arcades (542, 537).

Benjamin acknowledges his reader from across a room that is extravagantly "rich in spaces." In defining a diegetic setting for a book that is more of a reference encyclopedia than encyclopedic literature, he obviously does not mean for the reader to hold that somewhat confusing, gnomic description in mind the whole time they are picking through the trove of archival excerpts and commentary that make up the bulk of the book. For one thing, that would not work; for another, the moment would not come in the fourteenth convolute, after 450 pages, if he were to try it. The description is a metadiscursive move, a specification and a complication. The *Arcades*, which analyzes modernity by way of a granular investigation into a corner of the world of almost a century earlier, builds up a sense of double presence through its accretion of bibliographic code and historical detail. It implicitly places its reader in the library of the 1930s and the arcades of the 1830s, at once, in the hazy way that some books cannot help doing if their subject and the conditions for writing them come through clearly and overlap interestingly. But again, the spatial multiplicity that preoccupies Benjamin is not the type that maps onto easy binaries such as then/now, archive/city, or flânerie/contemplation. In centering the *Arcades* on a profusely, complicatedly multiple space, and having it encapsulate its project, he indicates that a stranger, richer multiplicity is integral to the book's subject—and, I argue, to its form.

Introduction: Encyclopedic Modernity and Encyclopedic Modernism

With the *Arcades*, Benjamin grounds the formal impossibility that defines encyclopedic modernism in the spatial complexities of the modern city, which at their most elaborate make that sort of encyclopedic profusion and overdetermination a fact of everyday life. Put another way: in adapting his work to the rampant information overload that characterizes modernity, as a

modern writer must, he takes historical inspiration from broadly architectural form as much as from literary form and thinks in terms of living space as much as reading environments. While he makes extensive use of the encyclopedia's traditional resources—he may, for example, be the most innovative cross-referencer since Diderot—many of his strongest formal models are drawn from the streets rather than the stacks. He also consistently troubles distinctions between literary form and the forms of urban experience.

Where Eliot and Joyce develop broad, suggestive analogies between the reader of encyclopedic modernism and the modern metropolitan subject, Benjamin analyzes in detail the varieties of encyclopedic experience available in cities at several stages of modernity. He attends closely to the spaces that foster that experience and the forms that structure them on his way to valorizing a very particular brand of flânerie as a model for reading. In many respects, the form of the *Arcades* is modeled on the multiplex urban spaces that best afford such wandering. That means drawing on his historical work to devise literary-formal analogues to the sort of spatial multiplicity that comes through in his reading-room reverie. In conceiving his new kind of encyclopedia, Benjamin considers the arcade and the phalanstery—the utopian socialist Charles Fourier's imagined arcade-like arcology—the international exhibition, the department store, the Hausmannian boulevard, among other public spaces with encyclopedic qualities.

When Benjamin sets to work on the *Arcades*, he has already made the case that books as traditionally written, big books especially,[7] are becoming obsolete. In *One-Way Street*, he argues that the book is dying because the crowded media ecologies of modern cities have battered everyone's attention into uselessness for contemplative reading: "before a contemporary finds his way clear to opening a book, his eyes have been exposed to such a blizzard of changing, colorful, conflicting letters that the chances of his penetrating the archaic stillness of the book

seem slight" (456). (In many other places, he uses to the old-new-media metaphor of the phantasmagoria to characterize that aspect of nineteenth-century experience.) So far, this may sound like a familiar declinist argument about new media and attention. Then comes a prescient twist. Benjamin continues:

> today the book is already, as the present mode of scholarly production demonstrates, an outdated mediation between two different filing systems. For everything that matters is to be found in the card box of the researcher who wrote it, and the scholar studying it assimilates it into his own card index. (456)

There is irony there but not canceling irony. To the extent he is making a joke, the joke is that the overload that has lately done so much to dissipate attention out in the blizzard of signs has long prevailed in the reading room. Meaning: the historic change that is apparently ruining us for traditional literary form runs much deeper than the proliferation of electric signs and cinemas (and, by the way, the library is not as old-fashioned as it might look). If modern culture is becoming, at base, an interchange of filing systems, that means information flows have become so overwhelming everyone needs to be an encyclopedist. It seems unavoidable that this will obviate established forms, genres, and reading practices, and that losing recourse to them will be deeply unsettling. Yet there is optimism in Benjamin's argument, or at least the absence of a pessimism we might expect from the type of argument he is making. He does not suppose we will have trouble adapting our genres and reading practices to the enforced granularity and manageable disorderliness that will come with what is sure to be an ever-deepening flood of information. Benjamin's ironical doubt about the future of the book contains a reassurance: we already have the means to remake it for our purposes.

In connecting the shocks dealt by the fast-changing, ever-faster-moving ecologies of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century media to the question of information management, Benjamin anticipates Friedrich Kittler's claim that the role of the book—among much else that

is less relevant here—changes fundamentally when the storage and transmission of information stops effectively being synonymous with writing things down and copying them. For Kittler, this change leads to a mechanization of culture that crowds out the subjectivity and agency of the so-called humans in its thrall, as well as the convergence of media, including literature, in forms and technologies that are inimical to the humanity—all governed by the inexorable logic of militarism.[8] Mark Wollaeger confirms the broad outlines of Kittler's argument, but rejects its bellicose teleology and the gloom about modernity and modern literature that comes with it. Following James R. Beniger, he attributes the convergence of media in what becomes, fundamentally, an information society with a rationalizing assertion of bureaucratic control issuing from a range of political and economic power centers, which include but are by no means limited to those whose main imperative is to make war. He sees in this the emergence of what Walter Lippmann calls a "pseudo-environment," in which mediated images come to be the main substance of subjective experience of the wider world. For Wollaeger, modernism does its cultural work in that contested area between interiority and control, "a kind of psychosocial contact zone defined at one extreme by subjectivity construed as a sanctuary for being, and at the other by propaganda as an encompassing array of manipulative discourses."[9] On this view, a book can interpolate a space for more humane or critical engagement with modernity in its coercively overwhelming media ecology, but only if it eschews "archaic stillness" and enters that fray.

Over the years of his work on the *Arcades*, Benjamin's thinking about these matters settles somewhere between Kittler's techno-determinist doomsaying and Wollaeger's qualified affirmation of modernism's potential. At the end of every version of his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility," which he wrote and rewrote three times between 1935 and 1939, he argues that the passive, distracted reception of culture—"a symptom of

profound changes in apperception," exemplified by cinema—can only be preparation for fascism, its anesthetization of violence, and total war as ultimate spectacle.[10] A movie is, in the language of *One-Way Street*, a twenty-four frame a minute "blizzard of changing, colorful, conflicting" images. Highly disjunctive montage films, such as those made by Dziga Vertov, epitomize the tendency he finds distressingly symptomatic of the modern pseudo-environment's reshaping of popular consciousness. He worries about the way movies engulf the audience's attention by continually flashing fresh information at viewers, never allowing them to get the subjective mooring they would need to sustain an "evaluating attitude" (269). To the extent that movie-going thus understood represents the drift of mediated modernity, Kittler is right, "[humankind's] self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure" (Benjamin, "The Work of Art," 270).

Yet just before he sounds that alarm, Benjamin entertains a more auspicious possibility. The viable alternative to the dangerous sort of distraction cinema foments is not contemplation but, he suggests, another mode of distraction. Its model is the appreciation of architecture. His explanation is an essential gloss on the form and project of the *Arcades*:

> Architecture has always offered the prototype of an artwork that is received in a state of distraction and through the collective. The laws of architecture's reception are highly instructive. Buildings have accompanied human existence since primeval times. Many art forms have come into being and passed away. […] But the human need for shelter is permanent. Architecture has never had fallow periods. Its history is longer than that of any other art, and its effect ought to be recognized in any attempt to account for the relationship of the masses to the work of art. Buildings are received in a twofold manner: by use and by perception. Or, better: tactilely and optically. Such reception cannot be understood in terms of the concentrated attention of a traveler before a famous building. On the tactile side, there is no counterpart to what contemplation is on the optical side. Tactile reception comes about not so much by way of attention as by way of habit. The latter largely determines even the optical reception of architecture, which spontaneously takes the form of casual noticing, rather than attentive observation. Under certain circumstances, this form of reception shaped by architecture acquires canonical value. *For the tasks which face the human apparatus of*

> *perception at historical turning points cannot be performed solely by optical means—that is, by way of contemplation. They are mastered gradually—taking their cue from tactile reception—through habit.* (268)

For Benjamin, the "canonical" way to apprehend modernity is by moving at your pleasure, inhabiting its spaces with errant curiosity, coming and going, bandying about, discovering affordances adventitiously, keeping your eyes peeled but not looking to capture a total picture, feeling your way around, accruing a sense of things without trying to take everything in. This is, equally, his paradigm for the type of appreciation to which modern art ought to be available: the way you develop a sense of a built environment over time… or read an encyclopedia.

The thinking that determines the form of the *Arcades* pivots on a deep analogy between flânerie and encyclopedism. Benjamin descries Wollaeger's zone of constructive possibility in that connection. He describes flânerie as "illustrative seeing," which in his description sounds a lot like errant, annotative reading (419), and as a kind of encyclopedic investigation: "botanizing on the asphalt" (372). His flâneur is distinguished by special access to the city's overwhelming plenitude, knowledge of its gifts and dangers. This comes down to prodigious awareness of its impossible multiplicity: of the ways that, as a text, the city is formally encyclopedic. That multiplicity has many dimensions. Although as an encyclopedist, the flâneur is self-evidently closer to Diderot than to d'Alembert, he enjoys the synoptic/ground level double perspective canonically defined by their differing conceptions of the *Encyclopédie*: "the city splits for him into its dialectical poles. It opens up to him as a landscape, even as it closes around him as a room" (417).[11] The flâneur "make[s] the street an interior," registering the privacies enclosed in public spaces and making himself at home as he crosses and straddles the city's overlapping social precincts (421). The multiplicity that overdetermines his experience of the city's spaces is also historical—"We know that, in the course of flânerie, far-off times and places interpenetrate

the landscape and the present moment" (419)—and intertextual: "in the course of the nineteenth century, [flâneurial knowledge of the city] was also deposited in an immense literature. […] [W]hat the flâneur learned from [it] took form and figure during an afternoon walk before the apératif" (417).

That literature is a major resource for Benjamin in his translation of flânerie's spaces into literary form. His study of what is typically classed as flâneur literature, most notably the work of Charles Baudelaire and Franz Hessel, is crucial to his conception of the flâneur as a figure. But above, he appears to be referring to a genre that is less well remembered, which seems a more significant foundation for the form of the *Arcades*: the urban physiology. Physiologies are guides to the city that anatomize its characteristic "types." They emerged at the moment of the arcades' cultural prominence, the early middle of the nineteenth century, and remained popular for several decades. Benjamin uses guidebooks of all sorts as sources for the *Arcades*. He even places an excerpt from one, the German *Illustrated Guide to Paris*, at the beginning of Convolute A and describes it as "the locus classicus for the presentation of the arcades" for its discussion of flânerie in connection with architecture (31). Yet physiologies have special relevance to his formal innovations. Two aspects of the genre set it apart from other varieties of guidebook in that connection. First, as Estelle Murail demonstrates, the genre evolved reciprocally with new media, incorporating, for instance, elements of the sketch and the panorama. It is a seminal example of how city writing can materialize the urban forms from which it takes inspiration. Second, a point that comes through Murail's analysis of the genre, though not one she makes: as physiologies increasingly center the flâneur as the narrator or organizing figure among the types they survey, the genre draws more deeply on the encyclopedia's formal repertoire.[12] The flâneur is as much a product of the nineteenth century's literature of the city as a subject for it. Benjamin, who can

only reimagine the century on the basis of its archive, is, it should be remembered, building on literary tradition in taking encyclopedic modernity as a basis for encyclopedic modernism.

Encyclopedic Space in the Nineteenth Century: The Crystal Palace as Encyclopedia

To take a step back: encyclopedic works by modernist writers generally take the modern metropolis as a setting and subject and, to some degree, a formal model. Those roles typically blur together, which can make the connection between urban space and spatial form difficult to analyze and historicize. As is so often the case with regards to tendencies in encyclopedic modernism, *Ulysses* is definitive. Leopold Bloom wanderers and his mind wanders. In representing that double peregrination, Joyce constructs an intratextual and intertextual complex that is available to meandering and exploration much the way that Dublin's streets and public spaces are to Bloom. The novel's encyclopedism is, then, broadly mimetic.[13] That much is basically a commonplace. If after a catastrophe Dublin "could be reconstructed out of [Joyce's] book," as Joyce bragged to Frank Budgen, it must at least partly be because it captures how everyday life there is structured.[14] Joyce conveys the mobility and compass for curiosity the city affords. Bloom's walking and wondering involve negotiating immensities of information, and they are, more generally, a model for such negotiation in modernity. The modern urban subject is an encyclopedist, *Ulysses* implicitly argues, and an encyclopedic presentation of modernity should consequently be written to solicit and accommodate readers with book smarts analogous to those street smarts.

The previous chapter unpacks the sophisticated formal strategies Joyce uses to build up that implicit argument and explains where those strategies come from historically. But, where

Joyce's analogy between encyclopedism and modern urban subjectivity is concerned, my strokes are awfully broad. The trouble is that trying to break the analogy down more precisely would undoubtedly become tendentious before long. Most literary form is nebulous and the impossible form that structures the sort of encyclopedic literature *Ulysses* typifies is unusually so. This makes it difficult to muster strong textual support or warrant much historical specificity in relating the form and experience of reading *Ulysses*, or just about any other major work of encyclopedic modernism, to particular aspects of the city or city life.

The *Arcades* is a more instructive exhibit for that kind of analysis because Benjamin specifies the forms of urban life he would have the book emulate, distinguishes them from alternatives, and expounds on the relevant history in ways that clarify how those models shape the work. Although this is anomalous, it makes the book definitive of encyclopedic modernism's relationship to the city in a usefully different way than *Ulysses* is. From word one, Benjamin indicates he is not merely writing the modern city in typical modernist fashion, but, more precisely, and not a little strangely, undertaking some manner of textual reconstruction of the *passages couvertes*— open but loftily roofed networks of shops and other commercial amenities— of nineteenth-century Paris. The original German title, *Das Passagen-Werk*, more emphatically indicates that as well as being its primary subject, the arcades are in some even more fundamental way the basis for his encyclopedia. Giving a basic account of the book's form is, then, an occasion to examine the relationship between encyclopedic modernism and the modern city a lot more closely than is usually possible or worthwhile.

This section of the chapter and the next one consider the built environments that bear on Benjamin's thinking about encyclopedic space, mainly to continue analyzing the broadly mimetic formal experiment of the *Arcades*, but also, more generally, to fill in some significant

background to modernism's encyclopedic turn. Modernism adopts the encyclopedia tradition as everyday life in modernity is increasingly becoming like encyclopedic browsing. A more complete account of the spaces and spatial practices involved should cast light throughout the dissertation. Benjamin supplies a helpful map for one. The introductory "exposé" for the *Arcades*, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," locates the arcades in a genealogy of encyclopedic spaces. There are sections about the arcade and the phalanstery; the international exhibition; and the streets of Paris, as they were before and after Georges-Eugène Haussmann's renovation of the city in the 1850s and 60s. Benjamin recurs to those spaces in defining the relationship between space, information, and subjectivity that he aims to make available to the reader of the *Arcades*. In sorting out how his thinking about particular spaces relates to the book's form, even as the chapter sometime strays from that issue to bolster its broader account of the spatial background to encyclopedic modernism, the two key questions to keep in sight are: why the arcades? And: to what, exactly, does the *Arcade* in *Arcades Project* refer?

In all of this, it will be useful to broaden the chapter's geographic ambit. Although Benjamin designates Paris the capital of the nineteenth century and makes it the focus of the *Arcades*, London is also central to his conception of the modern city. Note, for instance, how often and in what a variety of connections Charles Dickens comes up.[15] The urban encyclopedism the book scrutinizes and emulates evolved over the nineteenth century in a sort of conversation between Paris and London.[16] The tendencies, in architecture and planning, and in the institutions and everyday practices they shape and regulate, that comprise that encyclopedism travel between the two cities. Although each city presents its own distinctive version of the phenomenon, there is a lot of overlap between the two. The differences are meaningful and must not be minimized. But considering London along with Paris allows the chapter to adduce evidence

that in characterizing modernity Benjamin is not merely generalizing from local peculiarities and to extend its analysis to the most important metropolitan context for Anglophone modernism. And, perhaps most beneficially, it makes room in the chapter for the preeminent encyclopedic space of the nineteenth century, and the nineteenth-century space most pervasively recognized as being encyclopedic, Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace.

Benjamin favors the encyclopedic spaces of incipient modernity. Although the arcades never entirely disappear, their heyday is the 1820s and 1830s. Around mid-century, Paris and London produce both emblematic encyclopedic spaces that mark a change of era. In London it is the Crystal Palace, site of the Great Exhibition of 1851, and in Paris, the Haussmannian boulevard. With each, there is a consolidation of earlier developments but also rationalization and the imposition of the type of control Beniger defines. The effect is not unlike the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* bringing a new orderliness and alignment with official power to the messier, more miscellaneous encyclopedism that came before it. The urban farrago typified by the arcades at peak prominence gives way to similar, but more carefully governed spaces and experiences. The Crystal Palace and the Haussmannian boulevard, in turn, become important models for the late Victorian and Belle-Époque successors to the arcades in commercial architecture, department stores such as Whiteleys in London and Paris's Bon Marché.

After that turning point, as far as Benjamin is concerned, the potential for public space to really serve as a home to the flâneur (the exterior made interior), let alone materialize Fourier's ideal ground for humane community (planned encyclopedic plenitude as basis for dream socialism), is exhausted. In writing the *Arcades*, he hopes to recover some of that potential for the still later, more worryingly regulated phase of modernity in which he is writing. Quite clearly, he overstates the extent of the change heralded by the Crystal Palace and Haussmannization,

lamenting rupture where really there was an important shift but also a great deal of continuity. (The formal and epistemic differences between the *Encyclopédie* and the *Britannica*, though likewise significant and definitive of a difference between the eras that produce them, tend to be analogously overstated.[17]) Yet if there is greater continuity than Benjamin recognizes between the era of the arcades and later modernity, that would seem to strengthen his claims for that moment's relevance to his own.

Although Benjamin has more to say about Haussmann's boulevards, the Crystal Palace looms so large over my subject here that it seems best to discuss it first. Exhibitions present what may be the clearest example of how built spaces can be encyclopedic, and explaining how the Crystal Palace is a kind of encyclopedia should provide a solid foothold for Benjamin's thinking about cities and form. About twenty entries in the *Arcades* concern the Crystal Palace. Although Benjamin does not discuss it in the exposé, his notes show that he originally planned to (915). "A palace of glass and iron... that would cover eighteen acres,"[18] the Crystal Palace stood in Hyde Park for the six months of the Great Exhibition. The next year, it was moved to Sydenham Hill. A long slide into disrepair began in the 1890s, and it finally burned down in 1936. It is mostly remembered for the spectacle that it housed those first six months. Tens of thousands of things—new household goods, industrial machines, paintings and statuary, gadgets, famous diamonds—were displayed in some fourteen thousand booths.[19] The Great Exhibition (fully, the Great Exhibition of Industry of All Nations) is typically remembered as being the first major exhibition of its type, though the French Interior Ministry had organized ten increasingly elaborate and well attended Expositions Universelles in Paris between 1797 and 1849.[20] It is epochal on account of its unprecedented, then-almost-unbelievable size and inclusion of an equally unprecedented number and variety of exhibits from foreign countries. In his history of

international exhibitions, Paul Greenhalgh says that its "scope... rendered all previous exhibitions redundant."[21]

The Great Exhibition was, more than any previous exhibition had been, self-consciously encyclopedic. Thomas Richards puts it succinctly in his study of Victorian commodity culture: "the Great Exhibition[...] had at its root a single conception: that all human life and cultural endeavor could be fully represented by exhibiting manufactured articles."[22] This is the epistemology of the Enlightenment public museum as appropriated by burgeoning industrial capitalism and adapted to the habits of metropolitan shopping. Whereas the British Museum and the Louvre were established (in 1753 and 1793, respectively) with the idea of making the known world known to the public in the form of objects of historical, scientific, or aesthetic interest, the Crystal Palace exhibited the world metonymically using commodities.[23] In that context, even the artwork signified as such. That nothing was for sale seemingly only stoked the intensity with which visitors imagined themselves as consumers of everything. As Richards demonstrates, Victorian England's culture of advertising and commodity spectacle took inspiration from the Crystal Palace and continually referred back to it. In cultural memory, it served as an encyclopedia in something like way Edward Mendelson describes, supplying a textual center and organizing logic for the encyclopedic array of images of commodities that circulated in everyday life.[24]

For Benjamin, the relatively unruly, often seedier commercial culture of the early nineteenth century is alive with liberatory, world-widening possibility. He understands the shift that the Crystal Palace represents to have badly attenuated that potential by instrumentalizing the energies it thrives on: "World exhibitions" he writes, "construct a universe of *spécialités*" [that is, of luxury items], "are places of pilgrimage to the commodity fetish" and "a school in which

the masses, forcibly excluded from consumption, are imbued with the exchange value of commodities to the point of identifying with it" (17-18). There are arcade-like things he clearly loves about the Crystal Palace—most notably, that Paxton enclosed several of the park's elm trees in its central hall, perhaps the epitome of the nineteenth-century tendency to collapse the difference between indoors and outdoors (158)—but mainly he sees in it the emergence of a stifling new order. Considering public deliberations over what should be done with the Crystal Palace post-Exhibition, he remarks that whereas other iconic public spaces might be made to *represent* anything, the suggestions for repurposing it made clear that more than anything else, "the Crystal Palace could be *used* for anything" (162).

Yet for all that it was structured by the imperatives of capital and empire, the "virtual encyclopedia of manufactured objects"[25] in Hyde Park left considerable compass for divagation and freedom or creativity in reception: the sort of encyclopedism embodied by the secular apparatus in the *Great Mirror* and Ephraim Chambers's "bandying" cross-references and canonically identified with Diderot's contributions to the *Encyclopédie*. As encyclopedias often are, the Great Exhibition was at once carefully organized and an overwhelming jumble. Exhibition space was split fifty-fifty between the British Empire and all other countries and divided by country on one side and by country or colony on the other. On the British side, exhibits were also meant to be subdivided taxonomically, in four sections (Raw Materials and Produce, Machinery, Manufactured Goods, and Fine Artwork), the first three of which were to be broken into four, six, and nineteen sub-subsections.[26] In practice, geographical divisions mostly overwhelmed taxonomic ones and throughout the exhibition the exigencies of finding space to fit such a superabundance and variety of exhibits tended to trump all efforts to make categorization visible. Richards observes:

> In the eighteenth century the plates from Diderot's *Encyclopedia* had shown individual objects placed in huge empty rooms reserved especially for them; in the nineteenth century these bare spaces were filled by a dense vegetation of things packed together so tightly that the largest conservatory in the world could now barely hold them.[27]

This maximalist catchall of a glass-and-iron encyclopedia was made all the more difficult to read in accordance with the organizers' totalizing designs by the fact that an exhibition-goer could only somewhat control their pace or trajectory through the text. Crowds were kept moving swiftly through the Exhibition by a dedicated police force of four hundred men. That might sound like a harbinger of the sort of "evaluating attitude"-steamrolling mediation Benjamin worries about with regards to cinema, but it seems the architectural paradigm for "reception in distraction" prevailed. Eileen Gillooly demonstrates that, for all the efforts to impose a taxonomy on the exhibition's exhibits, comprehension of it as a coherent whole, or of any particular exhibit's place in that advertised totality, was next to impossible, and that exhibits could really only be understood upon reflection, by analogy with each other.[28] Limited physical mobility in the exhibition space compelled greater mobility in making the connections required to read and interpret the exhibition as a text. Ultimately, both the enthusiastic capitalist and imperialist, formally d'Alembertian *Britannica* encyclopedism the Crystal Palace intentionally embodied and the less determinate, ground-level Diderotian encyclopedism it could nevertheless not help affording obtained in different ways. Although it had to have been impossible to take in everything or to situate exhibits in the total scheme while streaming through the exhibition, the public came away with a picture of that totality that was so vivid and persuasive it effectively created Victorian commodity culture. No one could have quite known what they were being shown, but on the whole, everyone saw it.[29] Yet that was not all that was there to see. The excess and overdetermination of the exhibition effectively made the Palace an impossible space,

allowing for a multiplicity of potential meaning as well as use. For instance, as Gillooly points out, by carefully attending to the exhibits and finding subversive analogies in the jumble of commodities, an exhibition-goer could uncover powerful undercurrents of imperial anxiety.[30]

Encyclopedic Space in the Nineteenth Century: "The Phantasmagoria Rendered in Stone"

The Crystal Palace exemplifies encyclopedic space, its susceptibility to being made an instrument of control, and the way that the encyclopedia's inherent impossibility always leaves latitude for Diderotian "ingenious" cross-reference or, to put a more modern gloss on it, the "surreptitious creativity" of Michel de Certeau's walker in the city.[31] The same goes for Benjamin's greatest bugbear in the *Arcades*, the Haussmannian boulevard. Haussmann served as Prefect of the Seine Department under Napoleon III through the 1850s and 60s, and public works projects ordered by him continued to be carried out well into the twentieth century. His reorganization of Paris around straight, wide, and mostly paved boulevards through working-class neighborhoods deeply transformed Paris. For Benjamin, this amounts to laying waste to the city. His section on Haussmann in the exposé concludes: "The burning of Paris is the worthy conclusion to Baron Haussmann's work of destruction" (25).[32] Vanessa R. Schwartz makes a strong case that the extent of his physical transformation on the city is typically somewhat exaggerated, either in praise, for creating the boulevard culture of the Belle Époque, or in Benjaminian blame. She shows that the most famous and focal *grands boulevards* of the Haussmann era predated Haussmannization and had long been the arena for a lively and various peripatetic social scene that would, by most definitions, be considered a thriving environment for flânerie.[33]

The pivotal change Haussmann made was to Paris as a text. Schwartz argues that by recentering the city symbolically on the grid of new boulevards, he made boulevards, mostly long-existing ones, the focus of civic life. This invited the bourgeoisie into what had mostly been an aristocratic domain and made boulevards the focus of development on a scale and with a spectacular dimension that had never before been seen. The boulevards filled with new stores and stupendous displays of things to buy, and browserly and spectatorial styles of shopping, unmediated by clerks, took hold, creating a Crystal-Palace-like commodity display that could be absorbed at leisure. The new commercial culture of the boulevard blended with the world of theatre, the public pageant of fashion, and the city's dizzy miscellany of *divertissements* to create an active, teeming, glittering world. As Schwartz puts it, after Haussmannization, "Paris did not merely host exhibitions, it had become one."[34]

Having become so focal and being full of seemingly every sort of thing, the boulevard achieved a sort of encyclopedism. Schwartz writes:

> the boulevards were considered to be not only the center of Paris, even the center of France, but also quite explicitly the center of the universe because of the diversity of things and people that could be found there.... *Grands boulevards, grands magazins, le Grand Hôtel*. [...] The meaning of *grand* here implied a certain encyclopedic range.[35]

As the new boulevards (and old boulevards that were newly *aggrandi*) became the arena for the canonical loiterer about modernity, the flâneur, the ranks of flânerie swelled. With Paris so in thrall of boulevard culture and participation in that culture at least somewhat democratized, a kind of flânerie newly became an ordinary condition of everyday life for many Parisians. Life on the boulevard having taken on such comprehensiveness, everyday negotiation of its sights and signs effectively became a kind of encyclopedic browsing.

Schwartz seems correct in observing that flânerie became a widely held social position in the encyclopedic everyday of Haussmannian commodity culture. The problem, on Benjamin's account, is that with that development, flânerie became merely a social position, where before it had been a special subjectivity that opened the city up in enriching and liberatory ways. This is a strong point, even if it is not historically correct. As the secondary literature on flânerie exhaustively establishes, over the nineteenth century the term *flâneur* was applied to a wide array of urban subjects as the city filled with wanderers. There were always flâneurs who were ovine shoppers and barflies. Benjamin reimagines the type to align with his interests and values, and as discussed above, that type was already substantially a literary construction.

That being said, Haussmann destroyed public spaces that were organized by human relations and had become palimpsests of otherwise mostly unrecorded history. He priced a swath of the working class out of the city[36] and made Crystal-Palace-like commodity browsing the underlying logic of the bourgeois experience As Benjamin continually repeats, he did all this primarily to prevent barricading—at the time, an essential tactic and metonym for revolutionary politics in the city—and facilitate control (see especially his thorough statement of the case in the exposé, 23-25, and Convolute E ["Haussmannization, Barricade Fighting"], 120-49).The Haussmannian boulevard did not, as Benjamin suggests, impose a d'Alembertian commodity encyclopedism so totalizing there was little room for Diderotian tactics of resistance to the imperatives of power. The flânerie Benjamin valorizes is too much a retrospective imaginary construction for Haussmann to actually have been able to pervert it. Yet his hyperbole registers a violent tilt toward the coercive pseudo-environment he believes is preparing Europe for spectacular self-destruction. "With the Haussmannization of Paris," he writes, "the phantasmagoria was rendered in stone" (24).

The brand of commodity encyclopedism that is the crux of Benjamin's antipathy toward Hausmannization finds its highest expression in the department store. Stores like Whiteleys in London and Bon Marché in Paris miniaturized the century's archetypal sites of urban encyclopedism and put that encyclopedism fully in the service of capital. They brought the *grand boulevard* indoors, invited shoppers into a Crystal Palace with price tags. The entanglement of metropolitan encyclopedism with the worlds of art and theatre, its basis in everyday communal life, fell away. William Whiteley, who styled himself The Universal Provider, swore throughout his life that he conceived of the idea for his eponymous department store, the first in London, as a young man visiting the Crystal Palace.[37] Whether or not the story is true, the association stuck. The *Modern London* guidebook from 1887 grandly describes Whiteleys as "an immense symposium of the arts and industries of the nation and of the world; a grand review of everything that goes to make life worth living passing in seemingly endless array before critical and bewildered humanity."[38] Though similar, department stores in Paris tended to favor the openness of the boulevard, and openness to the boulevard, over the contained Crystal Palatial monumentality of those in London. As Philip G. Nord recounts, they seemed almost an organic outgrowth of Haussmannization:

> The boulevards of the *grand magasin* interior were so many extensions of the grands boulevards that stretched from the Madeleine to the Bastille. The department store, the city's new boulevards, the look and structure of Paris nouveau were interlocking phenomena, aspects of a single process.[39]

Department stores proliferated and provincialized the commercial encyclopedism whose blueprints were the Crystal Palace and the Hassmannian boulevard. In Britain alone, by 1910 there were between 150 and 200 full department stores.[40] They cropped up most everywhere in Europe for decades to come.

Benjamin's "Magic Encyclopedia," or: "A Past Become Space"

So, why the arcades? In his essay "The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire," Benjamin reflects on the evolution of the nineteenth century's encyclopedic public spaces, which he takes to be a straightforward decline, in dilating on a scene in Edgar Allan Poe's seminal flâneur story, "The Man of the Crowd":

> On his peregrinations, at a late hour, the man of the crowd winds up in a department store where there still are many customers. He moves about like someone who knows his way around the place. Were there multi-level department stores in Poe's day? No matter; Poe lets the restless man spend an "hour and a half, or thereabouts" in this bazaar. "He entered shop after shop, priced nothing, spoke no word, and looked at all objects with a wild and vacant stare. If the arcade is the classical form of the *interieur*—and this is the way the street presents itself to the flâneur—the department store is the form of the *interieur*'s decay. The department store is the last promenade for the flâneur. If in the beginning the street had become an interieur for him, now this interieur turned into a street, and he roamed through the labyrinth of commodities as he had once roamed through the labyrinth of the city. A magnificent touch in Poe's story that it not only contains the earliest description of the flaneur but also prefigures his end.[41]

Benjamin acknowledges the similarity and continuity between arcades and department stores a few times in the *Arcades* (37, 40, 42). At those moments it is tempting to remove oneself from his heavily wrought argument about bygone commercial architecture, which invests superficially similar warrens of (mostly) shops with representative subjectivities and cultural/political logics that set them in modernity-defining opposition, and say: these are all basically just early versions of the mall, what is the big deal? As with his related argument about the changing nature of flânerie, he is imagining substantially unknowable subtleties of historical experience from his seat at the library. But—and this is an easy thing to disregard or underemphasize when you are trying to untangle his arguments—he knows that and lets the reader know.

That moment in Poe's story, as he begins to read it, is an unimprovable encapsulation of the arcade and flâneur strains of his thinking about the nineteenth century: the original flâneur wanders into the pseudo-arcade where flânerie goes to die and, Benjamin implies, for a moment perceives an impossible, crystallizing combination of arcade and department store. But of course he does not. Poe is writing in 1840, and there is nothing in the text to suggest the "large and busy bazaar" in the story has multiple levels. The story does not tell us enough to say for sure, but the balance of evidence suggests it is an arcade or something much like one. Benjamin waves all of that off: "Were there multi-level department stores in Poe's day? No matter; Poe lets the restless man spend an 'hour and a half, or thereabouts' in this bazaar." It is, of course, Benjamin, under the Bibliothèque's dreamy, unlit ceiling, who flâneurially perceives the richly suggestive multiplicity of spaces. As one spends time with the *Arcades*, Benjamin's analogies between the flâneur and the reader, encyclopedic space and his encyclopedia, the nineteenth century and the twentieth, can become so mired in the book's stupendous accumulation of historical detail that it can feel natural to assume the past is primary. But we are always with him in the reading room. He is urgently addressing his contemporaries, demonstrating the power of historical imagination and archival recovery. The difference between department stores and arcades comes down to what he can convey of the deep rot in modernity.

For Benjamin, the way that attention gets swept up in the modern media ecology's phantasmagoria or pseudo-environment is not a big problem in itself. The unchecked accumulation of surplus value makes it terrifying. Broadly speaking, his Marxism dissolves the difference between Kittler's and Beniger's theories of the increasing control of the spaces and media that make modernity. Whether or a will to war is the impulse guiding that control, if we have to do something with capital, and we are not going to be redistribute it, he thinks we are

going to use it to make war: "only war makes it possible to mobilize all of today's technological resources while maintaining property relations" ("The Work of Art," 269). The arcade, the exhibition, the Haussmannian boulevard, and the department store are all expressions of the same property relations. But the department store, which Benjamin knows intimately, is capitalism's most successful appropriation of the encyclopedic spaces and spatial practices of urban modernity. It thrives on a more insidious, everyday variation on cinematic distraction. The arcade, as Benjamin finds it in flâneur literature and physiologies, stray references in old books, ephemera, and other material for his card index, presents a basis for reimagining that palpably, canonically bad convergence of cultural energies and economic imperatives. That neither he nor his reader has firsthand experience of arcades as they were when they were culturally salient makes them all the more available to his project. He is not indifferent to historicity, but he is aiming at the constellation of past and present in images whose force is subjective, even oneric. These are literary constructions.

Benjamin writes: "Dialectical images are constellated between alienated things and incoming and disappearing meaning, are instantiated in the moment of indifference between death and meaning" (466). And here he quotes Louis Aragon:

> ... All this, in our eyes, is what the arcades are. And they were nothing of all this. 'It is only today, when the pickaxe menaces them, that they have at last become the true sanctuaries of a cult of the ephemeral, the ghostly landscape of damnable pleasures and professions. Places that yesterday were incomprehensible, and that tomorrow will never know.' (87)

There is a poetic logic to Benjamin's investment in vanishing things, which seems beyond the sort of analysis I am doing here, but also an economic one. A lot of the time, things leave the world because no one cares to preserve them: they have, in other words, outlived their value.

Where the street life that interests Benjamin is concerned, that mostly means they are without exchange value.

Remember that, although the arcades had long faded from prominence, old arcades are still standing in Paris when Benjamin begins work on the *Arcades*. The earliest writing toward the project we have, a short essay from 1927 called "Arcades,"[42] is a kind of eulogy for the Passage de l'Opera, which had recently been demolished, "swallowed up by the opening of [naturally] the Boulevard Haussmann." The essay begins:

> Antiquated trades survive within these inner spaces, and the merchandise on display is unintelligible, or else has several meanings. Already the inscriptions and signs on the entranceways (one could just as well say "exits," since, with these peculiar hybrid forms of house and street, every gate is simultaneously entrance and exit), already the inscriptions which multiply along the walls within, where here and there between overloaded coatstands a spiral staircase rises into darkness—already they have about them something enigmatic.

Having placed the reader in the liminal, multiple, obscurely polysemous space through which he is beginning to organize his thinking about modernity, he describes the things he finds there: faux-palatial mosaics in an antiquated style, stockings in a doll hospital, puppets without clothes or wigs, "types of collar studs for which we no longer know the corresponding collars," an aquarium filled with combs, "a vacant shop from whose inventory only a printed bill remains: 'Will purchase sets of teeth in gold, in wax, and broken,'" etc. (871-72). The arcades signify for Benjamin not only in theory—because of the contrast with the public spaces that evolved out of them, in which the shaping imperatives of capital show so much more strongly, and (more faintly) because of their resemblance to the arcologies in Fourier's socialist utopia—but also materially. Arcades as he and his contemporaries really knew them were commercial spaces abandoned by exchange value. That colors or charges them in a way that vividly sets them apart from the phantasmagoria. (It is tempting to say it gives them an aura, but that is a term to reserve

for careful use in connection with Benjamin.) He writes: "today a few arcades still preserve, in dazzling light and shadowy comers, a past become space" (871).

The arcade as Benjamin excavates it from the archive of the nineteenth century is an encyclopedically overdetermined space; the arcade as it physically survives at the time he is writing is another. These converge as a basis for his book: the *Arcade* in *The Arcades Project*. That formal complex also incorporates the library. (The library scene discussed at the beginning of the chapter is a figure for it.) Where Joyce most conspicuously uses diagrams to multiply form and Eliot uses annotation, Benjamin relies mainly on analogy. Throughout the *Arcades* he sustains a ravel of mutually reinforcing analogies that ground the book and position the reader. Initially: the text as arcade, and vice versa, as designated by the title and suggested by the double-column list of convolutes that serves as a table of contents, with its visual pun on the floor plan of an arcade. Most emphatically: the reader and flâneur as counterparts. The analogies deepen as he defines and historicizes the key terms.

They come to constitute an encyclopedism. Similarities between the book and both the arcade as recorded in the archive and surviving arcades in decay suggest themselves. Archival recovery and the recognition of dialectical images come into focus as analogues to the rich spatial consciousness of Benjamin's flâneur, which in turn deepens the mimesis of Benjamin's evocation of encyclopedic public space as it emerged in the nineteenth century. This is the most successful of Benjamin's experiments in translating urban space into literary form, which include "One-Way Street" and the essay "Marseilles" (1929).[43] The decisive differences are depth of similarity between the genre he adopts and the spaces he emulates and scale: writing encyclopedically at normal encyclopedic length, he makes the *Arcades* meaningfully in inhabitable. Gradually, over stints of reading and browsing, living with the book, the reader

should become habituated to Benjamin's multiplex presentation of modernity, with its impossible superimposition and constellation of multiple (and multiply mediated, construed, and imagined) pasts and his present. Thus Benjamin adapts the encyclopedia to the architectural model of receptive distraction he privileges as canonical.

Benjamin most clearly defines and emphatically warrants his encyclopedism in adding another type to his analogy linking flânerie and reading. The most conspicuous use of the term *encyclopedia* in his writings—at least, in the portion of them that have been translated into English—is in connection with the figure of the collector. He writes:

> Important in regard to collecting: the fact that the object is detached from all original functions of its utility makes it the more decided in its meaning. It functions now as a true encyclopedia of all knowledge of the epoch, the landscape, the industry, and the owner from which it comes. (848)

Four versions of this passage appear in the *Arcades*, two in Convolute H ("The Collector") and two in appendices of notes (also 205, 207, 856); ultimately, he incorporated it in his 1931 essay "Unpacking My Library." It helps to explain why so much of the material in the *Arcades* about surviving, decaying arcades—where "object[s are] detached from all functions of utility"—is in the collecting convolute. For Benjamin, the collector is characterized by a talent for discerning value that is unrelated to the price of things, that instead derives from deeper relations invisible to most. Collecting is similar to flânerie but politically unsullied by participation in commercial culture. In the Baudelaire essay discussed above, Benjamin, echoing Baudelaire, describes the flâneur as "a kind of ragpicker."[44]

Yet, more than anything, Benjamin seems to invoke the collector in defining his encyclopedism as a proxy for another key figure, one who is always present in the *Arcades* and the analogies that structure it but little seen: the researcher. Fundamentally, the book belongs to the reading room. What makes it more than a card index is Benjamin's absorption of his research

into the privileged subjectivity and rich space he identifies with flânerie. In encyclopedically overdetermining the position and role of the reader, he draws his reader into his performance of flâneurial, collectorly archive-assaying as much as anything else. Exploring the book with the mobility, feeling for multiplicity, and sense of value it inculcates, they can participate in his work. As with Joyce, the keynote of Benjamin's encyclopedism is generosity. He writes: "I needn't say anything. Merely show. I shall purloin no valuables, appropriate no ingenious formulations. But the rags, the refuse—these I will not inventory but allow, in the only way possible, to come into their own: by making use of them." (460)

NOTES

[1] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, prepared on the basis of the German volume ed. by Rolf Tiedeman (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1999), 457-58. Subsequent references will be made in the text.

[2] Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, *Walter Benjamin: A Critical Life* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 285 and 667.

[3] The library-ceiling passage concludes the draft as it appears as an appendix to the *Arcades*, which would seem to suggest Benjamin gave it special structural emphasis that should contribute to our sense of its importance to him. But always read the fine print: the draft appears in English as rearranged by its original German editor, who moved the passage to the end.

[4] Benjamin quotes the historian Emile Levasseur's claim that "Labrouste, an artist whose talents are sober and severe, successfully inaugurated the ornamental use of iron in the construction of the Bibliothèque Sainte-Genevieve and the Bibliothèque Nationale" (*Arcades*, 152).

The other contemporary exemplar of iron construction—certainly a monumental building but not intended to be a permanent one—was, of course, the Crystal Palace that housed the Great Exhibition of 1851, about which more below.

[5] Walter Benjamin*, One-Way Street*, 1928, trans. Edmund Jephcott, *Selected Writings, Volume 1: 1913-1926*, eds. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2003), 444. Subsequent references will be made in the text.

[6] Walter Benjamin, "Main Features of My Second Impression of Hashish, Written January 15, 1928, at 3:30 P.M.," *Selected Writings, Volume 2, Part I: 1927-1930*, 87. See as well "Hashish in Marseilles," in *Volume 2, Part II: 1931-1934* ("Now the hashish eater's demands on time and space come into force. As is known, these are absolutely regal. Versailles, for one who has taken hashish, is not too large, or eternity too long") (674; he is speaking of his own experience here, but he attributes the same remark, verbatim, to the painter Eduard Scherlinger in his earlier piece "Myslovice—Braunschweig—Marseilles"), and his argument for the importance of hashish to Baudelaire's vision, e.g. in the notes on *Les Fleurs du Mal* included in *Volume 4: 1938-1940*, (96) and in the *Arcades* (21-22, 206, 250, 348-49, 365). In a moment from the *Arcades* that he incorporates into the essay "Central Park," (*Volume 4: 1938-1940*, 165), he also refers obscurely to the "prostitution of space in hashish" (200).

[7] *One-Way Street* includes a satirical list of instructions for bad writing headed "Principles of the Weighty Tome, or How to Write Fat Books" (457).

[8] For Kittler's full argument for baleful media determinism, see *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (1986; rpt. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). The endgame there: "Electronics, a tube monster since Bletchley Park, replaces discourse, and programmability replaces free will" (259). For Kittler on the fate of the book

specifically, see "Perspective and the Book," trans. Sara Ogger, *Grey Room* 5 (Autumn 2001), especially 51-52.

[9] Mark A. Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, and Propaganda: British Narrative from 1900 to 1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), xiv. Beniger develops his argument about bureaucratic control in *The Control Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986). For Walter Lippmann on the pseudo-environment, see *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1922).

[10] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility (Third Version)," *Selected Writings, Volume 4: 1938-1940*, 269-70. Subsequent references will be made in the text.

[11] The echo of the Diderot/d'Alembert antithesis is clearer in this less pithy statement of the same thought:

> flânerie can transform Paris into one great interior—a house whose rooms are the *quartiers*, no less clearly demarcated than are real rooms—then, on the other hand, the city can appear to someone walking through it to be without thresholds: a landscape in the round. (422)

[12] "Beyond the Flâneur: Walking, Passage and Crossing in London and Paris in the Nineteenth Century" (dissertation, King's College, London and Université Paris-Diderot, 2013), 50, 69, 86.

[13] As discussed toward the end of Chapter I, the novel's first three chapters, centered on Stephen, and the later chapters comprising Joyce's later, kaleidoscopic experiments give variations on the mimetic presentation of modernity as encyclopedic; however, the parts that closely track both facets of Bloom's wandering ("Calypso," "Lotos Eaters," "Hades," "Lestrygonians," and the second part of "Nausicaa") are the clearest instances.

[14] Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of 'Ulysses,' and Other Writings* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 69. On Budgen's account, Joyce emphasizes the connections between public space and social life, and the ways information travels along those circuits, in describing what he means to capture. He does not seem to have in mind the amount of documentary detail the novel includes, as glosses on the remark often suggest. Budgen notes that the so-complete picture Joyce gives of Dublin does not include much conventionally pictorial detail—less than *Dubliners* does. There is an implication that *Ulysses* could be the basis for the reconstruction of the city in ways that, say, *Thom's Directory* could not.

[15] Benjamin cites Dickens in the *Arcades* for how, per G.K. Chesterton, "His tales always started from some splendid hint in the streets" (57); as a theorist of collecting (208; *The Old Curiosity Shop* appears to be Benjamin's favorite); in relation to Baudelaire (233-34); as a major figure in flâneur literature in his own right (426, 436, 437-38); for his interest in the shows of London (532 and 535); and as the English counterpart to Victor Hugo (770 and 774).

[16] Estelle Murail explains that co-evolution in depth in "Beyond the Flâneur." Anke Gleber makes a strong case that Berlin ought to be given equal consideration in *The Art of Taking a Walk: Flânerie, Literature, and Film in Weimar Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). I am bracketing it off here only so as not to have this chapter overwhelm the section.

[17] See Paul Saint-Amour, *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 199-203.

[18] Julius Lessig quoted by Benjamin in the *Arcades* (183).

[19] Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle 1851-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 17-18, 26.

[20] Paul Greenhalgh, *The* Expositions Universelles, *Great Exhibitions, and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988) 3-12. Note, as an indication of the Crystal Palace's preeminence, that although Greenhalgh's subtitle gives equal weight to the *Expositions Universelles* and the Great Exhibitions, the near bracket of his date range for the book is 1851, not 1797.

[21] Greenhalgh, "Expositions Universelles, *Great Exhibitions*," 12.

[22] Richards, *Commodity Culture of Victorian England*, 17.

[23] For a discussion of the encyclopedic ambit of those museums, see "The Enlightenment Museum," the first chapter of James B. Cuno's *Museums Matter: In Praise of the Encyclopedic Museum* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011), 11-32. For more detailed histories of their founding, see David M. Wilson, *The British Museum: A History* (London: The British Museum Press, 2002) and *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999). Tony Bennett describes the reticence with which the British Museum, and British museums generally, opened themselves up to the public prior to the Great Exhibition in *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 69-75.

Notwithstanding that reticence and the exclusion that resulted from it, the history of the museum presents many strong pre-nineteenth-century examples of encyclopedic public space in cities. Perhaps owing to the time it took them to really open up to the public and the ways many museums were reorganized in the second half of the nineteenth century, Benjamin understands them as a later permutation of the spatial encyclopedism he examines in the *Arcades*, positing "industrial exhibitions as secret blueprint[s] for museums" (176).

[24] See Edward Mendelson, "Encyclopedic Narrative: From Dante to Pynchon" *MLN* 91, No. 6 (1976): 1267-1268.

[25] Richards, *Commodity Culture of Victorian England*, 23.

[26] *The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations, 1851. Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue,* Vol 1 (London: Spicer Brothers, 1851), 23. James Buzard gives a detailed

account of how and for what reasons the organization of the Exhibition came to be so unmanageably overdetermined in his essay "Conflicting Cartographies: Globalism, Nationalism, and the Crystal Palace Floor Plan," which appears in *Victorian Prism: Refractions of the Crystal Palace*, eds. James Buzard, Joseph W. Childers, and Eileen Gillooly (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 40-54.

[27] Richards, *Commodity Culture of Victorian England*, 25.

[28] Eileen Gillooly, "Rhetorical Remedies for Taxonomic Troubles: Reading the Great Exhibition" in *Victorian Prism: Refractions of the Crystal Palace*, eds. James Buzard, Joseph W. Childers, and Eileen Gillooly (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 25-26.

[29] In the terms Gillooly takes from Henry Mayhew's account of the Great Exhibition in *London Labour and the London Poor*, the public apprehended what the exhibition was organized to say, even if they could not comprehend it (23-25).

[30] Gillooly, "Rhetorical Remedies for Taxonomic Troubles," 33-36.

[31] Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 91-110.

[32] Benjamin means the quashing of the Paris Commune—he argues that Haussmann's reforms were only undertaken so that the city's streets could never again be barricaded—but there may be a rueful hint that, given the damage done, it might just be better to start over with a blank slate. For a contrasting, largely triumphalist account of Haussmannization, see David H. Pinkney, *Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958).

[33] Vanessa R. Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in* Fin-de-Siècle *Paris* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1998), 16-26.

[34] Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 16-21, 1.

[35] Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 21 and 23.

[36] Sharon Marcus shows that although public space in Paris was thoroughly modernized by Haussmann's renovation of the city, the design and location of private dwellings for those who were displaced by Haussmannization tended to turn those people away from urban modernity. "Haussmannization as Anti-Modernity: The Apartment House in Parisian Urban Discourse, 1850-1880" *Journal of Urban History* 27.6 (Sept. 2001), 723-745.

[37] Erika Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 41. Rappaport is skeptical.

[38] Qtd. in Anthony Clayton, *Decadent London: Fin de Siècle* (London: Historical Publications, 2005), 22.

[39] Philip G. Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers and the Politics of Resentment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 133.

[40] The National Institute of Economic and Social Research, *Retail Trading in Britain 1850-1950* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 327.

[42] It was such early going that he envisioned writing, not even a fifty-page essay about the arcades, but a newspaper article (871). The editors of the English *Arcades* speculate that Hessel may have had a hand in writing it.

[43] Walter Benjamin, "Marseilles," *Volume 2, Part I: 1927-1930*, 232-36.

[44] Walter Benjamin, "The Paris of the Second Empire," 4. See also, "Le vin des chiffoniers" ("The Ragman's Wine") in *Les Fleurs du Mal*.

CHAPTER III

ANTI-ENCYCLOPEDIC MODERNISM:
FROM "I GATHER THE LIMBS OF OSIRIS" TO *PATERSON*

If you run your thumb along the fore edge and flick through a copy of William Carlos Williams's long poem *Paterson*, the pages will look spattered. The poem is dotted with widely spaced periods that do not stop sentences, indicate pauses or gaps, or do any of the other things periods normally do. They do not measure the text in an idiosyncratic way or mark any special relation between words. These stray or floating periods are buffered by white space, usually three eighths of an inch on either side. They stand out from the legible text and are too conspicuous to easily ignore. Often, they turn up in the middle of sentences or after full stops. They sometimes come in pairs or longer strands but hardly ever in threes. Where they are tripled, the strands do not parse as ellipses. In a few places, it might look as though Williams is experimenting with the sort of variable-length, measuring ellipsis Walt Whitman uses throughout the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, but that impression never holds up to close scrutiny. Generally, the harder you try to construe the stray periods in *Paterson* as working punctuation, the more incongruous they will seem.

They are an enduring puzzle. Writing more than fifty years into the poem's reception, Frederic Jameson says: "We need… a study of Williams's punctuation," "above all the mysterious spaced period."[1] Are those periods not punctuation at all, merely marks on the page? Or are they puncta in more than one sense? (Revealing… what, exactly?) Could they just be there to make the surface of the poem look sloppy or sullied, for some reason? To the extent that they

do, the stray periods literalize something people have been saying since Williams completed the poem: that *Paterson* is a mess.

Paterson first appeared serially in installments—Books One, Two, Three, and Four—in 1946, 1948, 1949, and 1951. This completed Williams's design for the poem, and he declared it was finished. He later returned to it, adding Book Five in 1958 and writing a few pages of fragments toward a Book Six before his death in 1963. I am interested here in the original, four-book version of *Paterson*.[2] Book One of *Paterson* was widely acclaimed; by the time readers were taking stock after Book Four arrived, the consensus was that the project had not panned out. The poem's most influential reviewer, Randall Jarrell, praises Book One as a poetic treatment of modernity that outdoes *The Waste Land* in bringing order to chaos. He says it is "the best thing Williams has ever written" and declares: "if the next three books are as good as this one... the whole poem will be far and away the best long poem any American has written."[3] Five years later, with all four books at hand, he registers cutting disappointment:

> Now that Book IV has been printed, one can come to some conclusions about *Paterson* as a whole. My first conclusion is this: that it doesn't seem to *be* a whole; my second: *Paterson* has been getting rather steadily worse... [though] there are fits and starts of excellence.[4]

Jarrell finds the finished poem to be a mess formally. He does not see how the aggrieved letters from Marcia Nardi to Williams that comprise much of Book Two belong in any kind of poem. ("One reads these letters with involved, embarrassed pity.") He grouses about the "raw reality" and "ugliness" of the later books, their lack of lyrical sparkle. (Book Three "suggests that the guidebook of today is the epic of tomorrow; and a more awing possibility, the telephone book put into accentual verse, weighs upon one's spirit.") He complains at length that Williams takes up Ezra Pound's economic ideas but doesn't allow himself to be civilized by any of the "European

things" he might learn from Pound. Finally, he settles on the backhanded apology that Williams "is not... an intellectual at all, in either the best or the worst sense of the word."

Jarrell's second review largely set the terms for *Paterson*'s subsequent reception.[5] About midway between the review's appearance in 1951 and today, Paul Mariani would report in his biography of Williams that "no critic has been able to say much more about [the poem] than that it fails, or, at the very least, that it is a falling off from *Paterson* 1."[6] Some critics have contested that received interpretation in the years since,[7] but their arguments for the poem's unheralded success have not done much to wobble the orthodoxy that says *Paterson*, though admirable in parts, fails to cohere or complete its project or live up to its promise. There is room in the critical conversation for contrarian dissent from that view and for argument about how much or little of a let-down *Paterson* is, or how wonderful or tedious a jumble, but Williams is mainly read and appreciated as an author of limpid short lyrics. This emphasis has long been reinforced by the perennial popularity of poems such as "The Red Wheelbarrow" and "This Is Just to Say" with anthologists and teachers of elementary lessons in poetry.[8] Williams's long poem does not rate the prestige or attention that Eliot and Pound's entries in the genre do. Whatever faults *The Waste Land* or *The Cantos* may have, they are canonical achievements; whatever its virtues, *Paterson* is a confirmed failure. Writing four years ago, Williams's most recent biographer, Herbert Leibowitz, all but repeats the summary of the poem's reception Mariani gave thirty years earlier.[9]

But, whatever else might be surmised about Williams's ambitions for *Paterson*, the one thing we can be sure he is not doing is trying to write his own *Waste Land*. In his *Autobiography*, which he published the same year as Book Four, and which he uses to position *Paterson* as his major contribution to posterity, Williams describes Eliot's—and Anglophone modernism's—most celebrated and influential poem as "the great catastrophe of our letters," "a sardonic bullet

[that] set me back twenty years," and "an atom bomb" that vaporized the promise of modern American poetry just as it was approaching "a rediscovery of a primary impetus, the elementary principle of all art, in the local conditions."[10] By all accounts, he is not exaggerating his disdain to make space for Eliot's long poem in the modernist canon. He really did deplore *The Waste Land*, and he was mad about it for a long time. He believed that Eliot "gave the poem back to the academics" and so intense was his umbrage that for years he often told people he had never been to college.[11] (This, though his day job was medical doctor.) His remarks in the *Autobiography* mostly repeat what he says in a letter to Pound five years earlier, a couple of weeks before Book One appeared. There, he also refers to Eliot's poem, bafflingly but memorably, as a "piece of vaginal stop-gap."[12] In his second review, Jarrell notes with exasperation: "in his long one-sided war with Eliot, Dr. Williams seems to me to come off surprisingly badly."[13] It is screamingly unlikely that in writing *Paterson* he is aiming for success on the terms established by *The Waste Land*'s game-changing reception.

Jarrell is not speaking as loosely one might suppose when he describes Williams as being at war in his opposition to the encyclopedic turn in modernist poetry. Destruction is a key trope in Williams's poetics in the 20s, 30s, and 40s. As the metaphors he uses to describe *The Waste Land* and its reception make clear, he regards Eliot's transformation of poetic norms as violent. It is much less clear how this is so, but whatever the case, he believes that writers who would resist Eliot's baleful influence do well to retaliate in kind. In critical essays written at the height of *The Waste Land*'s preeminence, he applauds the destruction of received language and received forms wherever he descries them. He takes such destruction to be a necessary, field-clearing preparation for a post-Eliotic renewal of literature that cannot come soon enough. Pulverizing anti-encyclopedism seems to him the essence of the work in progress that would become

Finnegans Wake. He argues that with his multilingual punning and neologizing, "Joyce maims words" to clear away their connotations, creating a language in which "meanings […] perverted by time and chance—but kept perverted by academic observance and intention" can once more be denoted.[14] Reading Gertrude Stein's libretto for the Virgil Thomson opera *Four Saints in Three Acts* as a long poem, Williams writes:

> [Stein] has gone systematically to work smashing every connotation that words have ever had, in order to get them back clean. It can't be helped that it's been forgotten what words are made for. It can't be helped that the whole house has to come down. In fact the whole house has to come down. It's been proved over and over again. And it's got to come down because it has to be rebuilt.[15]

As with his invective against Eliot, there is no mistaking the gist of his metaphors, but how, exactly, it is that Joyce and Stein destroy language and form is difficult to suss out. Those reviews evince an appetite for destruction that is keenly felt but whose implications for his poetics are not fully thought through. This may be a major part of what he was struggling to work out over *Paterson*'s notoriously difficult, two-decade gestation. His preoccupation with poetic destruction is, anyway, a key to understanding the mess he ultimately makes, which looks to so many readers like a botched encyclopedic project.

Introduction: From Deletionism to Anti-encyclopedism

Could it be that rather than successfully completing the first part of a more affirming, Garden State *Waste Land*, only to have it go to shambles over the next three installments, Williams invokes the Eliotic encyclopedic poem and then blasts it to smithereens? This chapter makes a case that he does and that in doing it, he brings an important, long-evolving tendency that is the antithesis of encyclopedic modernism to a kind of fruition. It develops a reading of

Paterson as a thoroughgoing and sophisticated attack on the literature of information overload that Williams's contemporaries develop for an information-glutted era.

Williams hates *The Waste Land*, hates the direction modern poetry has taken because of its success, hates that his friend and mentor Pound has been swept up in that encyclopedic turn—and he deeply understands what he hates. He knows how to construct the thing he wants to see destroyed, and he devises a poetic arsenal to try and do the destroying. This is practical criticism with a vengeance, a rebuke to Eliot and a corrective to Pound's didactic, capaciously history-containing *Cantos* in the spirit of the foundational program for modernist renewal that Pound abandons after he becomes an encyclopedist. Above all, it is a means of subjecting to exacting scrutiny both poetic language and the authority that underwrites it.

With *Paterson*, I argue, Williams reflexively performs and repeatedly imagines the destruction of the modernist encyclopedia. This is for him a necessary step toward establishing a poetics that is not complicit with the real violence he takes to be abetted by prevalent literary forms and language. The basis of that abetting, as he understands it, is the abstraction of material reality. He finds encyclopedic form to be specially pernicious because of how thoroughly it vacates language. Refusing the dematerializing effects of abstraction at every level, Williams pursues failure and textual damage as poetic values. The poem that results is a singular oddity but also the realization of a familiar, though often misremembered, early version of modernism.

Imagism, as Pound first formulates it in his critical essays of the 1910s, is not primarily a style but a program for the care of language that derives from theorizing centered on questions to do with information overload. More precisely, *imagism* is the most famous name Pound gives that program, which he recasts with changing emphases as his thinking evolves over the 1910s

and early 20s and which continues to guide Williams's work long after Pound moves on from it. Consequently, although Williams makes it known that with *Paterson* he is writing against Eliot and all he has come to stand for, Pound is the writer he continually, competitively addresses throughout the poem. That complicated interaction is an index to developments in modernist literature, and literary history more broadly, that go to the heart of this dissertation's subject.

The encyclopedia is the iconic genre of information overload; however, it is not the only genre information overload has engendered. This chapter considers another, a distinct genre with as long a history, which like the encyclopedia produces an important strain of literary modernism. It is trickier to define and name. The *anti-* in the chapter's title is not like the *anti-* in *anti-establishment* or *the anti-novel*. What I am calling anti-encyclopedic modernism is not a reaction against modernism's encyclopedic turn. It is an antithetical response to the constitutive problem the encyclopedic tradition is always reckoning with—a response to overwhelming accumulations and flows of information as traditional as encyclopedism.

In her history of pre-modern reference works, Ann M. Blair observes that as long as readers have felt there is too much to read, some of them have argued there ought to be vastly less. She cites Solomon, Seneca, Descartes, and Francesco Sacchini, author of the first guide to note taking, as proponents of drastic reduction as a strategy for making immensities of writing manageable. This school prefers canons to archives and excerpts to corpora; it privileges the knowledge readers that internalize over the information reference makes available to them. Its adherents cull where encyclopedists incorporate. They would furnish history with a bigger, more book-filled dustbin.[16] Nowadays their flag is carried by the Association of Deletionist Wikipedians, whose fittingly Poundian manifesto exhorts fellow editors of the Internet's Free Encyclopedia to "be… BOLD as a lion to stand up for what is Holy and Proper to be Deleted."[17] In practice that

mostly means deleting entries that they deem trivial, over the objections of the no less zealous Association of Inclusionist Wikipedians.[18] The perennial opposition between deletionists and inclusionists, winnowers and all-encompassers, underlies the evolution of modernist form. This chapter examines the deletionist side of that antithesis.

The introduction and first two chapters locate modernist literature's turn to encyclopedism in a long history of inclusionist formal innovation. Encyclopedic modernism is, I have argued, an overload-embracing compromise between the impossibility of encompassing everything knowable and the persistence of the world-writing impulse personified in different times by Homer, Diderot and d'Alembert, James Joyce, and the subterranean clerisy that tends to Wikipedia. Works such as *The Waste Land*, *Ulysses*, and *The Arcades Project* invite readers to revel in the muchness of too much information; they privilege its pleasures and rewards. The superabundance of text, paratext, intertext, and formal architecture they assemble is not an inadequate substitute for totality as some critics allege, so much as an approximation of the incomplete but practically inexhaustible plenitude of information-saturated late modernity. The authors of those works draw on a centuries-long tradition of bookish encyclopedism to write city texts for the moment at which metropolitan life becomes inescapably encyclopedic. They make the most of the affordances of information overload and of the forms, habits, and practices that have evolved to manage it, in ancient libraries, medieval scriptoria, the media ecology created by the printing press, and the culture and living spaces of the modern city. Treating it as subject matter, they are mindful of the problems information overload poses, but insofar as they adopt it as a formal principle, they mainly take it as a kind of generosity.

Here I consider a strain of modernism that finds information overload unworkable as a basis for literature. It begins with a program for culling most of the established canon and writing

with the expectation that nearly everything anyone writes will be discarded. Contempt for genres and institutions that thrive on information overload—the encyclopedia, the university—is a minor current in the earliest criticism expounding that position. As the most successful encyclopedic works of the period gather acclaim and influence, give rise to exegetical industries, and increasingly define modern literature, that contempt becomes blazing antipathy. The basic objection is not that encyclopedic modernism aspires to a comprehensiveness that is impossible, but that its aspirational extension toward totality proliferates literary and social forms that ruin language. All encyclopedic works are failures, and from early modernity onward, most are self-conscious ones. It can be something like a point of pride. Anti-encyclopedic modernism strains to expose that ostensibly quixotic, generous failure as ugly and harmful.

My subject here spans early and late modernism. It emerges in the isms-and-manifestoes ferment of the 1910s, and achieves its fullest expression in retrospective and proto-postmodern work by ageing modernists in the 40s and 50s. I aim to condense the story of its evolution from an ethic of rigorous economy to a scourging critique of encyclopedism in connecting two coordinates on that trajectory: "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris"—Pound's first major critical essay, from 1911-12—and *Paterson*. Both are farraginous experiments that combine prose and poetry, original writing and archival matter, according to formal logic that is not always evident. Although each has its champions, both have largely been received as problem works and accorded relatively little attention. Both were published in installments, completed, and published again in substantially different versions. Although neither work is much read, both are mostly known in these later versions, and in each case, that is likely to obscure aspects of the work that are important to my argument. Pound and Williams are ambivalent about the exacting aesthetic/ethical/political positions they stake out in writing them, and they retreat from those

positions later in their careers, which may also make the tendency I am focusing on easier to overlook. That tendency—and the continuity between "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and *Paterson* that I mean to draw out—comes down to conviction that literature has a special responsibility to care for its materials, belief in reduction as the proper means of giving that care, and the pursuit of forms to sustain it.

Deletionist Modernism: "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris"

"I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" appeared in *The New Age* in twelve weekly installments between November 1911 and February 1912, always with the editorial note: "Under this heading Mr. Pound will contribute expositions and translations in illustration of 'The New Method' in scholarship."[19] The essay alternates translations of poetry, with commentary, and critical prose from installment to installment. It opens with Pound's version of "The Seafarer" and includes five translations of Guido Cavalcanti and eleven of Arnaut Daniel. Some of these, such as "The Seafarer" and Pound's bracingly modern, haiku-like rendering of the last verse of Arnaut's "Canzon: Of the Trades and Love," are as much adaptations as translations. The prose sections range over cultural history and historiography, pedagogy, prosody, translation, ethics, and music theory. Like *Paterson*, it is sprawling hodgepodge that might look baggy and confused.

Its publication did not do much to launch Pound's career, and it has mostly been remembered as a faltering rehearsal for the coming decade of more focused sallies he would make against established culture. The essay does show the beginnings of most phases and facets of his prolific, hugely variegated pre-*Cantos* production; however, the impression that it is a kind of master first draft for that later work appears to have obscured its ambitious and original project.

So has the extent to which Pound's inexperience shows in the execution: it *is* kind of a mess. But even so, it is a seminal, exhaustively thought-through, and formally sophisticated expression of an essential modernist idea. It inaugurates a strain of modernism that is generally not recognized as such, perhaps partly because of the essay's longstanding neglect. Hardly anyone reads it, and most readers who think they have read it have not really. When it was included in Pound's posthumous *Selected Prose*, after going uncollected for sixty-two years, the translations were excised by the editor, William Cookson. It has never been reprinted in its original form.[20]

Although Pound's tone in the prose sections is typically joco-magisterial, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" is not one of his manifestoes: it is speculative, undecided, essayistic. He continually revolves and recasts its arguments, switching topics, changing metaphors, trying to get the right contour on his ideas and balance them with the right emphasis. The essay is a meditation on critical and artistic process and a performance of it, meshed in its experiment with protean, heterogeneous form. Its basic subject is what to do, practically, as an artist or a scholar taking the longest possible view of culture, the sort of geologically long view in which individual contributions almost all disappear. Pound works the question over and shows how he works, reflexively, in his oscillation between practice (selection, translation, adaptation) and reflection and in his restless self-revision in reflecting. Readers of his better-known work from the 1910s will be used to seeing him shuttle between activities such as poetic composition, commentary, editing, and translation while continually tweaking his key terms and first principles—but always under separate titles. In the busy years between "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and the first Cantos, he does not make another effort to consolidate his literary/scholarly project in one text. He keeps up roughly the same work, addressing versions of the same problems with variations on the same process, but never with form and adventure so integrally connected.

The problem at the heart of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris"—the germinal problem for Pound's early writing—is information overload. Toward the start of the first prose section, he makes new the ancient and medieval complaints about the overabundance of books that Blair compiles, saying: "If on no other grounds than this, namely, that the eye-sight is valuable, we should read less, far less than we do" (130). That is a bumptious gloss on the first of a long series of metaphors he devises to define his project as a poet and scholar, over the course of the essay and throughout the first decade of his career. The metaphor anticipates his coming role as captain of the high-culture industry to be known as imagism, vorticism, and eventually modernism, as well as the many broadly postcolonial critiques that will someday be made of his use of non-Western sources:

> If a man owned mines in South Africa he would know that his labourers dug up a good deal of mud and an occasional jewel, looking rather like the mud about it. If he shipped all the mud and uncut stones northward and dumped them in one heap on the shore of Iceland, in some inaccessible spot, we should not consider him commercially sound. In my own department of scholarship I should say the operations are rather of this complexion. There are many fine things discovered, edited, and buried. Much very dull 'literature' is treated in like manner. They are dumped in one museum and certain learned men rejoice in the treasure. They also complain of a lack of public interest in their operations. […] When it comes to presenting matter to the public, to the intelligent, over-busy public, *bonae voluntatis*, there are certain forms of civility, consideration, and efficiency to be considered.
>
> Any fact is, in a sense, 'significant.' Any fact may be 'symptomatic,' but certain facts give one a sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into sequence, and law.

By "fact," Pound means, not necessarily a true statement, but something more like a moment in the archive. He dilates on an example, a sentence by the nineteenth-century historian Jacob Burckhardt, then completes his thought:

> In the history of the development of civilisation or of literature, we come upon such interpreting detail. A few dozen facts of this nature give us intelligence of a period—a kind of intelligence not to be gathered from a great array of facts of the

> other sort. These facts are hard to find. They are swift and easy of transmission. They govern knowledge as the switchboard governs an electric circuit. (130)

After having paused to raise our eyebrows at the metaphor's plunderous vehicle, we can discern just about the whole substance of the young Pound's aesthetic and political philosophy here. His emphases shift as he elaborates that philosophy and adapts it to different occasions over the decade to come, in essays that are foundational to literary modernism, yet the essential points are nearly all compacted in these couple hundred words about the persistent need to cull the mass of extant writing. The necessity of that shifting—of what Pound calls a method of "constant search and rejection" in a footnote about Arnaut (179)—is one of those essential points, which comes through at the end of the excerpt above. Pound mixes his mineral-extraction metaphor before he has finished unpacking it, refiguring its hoard of jewels as the circuitry of a switchboard and his work as a multihyphenate man of letters in terms of channeling culture's currents rather than stewarding its estate. From the first, he keeps his language moving to take in as much as he can.

In assaying metaphors to describe the overwhelming excess of writing in the world and what ought to be done about it, Pound alternately thinks in terms of masses and flows of information. His mine and switchboard metaphors typify those two angles on the problem. He almost immediately revises (and debrutalizes) the mine metaphor, recasting its scholar-tycoon as the curator of a collection of paintings (130) or photographs (131) that encapsulate big swaths of culture. With another quick shift, he comes to favor metaphors that figure selecting what "the intelligent, over-busy public" needs from the great heaps of things there are to read and know as a kind of science. The curator becomes a chemist and an anatomist (131), then a teacher showing slides in a microscope (344). In subsequent essays that develop that line of thought, the same figure is a mathematician,[21] a doctor,[22] and an archaeologist.[23] Pound also continues to develop the more dynamic conception of large-scale information management that he introduces with the

switchboard metaphor. Later in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," he figures civilization as an engine room (178-79) and, more puzzlingly, language as a proto-Fritz Langian array of hollow steel cones that radiate and suck in a force that is like electricity but a lot more complicated, in ways that bring out nuances in the tenor of what he admits is a "cumbersome simile" (298). This thrust in his thinking reaches its acme in his writings on vorticism from 1914-15, which give his culture-as-current metaphors a kind of Futurist chrome plating:

> THE TURBINE.
>
> All experience rushes into this vortex. All the energized past, all the past that is living and worthy to live. All MOMENTUM, which is the past bearing upon us, RACE, RACE-MEMORY instinct, charging the PLACID, NON-ENERGIZED FUTURE.[24]

Overabundance and overflow: in early Pound, the problem is always both. For their work to be of use, a writer or scholar or teacher needs to winnow the hoard and stem the flood, helping the audience cope with the overwhelming immensities that all cultural production and mediation is bound up in.

And use is key: Pound insists that his work is meant, above all, to be useful. He would have literature serve a far wider public than the audience for early modernism's little magazines and little-read books. Before he turns onto the path that leads to Rome Radio and the cage in Pisa, his politics are confused but decidedly democratic. He appears to be sincere that the renewal of culture he hopes to bring about will primarily benefit "the intelligent, over-busy public." That commitment carries through at least another decade of critical writing. Even in essays from the late 20s and 30s, he strains to reconcile it with his changing values and allegiances. Early in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" he introduces the "New Method" as an effort "to lead a man out into more varied, more intimate contact with his fellows" (130), and as late as his more ambivalent 1927 essay "How to Read," he argues poetry as it ought to be written is

"useful" in that it "maintains the precision and clarity of thought, not merely for the benefit of a few dilettantes and 'lovers of literature', but maintains the health of thought outside literary circles and in non-literary existence, in general individual and communal life."[25]

For Pound, in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and the criticism that follows on it, literature ought to serve the public two ways: by supplying terms for ethical and political deliberation and by caring for the common language. His mining metaphor makes a case for the first of those imperatives. No one is able to keep more than a small fraction of the information available to them in mind or at hand. By extracting the most illuminating "facts" from the archive, sifting diamonds out of mud, the scholar can help everyone make the most of their capacity to know about the world. As Pound goes on to explain, that original writing is useful in this way when it generates such facts. He gives these points sharper definition, returning to his scientific strain of self-description, in his 1913 essay "The Serious Artist." There he argues: "The arts, literature, poesy, are a science, just as chemistry is a science. Their subject is man, mankind and the individual [….] [They] give us a great percentage of the lasting and unassailable data regarding the nature of man." Art is most valuable "in providing the data for ethics." Consequently, "Bad art is inaccurate art. It is art that makes false reports."[26]

Pound's argument for reduction as care for language comes later in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," but he accords it more importance there. In the final prose section, unsure that he has made himself sufficiently clear, he spells out his "reasons… for writing" the essay and what he calls "the unity of intention" that links its critical prose and translations: "I should like to break up cliché, to disintegrate these magnetised groups that stand between the reader of poetry and the drive of it. For it is not until poetry lives again 'close to the thing' that it will be a vital part of contemporary life" (370). Pound makes the most granular work along these lines a synecdoche

for his whole project. At every altitude, from its presentation of history to its diction and syntax, literature needs to cleave to things as they are, clear away the cruft that adheres to habitual ways of speaking and reasoning, filter out the semantic noise that smudges impressions made by words and dissipates attention. Scouring the common language is the task that matters most because it is the most fundamental. Pound explains in another essay from 1912:

> The function of art to strengthen the perceptive faculties and free them from encumbrance, such encumbrances, for instance, as set moods, set ideas, conventions; from the results of experience which is common but unnecessary. […] Language, the medium of thought's preservation, is constantly wearing out. It has been the function of poets to new-mint the speech, to supply the vigorous terms for prose.[27]

Ten years later, even as he is evolving away from his early philosophy, he reiterates: "We are governed by words, the laws are graven in words, and literature is the sole means of keeping these words living and accurate."[28]

This conviction that poets are, foremost, "conservators of the public speech"[29] soon becomes the first principle of a hugely influential poetic doctrine. Imagism is mainly remembered as being what it sounds like, an aesthetic that prizes the sort of lucent visual compression exemplified by Pound's "In the Station of the Metro." It is, but that modern-painterly style is secondary to the ethic of rigorous economy that engenders it. A clue that imagism is not primarily about wet-black-boughlike visual imagery is that "In the Station of the Metro" is pretty much the only poem contemporary with Pound's imagist manifestoes that is ever given as an example when the term is understood that way.[30] Another is that most of the poems Pound identifies as imagist—the poems in his anthology *Des Imagistes*, for example—are not much like it. The three numbered directives in the essay "Imagisme," reoriented toward composition, constitute a version of the program for renewing language by winnowing it that Pound sets out at the end of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris." They are:

1. Direct treatment of the "thing," whether subjective or objective.
2. To use absolutely no word that did not contribute to the presentation.

And, since all but the deftest writing in regular accentual meter sometimes needs expletives to fill out lines,

3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.[31]

If a poet is exacting, talented, and lucky, these strict economies of expression, diction, and versification might enable them to produce an image. As with "fact," Pound uses "image" in a sense that is related to but essentially diverges from its ordinary meaning. He defines "image" for his purposes in terms of concision, concreteness, and a lack of received mediation, as "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time," "the natural object" that "is always the *adequate* symbol,"[32] and "the word beyond formulated language."[33]

Pound does begin to emphasize visual imagery in characterizing imagism when he becomes affiliated with vorticism and feels he needs to account for his literary work in relation to vorticist visual art such as Wyndham Lewis's painting and Henri Gaudier-Brezeska's sculpture.[34] This later tilt towards the ordinary meaning of "image" surely accounts for why his original understanding of imagism tends to be lost in reception. Yet it does not represent much of a change in his thinking. Even when he writes about the image as being "the poet's pigment" or "the primary pigment of poetry,"[35] picture-making is mainly the vehicle of a metaphor for a process of poetic materialization and self-scrutiny in which making pictures is more an effect than an objective. That public-spirited, posterity-minded process is the essence of imagism. A Poundian image is the sort of kernel of writing "that can be carried as a communication between intelligent men"[36] and that might survive the culling that is needed for culture to keep pace with the build-up and onrush of information.

Pound's principles of composition also serve as criteria for that culling. Just as the "'New Method' of scholarship" at the heart of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" entails a poetics, the more fully elaborated poetics he develops in subsequent essays involves a program for scholarship—although he stops calling himself a scholar. He sometimes privileges his criticism and translation, more often his poetry, but it is all the same work for him. For instance, as evidence of imagism's potency as a poetics, he makes wild claims for how stringent it is as a basis for criticism. He claims that, applied judiciously, his "first three simple proscriptions will throw out nine-tenths of all the bad poetry now accepted as standard and classic," and that as a public service, imagists are going around convincing bad poets to stop writing, either by showing them poems from the archive that unimprovably express what they mean to write or by rewriting their poems under their noses "using about ten words to [their] fifty."[37] The principles obtain across activities, blurring the lines that conventionally distinguish them. Making images—or 'interpreting details,' or vortices, or whatever else he is calling the jewels to be extracted from information overload's Icelandic mudpile at a given moment in his early career—recovering them from neglect, bringing them into focus through translation, and directing readers' attention to them and away from everything else: these are all aspects of the same immense transhistorical project.

The word "scholarship" becomes anathema to Pound when he comes to associate it with a degree of specialization that blinkers scholars to that big picture. The culprit, as he sees it, is the university. "German and American higher education was, is, evil, a perversion," he complains, because "it holds up an ideal of 'scholarship,' not of humanity." When an intelligent man comes under its influence, he is "switched on to some particular problem, some minute particular problem unconnected with life, unconnected with main principles" and becomes "a piece of mechanism for the accretion of details," "the bondslave of his subject, the gelded ant, the compiler of data."

Pound has "no objection to any man making himself into a tank or refrigerator for as much exact information as he enjoys holding," but he believes it is deeply pernicious for culture to be given over to that sort of specialized expertise. If assiduous reduction is the way to care for language and enrich general knowledge, then unchecked, fetishistic accumulation must corrupt the means for reflection and communication and impoverish deliberation. The university institutionalizes that corruption and immiseration. Writing in 1917, Pound blames German philology for the war.[38]

Yet for all that early Pound is all about taking the longest view of history and situating modern literature in large-scale cultural processes, between "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and the earliest Cantos, his interest in form narrows to the micro level. He fixates on atomic forms, the smallest particles of literary work: their make-up, structure, and valence. His understanding of the macro process by which those facts or images or vortices are created or extracted stays roughly the same, but he no longer works at materializing that process formally.

Although Pound relates those small forms to the overarching form of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," his micro-level thinking about form in the essay is fairly inchoate. At the outset, he defines his "New Method" as "the method of Luminous Detail, a method most vigorously hostile to the prevailing mode of to-day—that is, the method of multitudinous detail, and to the method of yesterday, the method of sentiment and generalisation" (130). His mining metaphor gives a first indication of what he means by that and, more generally, of how his often unusually granular analysis of literary text squares with the unusually panoramic view he often takes of his part in literary history. From one angle, the metaphor is about how the messy formal experiment that shapes the essay has a place for formal perfection at the smallest scale. He designates the jewels unearthed in the metaphor "interpreting details" and "facts." This is a more practical formulation than "Luminous Detail," with its connotation of figurative and historical

Enlightenment and more poetical, somewhat Emily Dickinson-like aspect. That first bit of overdetermination gives a sense of how the lapidary moments he hopes will emerge from the essay's deliberate muddle of literary activity might look like something from "The Seafarer" or Arnaut or like his more prosaic historical examples, while still having the same basic function. Pound continues to revolve the form of those moments as he works through his other metaphors, redescribing them as pictures, electrical nodes, weird cones, and the rest, but he only ever defines that form nebulously. This sets a pattern for his treatment of form in this phase of his career.

In developing his poetics after "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," Pound privileges compact, discrete units of form: atomic forms. Although the Imagist image is often misunderstood, it is not for lack of definition and explanation. If anything, the atomic form at the heart of Pound's poetics (variously labeled the interpreting detail, the image, the vortex, etc.) is overdetermined to an extent that goes beyond capturing multiplicity and invites confusion.[39] When he comes to describe it as being like a variable in mathematics, he captures something about its plasticity in his poetics as well as its function. But it poses an important question he leaves largely unaddressed: can it signify, as a variable cannot, outside of larger formal structures? In a 1917 essay, he writes:

> It seems to me that in music, as in the other arts, beginning in the eighteenth century, and growing a poison from which we are not yet free, greater rigidity in matters of minutiae has forced a break-up of the large forms; has destroyed the sense of main form. […] A pedantic insistence on detail tends to drive out 'major form.'

The subject of the essay is musical notation, but Pound seems to concede something about his own work.

At the moment he most privileges atomic form, he neglects what he calls major form. That is, he does not make much effort to have the overall form of his works embody or reflect

and inculcate his poetics. The absence of regular meter in most of his poems, for instance, is a sign that he prioritizes "direct treatment" over a sustained principle of poetic organization that might encumber his depiction of things. Generally, though, he does not seem to be choosing atomic form over major form where the two are incompatible, breaking up larger forms or conspicuously eschewing them. Rather, he is just limiting his experimentation with form to a small scale.

There is, then, not much about the shape and structure of most of Pound's writings from the mid-1910s that indicates they are meant to be ransacked by posterity for their most durable, illuminating, energized, or valent monads. That means, if he is sincere about the most extreme implications of his poetics, that their form is inarticulate about his deepest intentions and also that the forms that these writings do have tend to direct readers to read them differently than he claims they ought to be reading them. Nothing about *Cathay* or *Lustra* indicates they should not be received as complete books or that the poems in them should not be treated as coherent and whole. It could be that images need to be gleaned by reading against the grain of the forms in which they emerge, as Pound mostly does in gathering images from the archive, but it is difficult to figure why. The gist of his early philosophy is that what has normally been the diffuse work of posterity can and should be done now, deliberately, by modern writers.

Pound considers "whether there can be a long imagiste or vorticist poem" in a note at the end of his essay "Vorticism." He waffles, saying that the best Noh plays are sort of like long haiku, as they are "gathered about one image," that he "see[s] nothing against a long vorticist poem," and that it is fine for an imagist or vorticist writer to publish longer work that is not centered on an image or a vortex.[40] He does not entertain the possibility that a long imagist poem might draw a reader into the diffuse, waste-filled imagist process rather than composing a single

image, nor does he remember that with "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" he wrote a long work that does exactly that. The essay's formal and rhetorical messiness, ambivalence, unfinishedness, and venturesome weirdness, and the often strained, sometimes hard-to-discern connection between the translations and the critical prose may lead him and most others to consider it a failure. He appears to have reached that conclusion about it early: it is not among of the eleven essays he includes in his 1918 collection *Pavannes and Divisions*. But wouldn't a long imagist work need to mostly be a failure?

Pound makes clear that his program for winnowing culture to its essentials requires an enormous amount of waste and loss. Recall again the introductory metaphor in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," how it begins with a heap of mud dropped on Scandinavian shores: "A good deal of mud and an occasional jewel, looking rather like the mud about it." Pound insists again and again that hardly any writing is worth preserving. He says "some few scant dozen verses" should be enough to exhaust what a real poet has to say (224), though squeezing out the "pint of truth that is in him" can be a life's work (298). Not long after, he makes the point more bluntly. He says that "no man ever writes very much poetry that 'matters.'"[41] He complains about "the barrels of sham poetry that every decade and school and fashion produce"[42] and pegs the proportion of worthless art in any medium at ninety-five percent.[43] When in 1918 he looks back on the first years of his career, he supposes, best case, that "a few good poems have come from the new method" set out in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and popularized under the imagist banner.[44] He continually describes that method as a kind of science and uses scientific metaphors to explain it.[45] Science proceeds by the slow accretion of small advances through a huge number of mostly failed experiments. For Pound, so does culture. Failure is the engine of the process "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" performs and materializes.

Paterson's Imaginary Precursor: Williams Willfully Misreads *The Cantos*

Pound gradually abandons those principles as *The Cantos* takes shape as an encyclopedic project, becoming increasingly determinate and, eventually, didactic. This takes some time. In the teens and early 20s, he began writing Cantos with no definite sense of the finished product he intended to make. He hoped, as he told his Penn professor Felix Schelling in 1922, "to bring them into some sort of design and architecture later."[46] John Whittier-Ferguson jokes that "one could compose a sizable anthology of Pound's letters like this, from the nineteen-teens forward, that defend his project, confess its provisional nature, hold out hopes and promises of 'some sort of design' to be revealed in the future."[47] *The Cantos* begin not with a formal blueprint or any other sort of plan, but with Pound's unshakeable sense that he has an epic vocation, which goes back at least as far as 1908, the year of his first collection, *A Lume Spento*. In the poem "Scriptor Ignotus," he confides: "I see my greater soul-self bending / Sibylwise with that great forty-year epic... / yet unwrit."[48] His earliest efforts toward that epic, "Three Cantos," published in *Poetry* in 1917, are addressed to Robert Browning and read as though they might be the start of a long, miscellaneous historical sequence such as Browning's *Men and Women*. The project takes on a more recognizably epic shape when he reframes that opening as a rewriting of Andreas Divus's translation of *Odyssey* XI in 1924's *A Draft of XVI Cantos*. Yet, even then, the poem remains largely undefined at the level of major form. The Homeric myth does not serve as a strong principle of order in *The Cantos*, as, to make the obvious comparison, Eliot reads it as doing in *Ulysses*. For a decade or so, Pound entertains the possibility that formal underdetermination could be an effective basis for the sort of massive project he is undertaking. In a contrarian

moment in a 1928 essay, he even cites the *Iliad* as a prime example of "world-literature in which form, major form, is remarkable mainly for absence."[49]

It is debatable when in the composition of *The Cantos* the poem evolves from mainly absent or always-provisional form to some more comprehensive or totalizing kind. For James Longenbach, the crucial shift happens very early, about midway through that first batch of *XVI Cantos*, when Pound goes from reporting direct, visionary experience of the past, "giving language to ancient ghosts," and begins to enmesh his lyric voice in a collage of archival documents that speak for themselves.[50] Though Longenbach sees this starting to happen as early as Canto V, he argues that it is in the Malatesta Cantos and the American Cantos of the early 30s that the most important consequence of it really becomes apparent: that by substituting the authority of the archive for lyric subjectivity in its presentation of history, the poem begins to make strong historical truth claims. This makes the poem available to an extreme politics when Pound starts to espouse one. For Whittier-Ferguson, the new politics precedes the new poetics, and the basic change comes later. He suggests it is only when order becomes a primary political imperative for Pound—when he comes to believe the next world war "will be 'about' bringing coherence to an unruly world" and backs Mussolini as the man who "will stand not with... the lovers of power, but with the lovers of ORDER"—that the poem begins to build towards an argument by the patterned repetition of historical examples.[51]

By 1937, with the publication of Canto XLV ("With *Usura*..."), the litany against usury that serves as the poem's effective thesis statement, in *The Fifth Decad of the Cantos XLII–LI*, *The Cantos* has an unmistakable programmatic thrust that serves as an organizing principle. That makes *The Cantos* determinate in ways *The Waste Land* is decidedly not; however, the more basic changes in project that prepare the way for that move bring Pound around to something

close to the Eliotic version of encyclopedism. By having the poem speak with the authority of the culture that sustains its archive and privileging principles of order in assembling it, he gives it an integrity and canonicity that are incompatible with the accretion of images or "interpreting facts" through a process of trial and error heavy on failure and reconciled to the necessity of culling most everything that is written. Instead, on a much larger scale than Eliot does at his most encyclopedic, he devotes himself to the artful proliferation of information overload.

Divested of atomic hyperbole and treated as a description rather than a judgment, Williams's assessment of how deep and wrenching Eliot's impact on modern poetry proved to be is basically correct. The pivotal year for modernism's encyclopedic turn is 1922, the year of *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*. Whereas there were some precedents for Joyce's encyclopedism in the early and recent history of the novel (*Gargantua and Pantagruel* and *Tristram Shandy*, *Moby-Dick* and *Bouvard and Pécuchet*), Eliot's intervention in the poetic tradition brings us closer to the familiar story of modernism as rupture. He stakes a claim to the cultural precedence of epic with a poem that needs to be read differently than any existing canonical poetry, and he succeeds. As Joyce does, Eliot uses encyclopedic form to hold together an immense and incoherent prospect of modernity. *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses* are different in many ways, but the basic formal accommodation is the same: construct a vast complex of text and intertext, and you can guide reading while leaving an open world to readers. This use of encyclopedic form privileges an intertextual or annotative mode of reading that disrupts the steady progress through the poem that conventional poetic measure typically presumes. It also allows *The Waste Land* to comprehend enormously more than it embodies, making its substance unavailable to memorization. As such, his encyclopedism removes poetry from its traditional bases in the body and memory.[52] This is of a piece with a more basic dislocation that sees the work dispersed into

the archive in which it is constituted.[53] When *The Waste Land* is adopted as the model modernist poem, that dislocation becomes normative. It establishes a prevailing mode of modern epic that is, as Whittier-Ferguson puts it, "pre-eminently a textual production, fundamentally and ostentatiously a product of the library rather than the battlefield, the mead hall, or the court."[54]

The Cantos epitomizes this evacuation of poetry's traditional immediacies. It is library epic at its most profuse and recondite, and it marshals its Eliotic resources in service of a politics that is sometimes bonkers, sometimes heinous, and not infrequently both. Williams is disappointed in how it evolves and appalled by Pound's fascism, and he often says so privately. But over nineteen years, from 1931 to 1950, he writes five favorable reviews of its installments.[55] On the face of it, this is strange, even allowing for the importance of Pound's friendship to him and his heavy involvement in the campaign to get Pound released from St. Elizabeths after his incarceration there in 1945. That these are the years he is most intently trying to write *Paterson*, then finally writing it, may be a clue as to what he is up to. So might the fact that his praise of *The Cantos* sounds a lot like Jarrell's criticism of *Paterson*.

Williams's private opinion of *The Cantos* definitely curdled over the years that he regularly reviewed new installments. For instance, in a 1947 letter to Robert McAlmon he writes: "I don't think any of the Cantos, the recent Cantos, increase Pound's reputation or are likely to increase it." There are, he allows, "good passages here and there in everything he writes," but not enough of them to amount to much. On the whole, he says: "Pretty sad stuff to me."[56] Yet he would go on to write two more essays praising Pound's new work. He does this not quite honestly, but in a kind of generous bad faith. His reviews pretend perfect indifference to the poem's emerging and then determinative encyclopedic and programmatic qualities. In Jarrell's terms, he commends Pound's fits and starts of excellence and access to raw reality while excusing as incidentals his rampant

intellectualism and his totalizing and speechifying zeal. Privately, he believed that many of *The Cantos*' defining qualities indicated deep failings, as well as thinking most of the writing in the later installments was bad. But in his reviews he construes those things he takes to be wrong with the poem as failures that are integral to Pound's process and ought not to be counted against the work.

Williams holds this line with impressive consistency. However much Pound's poem changes over twenty years, becoming less and less appealing to him, his reading stays the same. He argues that the "seriousness and value" of the first Cantos is in "the minute organization of the words and their relationships in a composition... *not* in the sentiments, ideas, schemes portrayed" and, much later, that *The Pisan Cantos*, the last installment he reviews, succeeds on the basis of "the illumination brought on by the reality of the sound, the well based quality of the language itself—even, yes, apart from the 'meaning'—and this *alone*."[57] If, in that first installment, Pound had "the discernment to descry and the mind to grasp that the difficulties in which humanity find itself need no phenomenal insight for their solution" but is in later years not so discerning and given to shouting his insights, that does not count against him, because on Williams's reading anything programmatic can safely be ignored.[58] At every stage, poetic success means making language new, never mind what it is saying, and in doing so "striking... at the basis of thought, at the mechanism with which we make our adjustments to things and to each other."[59]

Over two decades, Williams refines a plausible description of a successful long poem that runs on failure. *The Cantos* is, he argues, the record of an experimental project that scales up the work Pound was doing in the 20s: a massive poetic laboratory that processes huge quantities of careless writing to generate discrete moments of visionary lyric immediacy. By accretion, and not owing to any total design or argument, these moments build toward a thoroughgoing renewal of language and thought. They are rare, he suggests, even for a great poet such as Pound, and the

process produces staves and staves of poetry that can safely be discarded, but diligent readers, he believes, ought to sift through the whole heap, without making too much of the parts they dislike, picking gems out of the mud. He explains away the poem's incoherence, extreme unevenness, and despicable politics as a practical necessity: Pound needed to write his worst lines in order to write his best ones, and, as Pound makes clear in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and the better-known essays that follow on it, a poet cannot be expected to distinguish the one from the other.

That is tendentious to begin with—though Williams does capture (while overemphasizing it) one key aspect of the poetics of the very earliest Cantos—and the reading soon lapses into casuistry. But even if Williams's reviews can largely be explained away as the due diligence of a friend and supporter who felt he needed to say *something* on Pound's behalf, they are nevertheless instructive documents of Williams's thinking about poetic form and language; they also say a lot about Poundian "major form" and the possibilities of the long poem in particular between the years when Eliot detonated *The Waste Land* and when he completed *Paterson*. As the drift of Pound's poetics and politics increasingly disappoints him, and as *Paterson* becomes a focus of his creative life, the reviews read more and more as indirect criticism of Pound—as plaudits for the poem he thinks Pound ought to be writing—and roundabout glosses on his own work in progress. In straining to commend what he takes to be a failed project, he gets a handle on failure as a poetic value. The profoundly unencyclopedic project he attributes to Pound comes to be preposterously far from *The Cantos* as Pound and most readers understand it. But that imaginary, alternate-universe *Cantos* keeps Williams in touch with Pound as he knew him at the outset of their careers. It is a plausible vision of how Pound's earliest poetics could operate if adapted to the demands of the long poem. The principled poetics of failure Williams descries in amicably misrepresenting *The Cantos* is, I argue, foundational to *Paterson*.

Anti-encyclopedic Form: *Paterson* as Controlled Demolition

Paterson is a fragmentary jumble of free verse, archival material real and fake, excerpts from private letters, strange punctuation (not only periods that seem pointless, but also colons with nothing on one side or the other and em dashes that begin sentences or sentence fragments), as well as other oddities, such as a page whose scrambled typography makes it appear to be crumpled in on itself. In the most basic sense, it is about Paterson, New Jersey and its environs: the landscape, local history, the people there, and the peregrinations of the poet-physician Dr. P, Williams's surrogate in the text. The poem's form and project can be difficult to puzzle out, and many readers have concluded that for all intents and purposes it has neither. It is little read, in spite of Williams's enduring popularity, though its motto, "No ideas but in things," is well known.[60]

Paterson begins with a prodigious feat of misdirection. Book One is typically read as the opening gambit of a brighter, airier variation on the Eliotic encyclopedic poem. Jarrell characterizes it as a contest between the "the clear speech of nature" and "all the confusion and ugliness in which men could not exist except for 'imagined beauty'," won by the poet on behalf of nature.[61] On its own, the first book bears this reading out. It lays on encyclopedic modernism's classic establishing moves, while tilting the overall impression that it makes toward the sort of optimism Jarrell sees in it. In the paratextual "Argument" at the outset, and in the epigraph, the Preface, and the early pages of Book One proper, Williams overloads the poem with totalizing self-description, creating a typically Joycean or Eliotic profusion of principles of order. The poem describes and redescribes its shape or project more than twenty times in those first few pages. The reader is quickly told: *Paterson* will liken a man and his life (and also every human

life) to a city (or, for that matter, any city) and its civic life (6); the poem will also be a confession, an earthy and/or materialist epic ("*a reply to Greek and Latin with the bare hands*"); a container or a monument, "a dispersal and a metamorphosis"; and fourteen or fifteen other things listed rapid-fire (10). It will be a quest for "rigor of beauty," a bestial rooting-around after particulars, an answer to Eliot's "Little Gidding" (11-12). Its all-organizing master figure for life or the world will be the city of Paterson or the Passaic valley or a giant identified with the landscape or—together—the city (male) and a flower (female) or the city and several flowers or the Great Falls and one or several of those flowers or just the Great Falls or just the Passaic River (15-17).

Totalizing abstraction is piled on totalizing abstraction in such a complicated overlay that it becomes unclear at any point just what totality is being abstracted through which description or metaphor, and to what purpose. Anything in the poem might stand for anything else in the poem, or anything that the poem refers to.

> A man like a city and a woman like a flower—
> —who are in love. Two women. Three women.
> Innumerable women, each like a flower.
>
> But
> only one man—like a city. (15)

A jumble of repeated images—city, giant, falls, flower, river—comes to seem like a sort of composite figure for the idea of encyclopedic form. Readers trained by Joyce or Eliot, or any number of others writing in the tradition they establish, will absorb that convoluted overdetermination without stopping to unpack it and, likely, breeze through the establishing pages. They will take in the lyric/archival hodgepodge that makes up the rest of Book One as they normally read work like it—attending to particulars while gradually developing for themselves

a sense of the whole, following references and exploring intra- and intertextual connections, thinking along with the poem, breathing in its sophisticated air.

The sort of sunny, affirming interpretation of Book One Jarrell gives is credible, though a careful reader can find a lot of bleakness to count against it. There are many deeply disquieting moments, mostly incidents in local history given as prose interpolations from real or fabricated archival sources: the ransacking of the Passaic by mobs crazy for pearls and for eels (17, 46-47); the suicide of a conventionally happy minister's wife, who disappeared into the river during a pleasure trip in 1812 (23-24); the formation of a community of outcasts (escaped slaves, Hessian deserters, Tuscarora Indians exiled after a massacre) in the hills outside the city (21-22); rapes and executions mentioned without context. Yet a reader disposed to privilege principles of order where they find them should not have much trouble assimilating these moments as confusion or ugliness the poem is overcoming. Modern poems are full of grim or lurid stuff. It is an expected part of the texture. And the hero of Book One is Sam Patch, an icon of overcoming, associated with nature's voice and the transcendence of confusion, whose triumphant leap into the Passaic in 1827—"The water pouring still / from the edge of the rocks, filling / his ears with its sound, hard to interpret. / A wonder!" (26)—initiated his career as America's first daredevil. That big cue, the riot of principles of order introduced in the first pages, and the conventions for construing those established over more than two decades of encyclopedic modernism, ought to give an optimistic reader sufficient reason to subordinate anything disturbing in Book One to the inchoate and indeterminate but seemingly affirmative total design its framing appears to indicate.

Having set *Paterson* up as an exemplary Eliotic poem, a kind of pleasingly less waste-filled *Waste Land*, Williams can begin to tear it down. He employs various strategies to effect the poetic destruction that he valorizes but does not really define in his reviews of Stein's *Four*

Saints in Three Acts and *Finnegans Wake*. In Book Two, he makes a concerted effort to liquidate his poetic authority and deal damage to the formal architecture in Book One that promises to hold the poem together. If the disturbing material in Book One put strain on that encyclopedic scaffolding, the Cress letters in Book Two overwhelm it. Cress is the pseudonym Williams gives Marcia Nardi, an unknown poet with whom he had corresponded in 1942 and 1943.[62] He had encouraged Nardi's writing and at one point sent her money but stopped writing her back as she complained more and more about her troubles and pleaded for him to find her some kind of job as a writer. She had a child and no steady work, and she struggled to keep up a writing practice. She felt trapped by poverty and precarity. She went on sending him letters after he quit responding. In these, she excoriates him for taking a purely literary interest in her life, for the harm she felt his snub was doing to her sense of herself as a poet, for cringing away from her when she was in desperate need and "dying of loneliness" (107), and for continuing to play the part of the saintly doctor-poet in his books while treating her heartlessly.

Williams excerpts Nardi's letters extensively in Book Two. The excerpts are painfully raw and make him seem doubly callous, for ignoring her and for appropriating her letters as material for his poetry. Writing about Pound, Longenbach observes that quoting documents extensively enables modernism's encyclopedic poets to enhance their authority, in that they get to switch from speaking in a plainly subjective lyric voice to ventriloquizing the seemingly objective voice of the archive.[63] The Cress letters inculpate Williams as lyric speaker and encyclopedic arranger, liquidating the authority that underwrites the poem's claims to cohesion and encyclopedic plenitude.[64] They also pose a gut-twisting challenge to the authoritative intellectualism and diversion from material reality that are so deeply constitutive of encyclopedism. Nardi spells it out:

> You might as well take all your literature and everyone else's and toss it into one of those big garbage trucks of the Sanitation Department, so long as the people with the top-cream minds and the 'finer' sensibilities use those minds and sensibilities not to make themselves more humane human beings than the average person, but merely as a means of ducking responsibility toward a better understanding of their fellow men, except theoretically—which doesn't mean a God damned thing. (101)

Having no good answer to that and many similar admonishments, the poem effectively releases its fragments from the totalizing designs it so strenuously establishes at the start of Book One.

The final Cress letter marks a formal breaking point for the poem. Book Two ends with eight tightly spaced, vituperative pages from Nardi—constituting the last word in that installment and far and away the longest stretch of the poem in the same voice. Williams says in a 1951 letter: "It was a strong reply, a reply which sought to destroy me. It was just that it should have its opportunity to destroy."[65] That final letter transforms *Paterson*, not only by quashing what's left of Williams's authority in the poem, but also by going on for as many pages as it does and being as unpoetic as it is. The letter is so far out of proportion with all the other parts of the poem and interrupts the reader's sense that they are even reading a poem to such a degree that it disabuse the reader of any remaining hope that the poem could cohere formally or complete the poetic project its early encyclopedic gestures promise. At the height of his exasperation, Jarrell rages:

> What has been done to [Nardi's letters] to make it possible for us to respond to them as art and not as raw reality? to make them part of the poem *Paterson?* I can think of no answer except: *They have been copied out on a typewriter*. Anyone can object, *But the context makes them part of the poem;* and anyone can reply to this objection, *It takes a lot of context to make somebody else's eight-page letter the conclusion to a book of a poem.*[66]

Typically, Jarrell is perceptive about the poem while mistaking what Williams is doing. With the final Cress letter, Williams decisively privileges raw reality over the sort of art that would claim to take dominion over modernity's confusion and ugliness. The letter cannot cohere as part

of the poem *Paterson* pretends to be in Book One. The relevant context, the reason he ends Book Two so disruptively and unpoetically, is that he wants to demolish that poetic model. Even allowing for the unusual formal plasticity of the encyclopedia, there is no principle of coherence that could assimilate such damage to any kind of order. The final Cress letter is a crack running down the middle of the poem, the blow that irreparably breaks its formal edifice.

In *Paterson*'s front matter and first two books, Williams thus initiates a classic modernist encyclopedic project, with the requisite world-writing ambitions and extravaganza of formal overdetermination, then throws everything he has into undermining it. In Book Three, he shifts from reflexively performing the destruction of the encyclopedic to repeatedly, almost ritually representing it. It is the most overtly and emphatically anti-encyclopedic part of the poem. In it, Williams has Dr. P retreat to the Public Library and read about local history. The library stands for the impossible space that seems to emerge in encyclopedic reading. The physical world and the information that constitutes the archive interpenetrate woozily as the poet's reading absorbs him, materializing the confusion of lyric description and archival interpolation that constitutes the poem. The situation recalls that moment in *The Arcades Project* when Benjamin looks up from his desk and finds that the wholly textual Paris of his encyclopedic research project and the real Paris where he's sitting reading have become perfectly coextensive. For Benjamin, this is a sort of idyll. To Williams, the same kind of coextension materializes a lethal separation of language from the world, ideas from things.

It is astute of Williams to choose the library as the poem's master figure for the encyclopedic. At every stage of their history, encyclopedias have been heavily identified with libraries. Detailed library catalogues were major precursors to the first western encyclopedias. For many centuries, encyclopedias were all but exclusively written and read in libraries. The

encyclopedists of the first European age of encyclopedias were fixated on warding off another catastrophic archival loss like the destruction of the Library of Alexandria by effectively making libraries portable and practicably reproducible.[67] Encyclopedic novels tend to feature emblematic libraries (Don Quixote's library of chivalric romances, the Library of St. Victor in Rabelais, Uncle Toby's library in *Tristram Shandy*), and, as Whittier-Ferguson suggests, encyclopedic modernism may belong to the library more than any other cultural space. (To that list of earlier entries we could, for a start, add the National Library of Ireland as it appears in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode of *Ulysses*; Jorge Luis Borges's limit case of encyclopedism, the total library; and the reading room of the British Museum, where Virginia Woolf's efforts at an encyclopedic survey under the heading "WOMEN AND FICTION" runs aground). Ultimately the library is an apposite figure for the encyclopedic because libraries and encyclopedias are deeply similar. Both are sites of intertextual crossing, microcosms or heterotopias for browsing readers, navigable archives where minute order is mapped onto the vastly miscellaneous.

Williams might add: *And both are spaces in which life goes to die as language.* Having identified the library with encyclopedism, Williams lays waste to it, rehearsing its destruction three times, once in each section of Book Three. A cyclone, a fire, and a flood rise out of Dr. P's historical reading and blow the place apart. The reality that its archives embalmingly record rushes in, reversing the evacuation of language, restoring materiality, in an eruption of violence. "The pathetic library" (123)—the desolate, stagnant, putrid library (147)—does not stand a chance. Like the disturbing interpolations in Book One that take on the self-sufficiency and force of Poundian "interpreting details" when Williams collapses their provisional ordering structures, the history that Dr. P. would intellectualize asserts itself as material and real. The destroyed library is a triple-underlined metaphor for what Williams is doing with form.

It is also the most dramatic reiteration of the poem's defining antipathy. Again and again, Williams registers his disdain for scholarliness with poison-spitting vehemence. That Eliot "returned [modern poetry] to the classroom" means he perverted it. (From Book Three: "Who is it spoke of April? Some / insane engineer" [163].) Williams describes the university as "a green bud fallen upon the pavement its / sweet breath suppressed" (32). Scholars are "clerks… // spitted on fixed concepts like / roasting hogs, sputtering, their drip sizzling / in the fire" (44). (An even worse fate than being Pound's gelded ant.) The Public Library where Dr. P studies "is desolation… has the smell of its own / of stagnation and death" (123). It is, he later elaborates, "SILENT BY DEFECT OF VIRTUE IN THAT IT / CONTAINS NOTHING OF YOU" (147, 148). Jarrell gets one thing exactly right: Williams is no kind of intellectual. Wherever attention is referred away from the world, to books and further books, he sees life being abstracted away and is sour about the loss. It infuriates him that modern poetry is so often read this way.

Each time Williams wrecks the library, there is a climactic strophe in which the disaster Dr. P is reading about physically overwhelms him (120, 142, 156). These strophes, emblematic of the basic unmanageability of the history that gives rise to information overload, are roughly identical in shape, and the affirmation "So be it" (the plain English meaning of *amen*) runs through them like a chant. After the third such strophe, as if to italicize the point of his triple obliteration of the library, Williams observes, "And there rises / a counterpart" to the flood "of reading," and goes on to describe a dire case of death by encyclopedism in a strophe with the same shape and refrain as the first three. "Texts mount and complicate them- / selves, lead to further texts and those / to synopses, digests, and emendations": like an inter- and paratextual avalanche, like the blob from *The Blob*, this mega-glut of guides and glosses—Williams's nightmare metaphor for the intellectual, annotative, externalizing reading practice Eliot establishes as a

norm—smothers Dr. P, "slowly overwhelming his mind." Passersby "gather / upon the bridge and look down" (156).

The Mess Williams Makes: Failure, the Health of Language, and Noise

The moment of Dr. P's death suggests an earlier moment, whose significance can only come into focus after the poem has canceled its encyclopedic project. Toward the end of Book One, Williams seems to observe himself from outside the poem:

> Moveless
> he envies the men that run
> and could run off
> toward the peripheries—
> to other centers, direct —

(as Pound did, settling in Italy, and Eliot did, reinventing himself as an Englishman)

> for clarity (if
> they found it)
> loveliness and
> authority in the world—
> a sort of springtime
> toward which their minds aspired
> but which he saw,
> within himself—ice bound
>
> and leaped,

(like Sam Patch, who drowned after a jump into the Genesee River in 1829)

> "the body, not until
> the following spring, frozen in
> an ice cake" (48)

With this passage, Williams takes a veiled anti-encyclopedic swipe at Eliot and Pound. As long as the reader understands *Paterson*'s encyclopedic ambitions to be genuine, Williams may sound sincere in saying that he envies Pound and Eliot their rootlessness and rarefied universal

perspective as well as the major-writerly achievements and authority that depend on that removal. However, a reader who has attended carefully to the whole poem will more likely fix on the parenthetical "if / they found it." That ironic knife's twist subtracts "clarity" from "loveliness and authority in the world," suggesting that Eliot and Pound and the many writers who follow them create work that is lovely and authoritative at the cost of turning away from things as they are.

The passage is also about Williams's determination not to leave New Jersey. For years Pound tried to entice him to Europe, but besides going on a five-month tour in 1924, he stayed put, staking out "an indigenist or nativist position" against Pound's internationalism.[68] One way of defining Williams's anti-encyclopedism is to say that he commits to his inheritance as an American poet from a particular place. Rather than aim to abstract himself to a universal subject position and assume the heterogeneous voice of History, selecting, arranging, and commenting with supposed objectivity, as per Longenbach's description of modernism's encyclopedic poets, Williams chooses to fully and self-consciously occupy the real situation his life has enmeshed him in. Whatever else, the "rediscovery of a primary impetus, the elementary principle of all art, in the local conditions" means, it has to mean attending to the world as you find it, writing from within the history of that place, using its language, and accepting the limitations that involves. The numinous "sort of springtime" Eliot and Pound aspire to is a fantasy of exemption from material subjectivity. Williams entertains no such illusions.

That means accepting failure as a necessity. In "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" and other early writings, Pound explains that the "constant search and rejection" that properly constitutes culture means even great artists must spend most of their time and energy failing. The project of destroying the modernist encyclopedia—which preserves so much that ought to be discarded and

diverts artistic effort away from the sort of immediate, material language-scouring and smallest-scale invention that produces work that might endure—seems to require that Williams fail personally in real, painful ways. The finished work needs to fall apart in the reader's hands. The major project of a decade of his career, which he promotes as his defining achievement, will have to be embarrassingly bad by the standards of most of his readers. He will expose how callously he treated Marcia Nardi by appropriating her letters in a way that should confirm the worst things she has to say about him. Book One has this end in view. That it so strongly identifies Patch with poetic overcoming and then, at the end, has Williams recognize himself in him, not during a triumphant leap, but when he washes up dead, gives the game away.

Yet Williams expresses a resignation that goes well beyond having chosen to fail as a critical demonstration. A few pages after Book Three's final assault on the library—the climax of the poem, if we take anti-encyclopedism to be its keynote—he finds himself still struggling to make a start:

> How to begin to find a shape—to begin to begin again,
> turning the inside out : to find one phrase that will
> lie married beside another for delight . ?
> —seems beyond attainment . (167)

If, in Book Three, he has not yet managed to put two satisfactory phrases together, success seems beyond attainment. (Williams favors the related term "radiant gist" [109, 185, 186].) There is surely a measure of hyperbole here. He is not saying there are no stretches of good writing in the poem, or that he has not managed to generate any Poundian images, "radiant nodes," luminous or interpreting details. He is making a point about the sort of challenge he means the poem to give. *Paterson* contemplates, rehearses, performs, and opens itself to failure far more than reflexive destruction of the encyclopedia requires. This commitment to failure indicates an anti-encyclopedism that goes well beyond opposing encyclopedic modernism. It partakes of the sort

of deep refusal of the encyclopedia's bases in thought and language that animates the deletionist impulse that always accompanies encyclopedism.

Williams mobilizes failure as an instrument of poetic destruction not only to attack the poem's specific target, but to counteract a more general corruption that he understands as symptomatic. This is the young Pound's program for the renewal of language ("new-minting" speech to supply "vigorous terms" for discourse, keeping the common language "living and accurate") with a surer political bent. Williams does damage to the forms and privileged subject position that give encyclopedic poems coherence and "authority in the world" in part to excavate and expose historical violence and to keep himself from abetting it. The Cress letters say as much about the insidious harm that comes with patriarchy and its persistence in the supposedly humane world of letters as they do about Williams's personal meanness.[69] The refrain "Beautiful thing" from Williams's harrowing 1937 poem "Paterson: Episode 17," runs through Book Three, associating the revenge of history on the Eliotic reader with the sexual violence, racism, and poverty to which the "beautiful thing" in that poem is subjected.[70] After *Paterson*'s encyclopedic architecture collapses and no longer assimilates its disquieting archival interpolations to any total design, readers are left to come to their own understanding of those documents, most of which concern the violence that power does to the weak and that greed inflicts on nonhuman life. Williams pointedly includes the kinds of ugly particulars canonical history typically abstracts out of the stories we live by. But, even as he does so, he continually insists that poetic authority and poetic language as they are normally constituted in his time and place, the fundamental stuff of culture as he and his readers know it, contribute to that sort of effacement, as a matter of course.

Throughout *Paterson*, Williams indicates that for him there is no participating in American culture without abstracting ugly, raw realities and making those realities easier to live

with for those who are not harmed by them. Encyclopedism is his target because it is an especially formidable engine of abstraction, which makes modernism's encyclopedic turn a special calamity, but the problem is not just the encyclopedia. All the ways of writing that are available to him seem suspect, and, as he says many times in the poem, he does not know what to do about it. Near the start of Book Three, he berates himself:

> Give it up. Quit it. Stop writing.
> "Saintlike" you will never
> separate that stain of sense,
>
> an offense
> to love, the mind's worm eating
> out the core, unappeased
>
> —never separate that stain
> of sense from the inert mass. Never.
> Never that radiance
>
> quartered apart,
> unapproached by symbols . (131-32)

Things are purified by the ways poetry assimilates them to thought and language, and that purification corrupts them. The "stain of sense" that contaminates poetic language is a morally befouling cleanliness. "No ideas but in things" is the right motto, but it does not make for much of a praxis. Language is things in ideas, not the other way around, and that is all he has to work with. So, Williams renounces poetic mastery, embraces failure as a guiding principle, and bashes away at received form and language seemingly any way he can think of. Taking stock at the start of the final section of Book Four, he sums up his calculation: "It is dangerous to leave written that which is badly written. […] Only one answer: write carelessly so that nothing that is not green will survive" (155).

Earlier, in Book One, he encapsulates the political bent of his anti-encyclopedism in a gnomic exchange with Pound:

P. Your interest is in the bloody loam but what
I'm after is the finished product.

I. Leadership passes into empire; empire begets in-
solence; insolence brings ruin. (50)

With Pound's plunge into fascism in the 30s and 40s, *The Cantos* becomes the textbook example of the encyclopedia's susceptibility to inhumane abstraction. Privileging finished product means giving up the rigor that ought to keep a process-oriented poet out of such trouble. Near the beginning of Book Two, Williams more explicitly positions *Paterson* as a corrective to *The Cantos* as they have evolved away from Pound's earlier poetics. He rewrites Canto XLV—the canto on which Pound's poem pivots decisively from the unprogrammatic, largely formless searching of the earliest cantos to the pursuit of a totalizing finished product—as a call for a comprehensive renewal of thought, language, and form. "With usura hath no man a house of good stone / each block cut smooth and well fitting"[71] becomes "Without invention nothing is well spaced." The pastiche continues:

unless the mind change, unless
the stars are new measured, according
to their relative positions, the
line will not change, the necessity
will not matriculate: unless there is
a new mind there cannot be a new
line, the old will go on
repeating itself with recurring
deadliness (65)

Pound's warnings that usury will bring about the adulteration of bread, the interruption of honest work, disorientation and dispossession, an end to masterpieces and cathedrals, the blockage of reproduction, and an atmosphere of death, among other unwelcome developments,[72] are matched, in a similar cadence, by intimations of drought and extinction that will come without revival of "the word" that once "lived in [the line], crumbled now to chalk" (65).

Pound responds to Williams's provocation as one might expect him to. He clearly grasps what Williams is doing in rewriting "With *Usura*," indulges him in a friendly way, with the usual learned-hayseed condescension, and gets right back onto his hobby horse. In a letter from 1950, he writes:

> IN
> venshun
> O.KAY
> IN venshun
> and seeinz az how yu hv/ started. Will yu consider
> a remedy of a lot:
> i.e.
> LOCAL control of purchasing power.??
> Difference between squalor of spreading slums
> and splendour of renaissance italian cities.[73]

Pound may have been tweaked by how Williams turns to the question of usury soon after the "Without invention" passage by including several long quotations from pamphlets on political economy Pound had recommended to him (84, 86-87, 90, 91-92) and arranging them in counterpoint with a long, sententious soapbox sermon about the evils of money (82-93). This repurposing enables Williams to give Pound's views on credit, which he agreed with in the broadest outline, a generous airing in the poem, while implying that the economic sermonizing of the later *Cantos* is an example of the worn-out language poets should be trying to shed.

Williams addresses Pound again in Book Four, with the three oddest pages in the poem. The first is a jumble of mostly unrelated lines, most in English but some in French, some off-kilter and crowded together (164). The text seems to be falling apart or in on itself. The next page reprints a 1948 letter in which Pound loads Williams up with typically Poundian reading duties: "you *need* to / read fer yr/ mind's sake. [...] *all* the Gk tragedies / in Loeb—plus / Gessell plus Brooks Adams"—and on and on (165). Book Four's third page reproduces a geological chart listing the specimens recorded at different depths from an artesian well dug in Paterson in

1879 and 1880. It stops at 2,100 feet, the depth at which it was determined the water was "altogether unfit for ordinary use" (166). The first page seems to show language that is worn out or that Williams is breaking. (On that reading, this is the poem's most literal realization of his drive to destroy language.) The second page gets at Pound's intellectualism and Williams's lack of it—the unsolicited reading lists that Pound never stopped sending drove him crazy.[74] As for the artesian well: there is failure there and experimentation and probably an oblique comment on the sort of profundity Pound aims for in the later *Cantos*.

The exact connection between the three pages is difficult to work out, particularly given how pointed is the poem's purposeful carelessness and underdetermination, but the outlines of what Williams means to say are fairly clear. In surrounding Pound's reading list with the caved-in page and useless well, Williams may simply be hinting that Pound, for all his intellectual bravura, has wasted his later years and come up dry. He may also be contrasting his principled breaking of received language with the glorified bibliography of the more encyclopedic Cantos, while having the third page show careful observation of things as they are and the folly of looking past that to what isn't there. Or, if the first page does sum up Williams's project in *Paterson*, the sequence could be a true rebus and a terrible joke: "Gist—Ez—well." He could be speaking, at least partly, in a private code. Williams's reckoning with Pound is intensely personal. At all events, the pages evidently did get a message across. Pound replies:

> Yas som lively itemz
> & crizism deaf-eated by lack of page numberz
> 2,100 ft. = thaz v. interestin' page
> but dont prove there aint no water no where.[75]

They will have to agree to disagree.

Williams's position is radical enough that it would be difficult to win anyone over to it, even the person whose earlier work it derives from. It could be that nothing lasting can survive his

performance of poetic self-destruction. Being unable to remove himself from the "recurring deadliness" of received ways of writing and the larger systems of meaning that sustain them, locked into his subject position like Sam Patch frozen in the Passaic, Williams exposes that deadliness and makes a show of rejecting the language that abets it. He does his best to keep himself honest by inviting, opening the poem up to, and representing failure. In failing he can contest prevailing conditions for poetic success without overcoming them and rehearse the destruction of the systems he is opposed to but stuck in. However, that seems to be about all he can do. Several times in the poem, Williams considers giving up writing. He urges himself to quit in the "stain of sense" passage, and he is still at it a few pages later when he says:

> Quit it. Quit this place. Go where all
> mouths are rinsed: to the river for
> an answer
> for relief from 'meaning' (135)

Throughout *Paterson* the river is where you go to escape abstraction. You go to the river to have a pure experience of the world in its impurity, uncontaminated by the rarefying mediation of signs and symbols. The idea surfaces when Sam Patch leaps over the falls:

> The water pouring still
> from the edge of the rocks, filling
> his ears with its sound, hard to interpret.
> A wonder! (26)

It is there in Williams's description of the final destruction of the library, by flood, in Book Three: "—the water at this stage no lullaby but a piston, / cohabitous, scouring the stones . ," and in the pointedly anti-Eliotic description he gives of the poem's temporality at the very end of that book:

> The past above, the future below
> and the present pouring down: the roar,
> the roar of the present, a speech—
> is, of necessity, my sole concern (172)

The noise of the river, its wash and roar, repeatedly enters the poem as a rush of unmediated materiality. Other noise in the poem is likewise associated with relief from meaning: the yahs and barks of the dogs in Book Two, the fire's "multiformity of laughter" as it 'unbottles' a melting bottle in Book Three, the "dissonance [that] // leads to discovery" mentioned in Book Four (207).

At its most rigorous, *Paterson* aspires to the materiality, unintelligibility, and inchoateness of noise. When Williams approaches a way out of his enmeshment in forms and language implicated in the unspeakable, he imagines the roar of the Falls. Acoustic noise is sound at its most material, sound as an unstained inert mass. Its representation may be about as close as mimetic poetry can get to the raw materiality Williams privileges in *Paterson*. Acoustic noise embodies semantic noise—the opposite of signal, that which does not signify. It is what is left when form and language have been smashed to the utmost. Noise may be the best figure the poem has for its rejection of the intellectual. But Williams is no sound poet. Although he was a spirited, if fussy, public reader, his poems do not even seem written to be read aloud. In *Paterson* noise is only represented—except, arguably, in one small way.

Those strange stray periods are the closest Williams comes to materializing noise in *Paterson*. They blot its pages, showing that the blank parts of the poem are physical space, not an abstract plane. Are they motes of inscrutable materiality, "unapproached by symbols," or canceled symbols signifying as such? All together, they make the pages look fly-specked or a little soiled—composing a stain of nonsense, a running crackle of semantic noise. They suggest dirt and the return to home ground Williams desires. Older readers might recall video noise breaking through a TV show on an analog set; younger ones would be likelier to see dead pixels. Williams's pointless periods inscribe on most of the poem's pages a hint of the resistance to dematerializing

abstraction within an inescapably symbolic medium. They are a continual reminder that the poem is also a physical thing: traces, everywhere in *Paterson*, of the poem it would be if it could, the very farthest thing from an encyclopedia.

NOTES

[1] Frederic Jameson, "The Poetics of Totality," *The Modernist Papers* (London: Verso, 2007), 20.

[2] Jameson writes: "some of us resist the canonicity of Williams's Fifth Book, which would tend to open *Paterson* up into the endless work-in-progress diaries of Pound, Olsen, and Zukofsky; whereas the fact of the four books seems somehow as monumental and irrevocable as the Joyce/Viconian cycle" (19). I agree that the four-book *Paterson* has an integrity that makes the later additions seem awkwardly grafted on, and, more specifically, that Williams's decision to make *Paterson* an open-ended life poem on the Poundian model is at odds with the project of the original version. The additions also seem to me to assimilate some of his least compelling writing to his most powerful. But my reason for bracketing off the first four books here is simpler than any of that: the additions come from a different phase of Williams's career, after he had adopted a different poetics. My interest here lies in what I see as the anti-encyclopedic poetics that determined his original conception of the poem. Congruent or incongruent, good or bad, the later stuff is not relevant to my argument.

[3] Randall Jarrell, "The Poet and His Public" [a review essay also taking in books by Robert Graves, Elizabeth Bishop, and others], *Partisan Review* 13.4 (October-November 1946), 493-498. "*Paterson* by William Carlos Williams," which appears in Jarrell's *Selected Essays*, stitches together this essay and the one cited below, "A View of Three Poets."

Though in this connection Jarrell prefers Williams to Eliot, who is not affirming enough for his liking, his understanding of Book One owes a lot to Eliot's reading of *Ulysses* (and its implicit gloss on *The Waste Land*) in "Ulysses, Order, and Myth" (1923; T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land: Authoritative Text, Context, Criticism*, Norton Critical Editions, ed. Michael North (New York: Norton, 2001) 128-32.)

[4] Jarrell, "A View of Three Poets" [also considered: early work by Richard Wilbur and Robert Lowell], *Partisan Review* 18.6 (November-December 1961), 689. The section of the piece about Williams runs from 698 to 700. "*Paterson* by William Carlos Williams," which appears in Jarrell's *Selected Essays*, stitches together the two reviews cited here.

[5] It did not help that even after Jarrell had badly soured on *Paterson*, James Laughlin engaged him to write the introduction to Williams's *Selected Poems* (New York: New Directions, 1949; republished with a different selection of poems, but with Jarrell's original introduction, in 1968). As a result, Jarrell was hugely influential in determining Williams's reception among nonspecialist readers as well as among critics, and the popular and critical attitudes he shaped were no doubt mutually reinforcing. His introduction is a fine critical essay but a dubious piece of salesmanship. He gives a sensitive, generous reading of Williams's life's work, and he is much kinder about *Paterson* than in his second review, though also conspicuously vague in discussing it. Still, he cannot help reflecting on Williams's simplicity, the virtues of his many bad poems, the narrowness of his range, his "underemphasis on organization, logic, narrative, generalization," and, again, his lack of intellectualism, for better or worse (ix-xviii). Paul Mariani argues that "the sense one was left with" reading Jarrell's introduction, "that one was dealing here with a circumscribed and

minor talent," "came to narrow the entrance to the one volume most readers of Williams were to pick up for the next thirty years" (586). New Directions replaced that volume with a selection chosen and introduced by Charles Tomlinson in 1976.

[6] Paul Mariani, *William Carlos Williams: A New World Naked* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981) 613.

[7] See, for instance, Margaret Glynne Lloyd, *Paterson: A Critical Reappraisal* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press: 1980); Greg Easterbrook, "'Somehow Disturbed at the Core': Words and Things in William Carlos Williams," *South Central Review* 11.3 (Autumn 1994), 25-44; Carla Billitteri, "William Carlos Williams and the Politics of Form," *Journal of Modern Literature* 30.2 (Winter 2007), 42-63; and Jameson's essay.

[8] Easterbrook details how this came to be, with particular emphasis on the reception of Williams's most popular short lyrics in the 1970s and 80s (26-29).

[9] Herbert Leibowitz, *"Something Urgent I Have to Say to You": The Life and Works of William Carlos Williams* (New York: FSG, 2011) 377.

[10] Williams, *Autobiography* 146, 174.

[11] Williams, *Autobiography*, 146, and Emily Mitchell Wallace, "Youthful Days and Costly Hours," *Ezra Pound & William Carlos Williams* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983) 18. Wallace allows that Williams didn't take any college-level classes in languages or literature.

[12] *Pound/Williams: Selected Letters of Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams*, ed. Hugh Witemeyer (New York: New Directions, 1996), 219.

[13] Jarrell, "Three Poets," 700.

[14] Williams, "A Point for American Criticism," 1929, *Selected Essays* (New York: Random House, 1954), 90. Williams's essay first appeared in the collection *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress*, alongside its editor Samuel Beckett's essay, "Dante . . . Bruno . Vico . . Joyce," which pursues a similar reading.

[15] Williams, "A 1 Pound Stein," 1935, *Selected Essays* 163.

[16] Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information Before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 14-16.

Although it is a separate development in literary history, this school has always been a kind of opposition party to the encyclopedic tradition. Seneca's warning that "the abundance of books is distraction," which becomes a deletionist credo in antiquity and the Middle Ages, is contemporary with the first great encyclopedic project in European literature, Pliny's *Natural History* (5). Descartes' foundationalist repudiation of accumulated knowledge comes at the end

of the first, medieval age of encyclopedias (15). "Index learning"—Jonathan Swift's coinage, a deletionist term of contempt—gains currency at the height of Enlightenment encyclopedism (144).

[17] "Association of Deletionist Wikipedians," meta.wikimedia.org, accessed October 5, 2017.

[18] Nicholson Baker's account of his short career as a crusading inclusionist gives a good feel for the controversy: "The Charms of Wikipedia," *New York Review of Books* 55.4, March 30, 2008.

[19] Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" *The New Age* X.5-17 (Nov. 30, 1911-Feb 22, 1912), first instance of the note at 130. Subsequent references will be made in the text.

[20] Pound, *Selected Prose 1909-1965*, ed. William Cookson (New York: New Directions, 1974), 19-44. A few months before he died, Pound wrote a half-page preface for the book in which he says that he approves of Cookson's selection. It seems a stretch to read that as an endorsement of his abridgment of the essay (6).

That being said, Pound continually republished and repurposed his work and over six decades never saw fit to reprint or revise the essay in its original form. This is a good sign that those who treat it as an inchoate first draft of later, more canonical work are following Pound's lead. But it may also show how singular the essay is. Throughout the first decades of his career, though Pound always seems to be centering something new in his poetics—the image, the vortex, the ideogram, and on and on—he assimilates older critical or theoretical writing to his new thinking as a matter of course and rarely has trouble making it work. As late as the 30s, he continues to pretend to lifelong consistency, at which point his doing so despite his having reoriented his work so often feels like a kind of running joke. In its full, original form, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" seems inextricably bound up with the poetics it materializes in a way that speaks to how potently its form signifies and sets it apart from the young Pound's other exercises in self-definition.

[21] Pound, "The Wisdom of Poetry," *The Forum* (April 1912), 501.

[22] Pound, "The Serious Artist," *The New Freewoman* 9.1 (Oct. 15, 1913), 162.

[23] Pound, "Arnold Dolmetsch," *The Egoist* 7.4 (August 1917), 104.

[24] Pound, "VORTEX.," *Blast* 1 (June 1914), 153.

[25] Pound, "How to Read," 1927, *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T.S. Eliot (London, Faber and Faber, 1954), 22.

[26] Pound, "The Serious Artist," 161, 162.

As Pound's politics begin to tilt rightward, he comes to emphasize the influence that the richer "data for ethics" he thought poetry ought to supply might have on the most powerful men. He takes Flaubert's remark about the Franco-Prussian War, "If they had read my 'Education Sentimentale,' these things would not have happened," as the epigraph for a major essay in 1917 ("Provincialism the Enemy," *The New Age* 21.11-14 (June-August 1917), 244) and alludes to it again in his review of *Ulysses*, at the end of which he laments:

> *Le beau monde gouverne*—or did once—because it had access to condensed knowledge, the middle ages were ruled by those who could read, an aristocracy received Machiavelli's treatise before the serfs. A very limited plutocracy now gets the news, of which a fraction (not likely to throw too much light upon proximate markets) is later printed in newspapers. Jefferson was perhaps the last American official to have any general sense of civilization. ("Paris Letter: *Ulysses*," *The Dial* (June 1922), 628-29)

That nostalgia for a heyday of strong Italian leaders should, to say the least, register uneasily with readers who have the benefit of hindsight. Yet even here Pound is imagining wiser government for a democracy, albeit a more elitist one, and the basic idea, that by adopting his version of deletionism, literature can inform consequential decisions by citizens who might not be interested in literature, is the same.

[27] Pound, "The Wisdom of Poetry," 498-99.

[28] Pound, "Paris Letter: *Ulysses*," *The Dial* (June 1922), 629.

[29] Pound, "The Wisdom of Poetry," 499.

[30] Williams's red-wheelbarrow poem, written almost a decade later, is the next most popular choice.

[31] Pound [as F.S. Flint], "Imagisme," *Poetry* 1.6 (March 1913), 199.

[32] Pound, "A Few Don'ts by An Imagiste," *Poetry* 1.6 (March 1913), 200 and 201.

[33] Pound, "Vorticism," 1914, in *Gaudier-Brzeska* (New York: John Lane Company, 1916), 102.

[34] Pound vacillates between adopting vorticism as a term to replace imagism, as he seems to do in his contributions to *BLAST*, and treating it as an umbrella term covering imagism in poetry and other modernist isms in other genres. His essay in *BLAST* repeats his earlier ideas but recasts images as vortices, a substitution that flips the emphasis in construing information overload from overaccumulation to overflow. In the later essay "Vorticism," he commits himself less, claiming that he, Lewis, Gaudier-Brezeska, et al. used "the term 'vorticist' when [they] wished a designation that would be equally applicable to a certain basis for all the arts. Obviously you cannot have 'cubist' poetry or 'imagist' painting" (93). Pound still does a lot of thinking in terms of flows and currents here, but he goes back to using "image" as his key term.

At another point in that essay, he briefly describes imagism as a core, visually-oriented poetic mode, saying that if lyric "poetry where music, sheer melody, seems as if it were just bursting into speech," imagism is "poetry where painting or sculpture seems as if it were 'just coming over into speech'" (95). This is an anomaly in his early theorizing: he seems for a moment to present imagism as exactly what the ordinary meaning of "image" would suggest it is. But this seems less like an abrupt change of mind than either a thought quickly entertained and discarded or a weird extrapolation from his usual position. As regards the first possibility: Pound often floats ideas that do not find a place in the pattern of his thinking and contradicts himself all

the time. As for the other: starting in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," Pound argues that the thoroughgoing reduction that culture's reckoning with information overload requires must involve matching subject matter to the medium that will permit its most "explicit and precise expression" (343). This argument—a sort of inverted precursor to the medium-specificity argument Clement Greenberg makes in "Modern Painting"—becomes increasingly prominent in later essays. In that anomalous moment in "Vorticism," maybe in an effort to claim as much common ground with vorticist painting and sculpture as possible, Pound seems to try out the idea that broadly visual poetry is a medium more conducive to the work of information management than broadly musical poetry. If so, it is not an idea he sticks with.

[35] Pound, "Vorticism," 99,100, and "VORTEX.," 153, 154.

[36] Pound, "The Serious Artist," 214.

[37] Pound, "A Few Don'ts," 206, 199-200.

[38] Pound, "Provincialism the Enemy," 245, 269, 289. Although his invective against the university follows clearly enough from the philosophy he begins articulating in "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris," there is no mistaking the jingoism that adds an ugly something to the later essay's vociferousness.

[39] An image is a concrete "thing" and a "natural object," an "intellectual and emotional complex" compressed in time, the "primary pigment" of a not-necessarily-visual sort of poetry that has some special relationship to the visual, "a radiant node," a piece of language scoured to its essentials, and the "permanent part" of whatever writing endures ("Vorticism, 106, 109). Where Pound recasts the image as the vortex—a concession to the vorticists that he never quite commits to and a turn to his more dynamic conception of information overload—it is also "the point of maximum energy" at which cultural currents converge ("VORTEX.," 153). Also, an image is like a symbol but not a symbol:

> The symbolists dealt in "association," that is, in a sort of allusion, almost of allegory. They degraded the symbol to the status of a word. They made it a form of metonymy. One can be grossly "symbolic," for example, by using the term "cross" to mean "trial." The symbolist's symbols have a fixed value, like numbers in arithmetic, like 1, 2, and 7. The imagiste's images have a variable significance, like the signs *a*, *b* &, and *x* in algebra. ("Vorticism," 97)

So, an image is a node and an icon the way a symbol is. It crystallizes connections and concentrates meaning. The difference is, besides the plain sense of its words, an image's content is determined by the specificities of what it brings into language. None of the connotative meaning is received. Imagism uses the structure of a symbol to try to convey the particular with something like the force of the deep traditional association.

This is extremely sophisticated, and it could be a strong foundation for a poetics. Yet it is doubtful that it accurately describes the work Pound is championing under the imagist banner, and it is a *lot* of complicated definition for the easily-misunderstood term "image" to bear.

[40] Pound, "Vorticism," 109.

[41] Pound, "A Retrospect," *Pavannes and Divisions* (New York: Knopf, 1918), 104.

[42] Pound, "T.S. Eliot," *Poetry* 10.5 (August 1917), 268.

[43] Pound, "Arnold Dolmetsch," 105.

[44] Pound, "A Retrospect," 94.

[45] E.g. "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" 131, 180, 344; "The Wisdom of Poetry" 500-501; "A Few Don'ts" 204; and "The Serious Artist" 161-63.

[46] *The Letters of Ezra Pound: 1907–1941*, ed. D. D. Paige (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1950) 169.

[47] John Whittier-Ferguson, "Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, and the Modern Epic," *The Cambridge Companion to the Epic*, ed. Catherine Bates (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[48] Ezra Pound, *A Lume Spento* [E-book], 1908 (Perscribo Publishing, 2011) n.p. He does not include the poem in *Personae* or his *Collected Shorter Poems*, suggesting, maybe, a tinge of embarrassment at how far ahead of himself he had gotten, though when he compiled those volumes, his nearly-fifty-year epic was well underway.

[49] If Pound's claim is difficult to countenance, he may still deserve points for prescience about Williams's yet-unwritten epic-scale poem, as he is discussing Homer in connection with Williams. "Dr. Williams' Position," *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T.S. Eliot (London, Faber and Faber, 1954) 394.

[50] James Longenbach, *Modernist Poetics of History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991) 133, 136-43.

[51] Whittier-Ferguson, 223, 226. His Pound quotation is from *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (London: Stanley Nott, 1935), 128.

[52] For more on how the traditional cultural roles of meter and memorization persisted, with changes, long into the twentieth century, see Meredith Martin, *The Rise of English Meter: Poetry and English National Culture, 1860-1930* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012)—which takes up memorization as well as meter—and Catherine Robson, *Heart Beats: Everyday Life and the Memorized Poem* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[53] This is the basis for C.D. Blanton's argument about Eliot's encyclopedism, which I discuss at length in the next chapter.

[54] John Whittier-Ferguson, "Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, and the Modern Epic," *The Cambridge Companion to the Epic*, ed. Catherine Bates (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 211.

[55] Those reviews are "Excerpts from a Critical Sketch: A Draft of XXX Cantos by Ezra Pound" (1931), "A 1 Pound Stein" (1934), and "Pound's Eleven New 'Cantos'" (1934), collected in *Selected Essays of William Carlos Williams* (New York: Random House, 1954) 105-112, 162-66, 167-170; "The Fistula of the Law," *Imagi* 4.4 (Spring 1949), 10-11; and "E.P.'s Cantos," written for *Four Pages* in 1950, but shelved and first published in Thomas Parkinson, "Pound and Williams," *Ezra Pound Among the Poets*, ed. George Bornstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 163-164. The increasing obscurity of the venues in which he elected to praise Pound's work may hint at his waning enthusiasm.

[56] *The Selected Letters of William Carlos Williams*, ed. John C. Thirlwall (New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1957), 254.

[57] Williams, "XXX Cantos," 109 and "The Fistula of the Law," 11 (emphasis very much his).

[58] Williams, "XXX Cantos," 106 and "The Fistula of the Law," 10-11.

[59] Williams, "A 1 Pound Stein," 165, but also see, for example, "XXX Cantos," 107 and 109-110, "Eleven New 'Cantos,'" 168-169, and "The Fistula of the Law," 10.

[60] William Carlos Williams, *Paterson* (New York: New Directions, 1963) 14 and 18. It is repeated a third time with a variation as "No ideas but in the facts" (39). The phrase first appears in Williams's 1944 poem "A Sort of Song" (*Selected Poems*, ed. Randall Jarrell (New York: New Directions, 1949), 108-09.) Subsequent citations of *Paterson* will be made in the text.

[61] Jarrell, "The Poet and His Public," 493-494.

[62] He resumed the correspondence after publishing Book Two but did not ask her permission to use the letters.

[63] Longenbach, *Modernist Poetics of History*, 133, 136-43.

[64] It seems to me the Cress letters do this formidably and decisively, but there are strong contrary readings. In particular, a number of second-wave feminist critics have argued that the authority Williams exercises in excerpting and arranging Nardi's letters is more significant than any relinquishing of authority he might effect by including them. Theodora Graham argues that he tries to make her sound unreasonable and unstable ("'Her Heigh Compleynte': The Cress Letters of William Carlos Williams' *Paterson*," *Ezra Pound & William Carlos Williams*, 164-193); Sandra Gilbert, that he tries to bring her into the poem as character of his rather than as her own person ("Purloined Letters: William Carlos Williams and 'Cress,'" *William Carlos Williams Review* 11.2 (Fall 1985), 5-15).

[65] Williams to Robert D. Pepper, 21 August, 1951, qtd. in Margaret Glynne Lloyd, *Paterson: A Critical Reappraisal* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press: 1980), 220.

[66] Jarrell, "A View of Three Poets," 699.

[67] Blair 16-17, 21, and passim.

[68] *Pound/Williams*, 49. This is a constant theme in Williams's writing and correspondence, almost from the very beginning, but see, for example, his letter to Pound of March 29, 1922 (56) or the preface to *Kora in Hell*, in which he counters Pound's accusation that, given his Puerto Rican and mixed European heritage, it's "INCONCEIVABLE!!!!!" that he should be considered a "REAL American," by describing Pound as, at heart, a French diplomat and "the best enemy United States verse has" (1918; *Imaginations* [New York: New Directions, 1970] 10-12, 26).

[69] In the next chapter we will see just how thoroughly women authors are shut out of encyclopedic modernism in its canonical form.

[70] Williams, "Paterson: Episode 17," 1937, *Selected Poems* 85-89.

[71] Pound, *The Fifth Decad of the Cantos XLII–LI*, 1937, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (New York: New Directions, 1970), 229.

[72] Pound, *Fifth Decad of the Cantos XLII-LI*, 229-230.

[73] *Pound/Williams* 267-268. Williams gamely includes this reply, minus the final two lines, and with different though no less bizarre spacing, in *Paterson* Four (218).

[74] See, for instance, his angry letter to Pound of August 14, 1946 (*Pound/Williams* 235-236).

[75] *Pound/Williams*, 264. The letter is dated December 13, 1949. It appears, slightly modified, in *Paterson* Four (215). Pound is referring to the fact that the installments of *Paterson* were not paginated.

CHAPTER IV

"OF CIRCULAR TRADITIONS AND IMPOSTURES":

MARIANNE MOORE'S UNENCYCLOPEDIC ENCYCLOPEDISM

> *As for Miss Marianne Moore, her notes to poems are always pertinent, curious, conclusive, delightful and give no encouragement whatever to the researcher of origins.*
>
> T.S. Eliot, "The Frontiers of Criticism" (1957)

"Marriage"—Marianne Moore's longest poem and, along with "An Octopus," "The Fish," the first versions of "Poetry," and perhaps a couple of others, the defining work of the initial, formative phase of her career—begins with a typically oblique and equivocal declaration about its subject:

> This institution,
> perhaps one should say enterprise
> out of respect for which
> one says one need not change one's mind
> about a thing one has believed in,
> requiring public promises
> of one's intention
> to fulfill a private obligation:
> I wonder what Adam and Eve
> think of it by this time,
> this fire-gilt steel
> alive with goldenness;
> how bright it shows—
> "of circular traditions and impostures,
> committing many spoils,"
> requiring all one's criminal ingenuity
> to avoid![1]

These lines provide a slant synopsis of Moore's thinking, which anchors the poem's roving, esoteric deliberations. Marriage, like "Marriage," confuses as it combines and constructs. That confusion may be innocent but is nonetheless pernicious. The official conflation of private and public life, past and present selves, and oneself and one's partner makes a married person a kind of impostor. Despite its luster and the advantages it confers, that is a position to try hard to avoid. The poem does not abjure marriage, there at the outset or at length, but it clearly affiliates its speaker with those enterprising nonconformists who are not confined by the "circular traditions" the institution consolidates and centers.

But hold on: what is a circular tradition? It appears that no one can say for sure. Critics tend to skirt the phrase when they write about those lines or else take it as understood. Several squinting close readers refer "circular" to a wedding ring they descry in "fire-gilt steel / alive with goldenness."[2] That is not implausible—though: a steel wedding ring?—but such a glancing connection can hardly suffice as an explanation. Other readers, reaching if not straining, suggest Moore could be talking about logical circularity or "social practices that lead nowhere."[3] "Circular traditions" might have those connotations, but it seems doubtful they are the thing the phrase denotes. Still other readers turn to Moore's source for the phrase.[4] In her endnotes to the poem, she attributes the quotation "of circular traditions and impostures, / committing many spoils" to Francis Bacon. Looking up the reference does help clarify the meaning of the whole sentence, yet for the more specific purpose of defining "circular traditions," there is a problem. Moore either mistranscribed or changed a crucial word when she copied out the excerpt she is quoting. The excerpt is from a 1592 letter; she found it in the entry on Bacon in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. What Bacon says is that in establishing a scientific basis for common knowledge, he hopes to quash "*auricular* traditions and impostures," that is,

received wisdom and the empirically groundless epistemic authority that it underwrites.[5] Moore appropriates Bacon's stately complaint about standards for proof and expertise in early modern natural philosophy to say that social and sexual mores in her time are likewise hampered by the dead weight of old baggage.

But that does not answer my question. A tradition is auricular (from the Latin *auris*, for ear) if its basis is hearsay. What does it mean for a tradition to be circular? Or, more to the point: what does the phrase *circular traditions* mean to Moore, and how does it relate to marriage as she understands it? There is ample reason to think it means something important to her, whatever it means. "Circular traditions" is the only part of that two-line quotation that she singles out for special mention in the entry for Bacon in her idiosyncratic index to the collection in which the poem first appears, *Observations*, and, unusually for a term that is listed under another one, she also gives it its own separate entry under C (111). She accords it a kind of structural emphasis that is unique in the poem's text, underlining it as a crucial moment, by introducing it in the first sentence and loudly echoing it in the last sentence with the phrase "cycloid inclusiveness" (a cycloid line is one that is described by a point on the outer edge of a rolling wheel) (266). As Darlene Williams Erickson observes, the phrase introduces a pronounced circle motif that is sustained throughout, which serves as a reminder of it.[6] How unusual, though not unlike Moore, to have what is evidently a key term in a major poem to be so opaque.

As far as I have been able to determine, the first recorded instance of "circular traditions" is Moore's mistranscription or interpolation, and the phrase is only ever used in connection with "Marriage." There is, however, a household word that means something close to *circular tradition*. That word is *encyclopedia*. Since Bacon's time, *encyclopedia* has been widely understood to derive from the ancient Greek for circle (*kyklos*) of learning or knowledge

(*paedeia*). It does not, really, but the misunderstanding is perennial. Scholarship from the late twentieth century establishes that the word's real origin is the similar Greek phrase *enkuklios paedeia*, which means something more like "comprehensive education" or "common knowledge." The circle-metaphor etymology is based on a misreading of that phrase similar to Moore's substitution of "circular" for "auricular," which was made well before the classical pedagogical or epistemological ideal of the encyclopedia supplied the name for the reference genre. The authority of that spurious etymology was well established by auricular tradition by the time encyclopedias as we know them became known as encyclopedias around the eighteenth century.[7] It has stuck ever since. Ephraim Chambers and Diderot and d'Alembert take it for granted. Moore's eleventh *Britannica* recurs to it three times in the first paragraph of the entry "Encyclopedia." The latest edition of the *OED* calls it "erroneous" but still repeats it, as it seems most present-day sources do.[8] Had Moore read somewhere about the origin of the word *encyclopedia*—and she was a careful, magpie scourer of dictionaries and other reference works[9]—'*kyklos* + *paedeia*, for "circle of knowledge"' is what she would have learned.

If that etymology is undebunkable, it may be because, whatever the term's actual history might be, the circle is an apposite master figure for encyclopedic form. It captures the way encyclopedias organize the immensities of information they consolidate around themselves by dilating and networking: the culture-centering, intertextually omnifarious quality described from different angles in Edward Mendelson and C.D. Blanton's writing about literary encyclopedism. Canonical works center traditions, and the shape and compass of a tradition changes when its center does. Mendelson's great man theory of literature posits a cleanly unitary version of this, in which single encyclopedic masterworks (or, occasionally, the cumulatively encyclopedic oeuvres of one author) center and define cultures until they are displaced by others.[10] The reality is surely

more like a shifting Venn diagram, with multiple circles and clusters of circles jostling and pulling the center around as new works are written and received and the vicissitudes of literary history move older works in from the margins or out toward them. But, in any case, because of the scale on which encyclopedias are written and how deliberately they undertake the work of reconfiguring culture, encyclopedism plays an outsized part in the sort of big-picture cultural evolution Mendelson is concerned with and reveals the encompassing contours of canonicity with unusual clarity.

But centering a tradition means being circumscribed. Blanton describes a related type of concentricity in considering how the modernist encyclopedic poem, exemplified by T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, "intend[s] a larger totality than it mimetically holds." Such a poem is "an index, a massive historical filing system," and, Blanton argues, much of its substance is in what it organizes.[11] (As discussed in Chapter I, this is also an apt characterization of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and is paradigmatic for modernism's encyclopedias.) As Mendelson does, Blanton understands that encyclopedism involves composing much more than what is on the page; that an encyclopedic work is always a double project, in which the primary text and the rearrangement of its cultural archive around itself that it indicates indexically are mutually constitutive. He differs with Mendelson and most other theorists of literary encyclopedism in insisting that meaning is mostly determined in that outer ring. It follows for Blanton that intertextual extension attenuates text. On his reading, *The Waste Land*

> does not merely allude... reinforcing its own language with that of other texts, but systematically externalizes the essential functions of poetic language.... impoverishing the sensuous or aesthetic stratum of unmediated sense—what [the poem's] language manifestly says or means—and reinvesting the poem's hermeneutic operations elsewhere, in a theoretically interminable act of critical reconstruction.[12]

Blanton's argument draws out two aspects of encyclopedism that have special relevance to Moore's avoidance of circular traditions. First, he gives an account of how heavy reliance on external reference has the potential to negate immanent qualities of encyclopedic language. Second, whether or not extensive intertextuality vacates encyclopedic writing, as he polemically concludes, the cogency of his framing of the question of whether it does and the plausibility of his conclusion point up how deeply encyclopedic works depend on the cultural archives in which they are constituted. Encyclopedists reconfigure and redefine the culture they inherit. Their genre requires it. As such, they are specially dependent on that inheritance. Though they have license to draw a new circle defining their tradition as they find it, they can only encompass and include what is there.

What has always been there, from the very beginning, is a world made by men. That may be the biggest thing Moore is getting at in positioning the speaker of "Marriage"—and, by clear implication, herself and her work—outside of circular traditions. She relates encyclopedism to marriage because both enterprises have a basis in patriarchal institutions that is so fundamental, their inhospitality to women cannot be corrected. In Genesis, Adam claims Eve as his wife as soon as she is made for him, before she even gets the chance to speak. She has no name—she is just "the woman" and "his wife"—until he gives her one, after the Fall (Gen 2:24, 3:20). Three lines down from the section quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Moore imagines an unmarried Eve thriving in a part of the garden where there is already culture. She is a kind of ideally capable encyclopedist, "writing outward" ambidextrously in three languages at once, like a woman Moore read about in the *Scientific American* (21-31).[13] Adam finds her, and she asks to be left alone. He, being the original man, replies: "Why not be alone together?" (34), inventing the pick-up line, along with not taking no for an answer.

Adam gets his way, and that is the end of Eve getting to be a woman of letters. From then on, he talks circles around her, "alive with words / vibrating like a cymbal" (73-74), and she has to listen. "Men are monopolists" of social and cultural prestige (204), and, Moore suggests, that begins with monopolizing the conversation. She shows Eve at the periphery of conversations that do not include her, having her subversively intelligent silences ignored by her husband (84-87) and waiting for teatime with the other well-mannered wives who know "that men have power / and sometimes one is made to feel it" (196-97). Adam says, "A wife is a coffin," repeating a remark of Ezra Pound's (215), and Eve feels like a cow (274). When at last she does get some words in edgewise, it is in private, toward the end of the poem, and she seems to have lost herself or to be coming apart. In the final lines, Moore registers the Bible in a formal wedding portrait. "The Book on the writing table" is there for Eve to take instruction from and, especially, for her to swear by (292). The table, as far as she is concerned, is not really for writing. If these are the origins and pattern of our culture, could a genre that speaks through our archives ever really be available to women?

Introduction: Moore Against the Male Monopoly on the Encyclopedia

A hard question looms here: why are there no canonical encyclopedic works by women modernists? The encyclopedic turn I discuss in the first half of this dissertation was a pivotal, defining development for literary modernism, and although patriarchy still limited possibilities for women writers in far-reaching and grievous ways, modernism fostered an enormous amount of major work by women writing in nearly every other prevalent genre. A lot of that work was slow to gain a readership and recognition commensurate with its importance, and plenty remains

neglected, but the list of acknowledged major modernist writers includes a great many women. Why did none of them write encyclopedically as Joyce or Pound or Eliot did?

A simple answer: there are no encyclopedic works by women in the modernist canon for the same lousy reasons there are, in general, so many fewer canonical works by women, and the problem is exacerbated by the outsized demands that encyclopedic writing makes on writers and those they depend on. Writing a book such as *Ulysses* or *The Cantos* and getting it read and appreciated requires material resources (time, private space, money, child care, etc.), accommodation from publishers and other intermediaries, and a special kind of benefit of the doubt in reception, all of which would have been, at best, extraordinarily difficult for a woman writer to secure in the early twentieth century.[14] (How different things are now is an open question.) Having the opportunity to do the work is part of the problem; being taken seriously is another. Quixotic ambitions are something men get to have. When women entertain them, the adjective is *crazy*. Probably, the best a woman modernist working on an encyclopedic scale could realistically have hoped for was the sort of reverent neglect that Gertrude Stein's long and difficult, if not exactly encyclopedic, novel *The Making of Americans* received well into the 1960s.[15] No woman, never mind how brilliant, could have gotten away with being Ezra Pound—Pound was, himself, barely permitted to be Pound—and it is all but unimaginable that a life-work by a woman as huge, weird, and messily miscellaneous as *The Cantos* could have received the same easy, careful publication and reverent reception. Realistically, though, what would have been acceptable for a writer of comparable ambition? It seems about as unlikely that a woman could, say, have adopted a milder public persona along the lines of Joyce's and enjoyed a career and reception comparable to his. The reasons why not would be roughly the same. A woman could as soon have run for President.

Yet that answer may be too easy. Stein and Dorothy Richardson produced major work on a Joycean or Poundian scale, though in each case its form is not encyclopedic in the ways I have been describing. That work did get read and acclaimed, if not as widely and loudly as comparable work by male contemporaries. Richardson's thirteen-novel sequence *Pilgrimage* has a higher page count than *Ulysses*, *Finnegans Wake*, and *The Cantos* put together. It has wavered in and out of print—currently, only two volumes have an American publisher, and that publisher, Broadview, has no plans to bring out any of the others[16]—but there have been a couple of small revivals, and it has never dropped into total neglect. Stein and most of her works were and are strange by any standard, and several are, in various ways, unwieldy. Many of the most difficult of them went unpublished until the decade after she died, including the ultra-hermetic long poem *Stanzas in Meditation*, which many rate as being among her best works; however, since then, nearly her whole corpus has consistently enjoyed a small, devoted, influential audience. *The Making of Americans*, which did not appear unabridged until that first wave of posthumous publications, is not included in the Library of America's hefty two-volume edition of Stein, with its promise of keeping her in print in perpetuity, but Dalkey Archive has mostly kept it available for more than twenty years.

That is all to say that, all else being equal, Richardson and Stein each received a much shabbier reception than male modernists of comparable importance habitually did,[17] yet despite the inequities they faced as women writing big, we have massive, challenging works from both of them, those works have consistently been read as long as they have been available, and they are widely understood to be signal contributions to modernism. For the two of them, at least, the forbidding material and social obstacles outlined above did not prove prohibitive. Still, neither Richardson nor Stein, nor any other canonical woman modernist, extensively avails herself of the

encyclopedia's formal resources to undertake a large-scale reckoning with modernity's immensities, as Eliot, Joyce, Benjamin, and Pound variously do. Granted, sample size is an issue here. It might be that, with so much tending to prevent women from writing enormous, difficult books of any kind and having them read and appreciated, it just happens that the extremely small set of women who could manage it does not include anyone encyclopedically inclined.

But then, how come Virginia Woolf never wrote an encyclopedic novel? Much as Joyce does, at the same literary-historical moment and over more pages, she restlessly reinvents narrative form in order to encompass more and more of life. Nearly every one of the chapter-structuring experiments in *Ulysses* has an analogue in shorter works of hers,[18] and that only makes for a fractional survey of the formal innovation through which she enlarges the scope of her work. Had she opted to exercise the encyclopedic-adjacent impulse that flashes through her oeuvre by attempting the sort of full-on encyclopedic project that makes extensive use of the tradition's resources to approach comprehensiveness, she would have faced fewer obstacles than just about any other woman modernist who might have adopted the genre. She had a room of her own to write in, and there was a printing press in her dining room. Her milieu afforded a rare combination of proximity to the cultural center and permission for women to flout norms. If any woman modernist working anywhere were particularly likely to break the male monopoly on encyclopedic modernism, would it not be Virginia Woolf in Bloomsbury?

The real trouble is not mere lack of opportunity, though. As Mendelson and Blanton establish, encyclopedic works center cultures by building out from their archives. Woolf understands that for women writers, the archive is always a poisoned well. Under patriarchy, which is to say everywhere at all times, the contours and contents of a cultural inheritance will always be determined by institutions in which women have little meaningful presence or power.

Women's voices and experience are excluded as a matter of course. Woolf makes the classic version of this argument in *A Room of One's Own*, and several generations of feminist literary history exhaustively bear it out.[19] Although she does not address modernism's encyclopedic turn directly in that essay, she supplies compelling reasons why even a woman writer with her talent and world-writing bent, even one who buys ink by the barrel, would not be able to participate in it. The encyclopedia's constitutive enmeshment with archives and institutions and the power relationships that governs them would seem to guarantee that exclusion.

Were Woolf to attempt, say, a farraginous, multiform eight-hundred-page *Clarissapedia*, drawing as deeply on the archive of European culture as Joyce does in *Ulysses*, how could she avoid writing a monster version of the WOMEN AND POVERTY notebook in *A Room of One's Own*, the encyclopedic survey of man's perennial condescension to woman that she accidentally compiles in the British Museum (32-35)? The museum is a metonym. There is no other archive, nothing else an encyclopedist of female experience could work with. "If truth is not to be found on the shelves of the British Museum, where… is truth?" (28-29).[20] Woolf senses "the accumulation of unrecorded life" all around her (104), but, being unrecorded, that life lacks the materiality and historicity it would need to be available to encyclopedic incorporation.

Whether it is more accurate to say that Woolf eschews encyclopedic extension or merely avoids it, there is no question of her writing encyclopedically. Her father, Leslie Stephen, earned a knighthood for editing the overwhelmingly male-populated *Dictionary of National Biography*, an object lesson in the encyclopedia's congeniality to established power. It is a bugbear and cautionary example for Woolf, a model of how she does not want to write. Her sense that, as Rachel Bowlby puts it, the *DNB* "stands for the epitome of lumbering Victorian seriousness and hypocrisy"[21] is integral to her deeply unflattering characterization of Stephen as Mr. Ramsay in

To the Lighthouse. Toward the end of *Orlando*, her narrator positions the novel's version of biography as a corrective to the *DNB*.[22] In *Three Guineas*, she drily remarks that her argument is limited by the fact that "no lives of maids... are to be found in *The Dictionary of National Biography.*"[23] This all indicates something like a guiding aversion. Although Woolf edges closer to a kind of encyclopedism with later novels such as *The Waves*, *The Years*, and *Between the Acts*, she stays committed to self-contained narrative forms: "everything… inside the book, nothing outside."[24]

With Moore, the matter is more complicated. From most angles, her poetry is as unencyclopedic as poetry gets. She works on a small scale, carefully weighing the objects of her attention as solid things. At 293 lines and seven or eight pages, "Marriage" is not only the longest poem she wrote in more than fifty years, but one of only a small handful of poems that are more than one, two, or three pages long. It would be minimizing to pigeonhole her as a miniaturist, but she tends to approach large subjects by attending to small things. Even when she addresses those subjects directly, as in parts of "Marriage," such as the opening, her eye on them is typically sidelong and glancing. Her poems are discreet and discrete. Their self-containment is evident, at times even palpable; it can feel like a pent-up force. Moore is jealous of a deep kind of privacy, and she asserts her artistic sovereignty as forcefully and insistently as any writer of her time. The openness to partial determination by intertexts, active readers, and critical intermediaries that enables encyclopedic works to encompass as much as they traditionally do and to be hospitable to the types of reading the genre solicits is about is un-Moorelike as an artistic attitude could be.

And yet, Moore makes greater use of the encyclopedic forms and practices than any Anglophone modernist poet besides Eliot or Pound. Compilation was the heart of her poetic

process. Her poems emerged from her “reading diaries,” ordinary datebooks whose dates she disregarded and into which she copied choice excerpts from whatever she was reading, along with running commentary, snatches of conversation, stray thoughts, drawings, and anything else might someday be of interest or of use to her. The logic of this core practice extended to a range of others, which included extensively marking up the books she read and filling them with relevant clippings and other annotative matter; maintaining an elaborate system of vertical files on a wide and miscellaneous array of subjects; and keeping many collections of things. This was not a complement to her writing practice; it was how she wrote her poems. They are the public product of a consuming private encyclopedic project. In compiling, annotating, revising and extending, day in and day out, she developed the interests, thinking, and language that would constitute her canonical life's work.

Moore is a dedicated late practitioner of the sort of everyday, miscellaneous encyclopedism that sustained defunct genres such as the scholar’s compendium, the commonplace book, and the florilegium. Copying and annotating, then working over what she had copied until it became her writing was the basis of her creative life. Though her project was utterly different, she was, with regards to method, a modern counterpart to Pliny or Beauvais. In her crowded reading diaries, compilation and annotation merge into and out of composition. It is all the same activity. This does a lot to determine the form and make-up of her published work. Her poems are packed with quotations, most of them indicated but many silently incorporated, some of them faithful and some irreverently adulterated for effect or even invented. Beginning with *Observations*, she supplies endnotes documenting her sources as a matter of course. Here again, she is punctilious at times, mischievous at others. What is for Eliot, with his notes to *The Waste Land*, a one-off experiment in using encyclopedic apparatus to supplement an especially

quotative poem becomes a trademark for Moore. *Observations* also includes her own one-off encyclopedic experiment: a nine-page double-column index that is somewhere between being a weird, charming curio and an encapsulation of her poetics hidden in plain sight.

What to make of this markedly unencyclopedic writer's use of the encyclopedia? And how does it relate to the treatment of circular traditions in "Marriage"? Analogies only get us so far. As Eliot does, Moore borrows from the encyclopedic tradition to cobble together a modernist landmark that is largely assembled out of other text, but in doing so she seeks above all to avoid writing herself into the center of the canon, which for Eliot is the whole point. The continuity between reading, copying, and writing in her creative practice calls to mind Joyce, from the later stages of composing "Cyclops" through *Finnegans Wake*, with his notesheets and crayons, and also the way that work on *The Arcades Project* anchors Walter Benjamin's writing through the 1930s. Yet whereas Joyce, in metabolizing his reading into original writing, is mainly gathering new language to use for his own purposes, Moore is absorbing herself into and speaking from different subject positions, usually supplying most of the verbal interest herself. She shares Benjamin's deep feeling for the complicated interpenetration of real and written worlds and, as he does, she takes a collector's approach to textual compilation. But as much as she is steeped in the written and otherwise recorded past, in drawing on the archive in her poetry she is not at all concerned with historicity. Like William Carlos Williams, she resists the encyclopedic turn in modernist poetry, and, as in *Paterson*, a sense that encyclopedism is inseparable from deep, ongoing inequity, particularly gender inequity, seems to be at the root of that resistance. It is not for nothing that in his *Autobiography* Williams describes her as the caryatid who held up the bombed-out edifice of American poetry after Eliot detonated *The Waste Land*.[25] But she has no interest in anything like his retaliatory poetics of formal destruction. For her, the encyclopedia is

an argosy of resources that need to be handled carefully and repurposed, not an effigy to obliterate.

This chapter analyzes Moore's unencyclopedic encyclopedism, developing a reading of "Marriage" that unfolds into an argument about *Observations* and the poetics it epitomizes. That poem and volume are my focus because they mark a pivotal moment of self-definition for Moore. *Observations*, published in 1924, is her first authorized book. A collection including most of the same poems, titled *Poems*, was published without her input or consent by her friends H.D. and Bryher in 1921. *Observations* is partly a revised, reorganized, and annotated version of that book, but it adds several new poems, including probably the two most ambitious and encyclopedically informed poems she would ever write: "An Octopus" (which I reserve for treatment elsewhere) and "Marriage," Moore's strange, impersonal song of herself and ars poetica.

"Marriage" is, more than any other, the poem that sets the course for the rest of Moore's career. It is ostensibly a free verse essay on its titular subject, which Moore develops by revolving and reimagining the story of Adam and Eve. Over what is, until the last page, one extremely long strophe, the first couple take their solitary way through history, which for Moore's purposes is a single moment that extends from the Fall to the present, in a lyric and expository phantasmagoria of recontextualized images, paraphrases, and quotations (some of them invented) drawn from a far-ranging, idiosyncratic library of sources (some likewise invented) documented in three pages of notes. Moore treats Adam and Eve as archetypes, of man and woman and husband and wife—she so variously describes them as figures, they are not really intelligible as characters—but the terms of that overdetermination are so peculiar, the poem never essentializes its binaries. Its exposition on marriage is, from the start, also about power, gender, self-sufficiency, and the

position of women writers, among many other things. However obscure, equivocal, and stupendously complicated, "Marriage" sustains a critique of received poetics under patriarchy that cuts at the roots of the encyclopedic tradition even as the poem uses encyclopedic forms and practices. In a poem whose singular, lunar weirdness and wild miscellaneousness make it appear on the surface to be all but apolitical, Moore quietly, half-hiddenly makes a case that resistance to women's writing runs marrow-deep in our culture. It is a steely feminist argument and an explanation of why she writes the way she does. For Moore, avoiding circular traditions—received encyclopedism and the patriarchal trap it represents and reinforces—is a matter of survival.

Encyclopedic apparatus: The index to *Observations*

The index Moore appends to *Observations*, although useless as a finding aid, makes a sort of poetry of the most prosaic reference form while crystalizing crucial aspects of her poetics. *Observations* may be the first-ever volume of poetry to include an index compiled by the author (111-19).[26] Indices were important to Moore, and the index to *Observations* typifies a preoccupation with formal information management that is a fundamental to how she wrote and lived. Moore indexed her reading diaries after she filled them and often penciled indices of passages that most interested her onto the endpapers of books she read, including ones that were already indexed. She did this even when there were only one or two items she chose to record. That she was a meticulous reader of paratext shows in the corrections she made to mistakes in tables of contents and indices to books that are now in her archives. She briefly worked for Melvil Dewey, inventor of the Decimal System, in Lake Placid in 1911,[27] and was, even in that

stage of her life before she had come into her own as a poet, deeply interested in documentation and classification. Her own filing system was unorthodox and idiosyncratic. Its exact principles are not fully known and difficult to reconstruct, because her papers, library, and various collections were reorganized in line with more conventional bibliography when they were processed by the Rosenbach Library in the 1970s. With very few exceptions, the order in which reclassified material had been kept before it arrived was not recorded. But it is evident that on multiple levels and across numerous activities that were mainstays of her creative process and everyday life, organizing information to make it accessible in the special ways that suited her was a constant concern, and playing with forms of information management, a significant expression of mind. Her indices, being invulnerable to the sort of disruptive reorganization that, for example, saw her vertical files rearranged according to new categories and most of the material she annotatively enclosed in books removed and filed away, show that side of her at work with a clarity that is lacking many other places we might look for it.

Moore's index is peculiar in both senses of the word. For a start, unlike in most indices, its entries typically provide a single reference each. There are many headings for thematic terms, but generally only one instance of each theme. As such, the index rarely draws intratextual connections a reader might find interesting, as one would normally expect thematic indexing to do. This is not because the book's poems are thematically disparate. Often, headings indicate a theme that recurs several at several points but only refer the reader to one instance of it: "aspiration, 19, 97," "calamity, 16," "disputation, 79," etc. (References to pages 97-110 are to Moore's notes; they frequently double what is really just one reference.) Even more strikingly, Moore several times gives a single reference for headings beside which much or most of the book could be listed, as with "authors, 73, 103," "knowledge of principles, 17, 97," "literature,

53," "poetry and fastidiousness, 32," and "style, 17, 97." Her choice of which thematic terms to index is likewise conspicuously arbitrary. There is, for instance, no entry for the sea, although Moore continually returns to it as a source of subject matter and imagery. Despite comprising close to a tenth of the book—more than that, if we go by word count instead of pages—the index leaves out many more of its key terms than it includes.

Moore's index is not useful, except as a backloaded, cluttered table of contents. It does not do the kind of work the encyclopedic tradition evolved indices to do. But it is significant and oddly beautiful. It is utterly unlike any index that might be compiled in accordance with normal editorial principles, but how much use could a reader even have for a conventionally useful index to *Observations*? A slim volume of mostly short, referentially inert poems does not present much information to manage. Although *The Waste Land* is less than half as long, notes included, normal indexing would benefit its readers a lot more. That Moore's index affords her readers so little help should be a clue to them as to what they should do with her poems. She gives her reader pages of apparatus that are mainly for them to read, rather than read with. With these, she suggests that meaningful classification, at least as it pertains to her work, might need to be personal and cannot, in any case, be universal. She also obliquely models how she would have the poem be read.

In some respects, Moore's index to *Observations* is like a negative-image counterpart to Joyce's schemata for *Ulysses*.[28] Both are pointedly unhelpful finding aids whose unhelpfulness signifies in instructive ways. Each reduces the work that it abstracts to an absurd exaggeration of key peculiarities of its form and project. For each, that reduction to absurdity instructively undermines ordinary or intuitive use of the apparatus. This defamiliarizes the works and disrupts the generic and historical expectations for reading that attend them. Joyce authorizes an absurd

overabundance of directions for reading his book, more than any reader could practicably follow. Moore gives what can only be read as a partial, idiosyncratic breakdown of hers. No one would ever take it as authoritative, although it comes from the author and is positioned as such. In these opposite but similar ways, Joyce and Moore use the conceit of a purposely frustrating encyclopedic apparatus to encourage unorthodox reading that is consonant with their formal aims. Where Joyce fosters an exploratory, immersive negotiation of the sort of overwhelming information ecology that typifies modernity, Moore models a more careful one. He encourages his readers to embrace the information overload *Ulysses* embodies, participates in, and equivocally celebrates. She nudges hers to partake of her sensibility by approaching the poems in *Observations* as she appears to do in indexing them, not attending to the big picture but instead making discerning, collectorly personal connections with moments in the text.

More than anything else, Moore's index atomizes *Observations*. The bulk of its entries are not thematic. Most indicate discrete, solid objects of attention—things in poems and specimens of language: "alpine buckwheat, 87," "elephants pushing, 26, 28; fog-colored, 37," "four o'clock, 80," "Harvard, glass flowers at, 84," "lizards without thickness, 66," "snowshoes, 90," "supertadpoles, 73," "velvet, antlers, 101; Persian, 65, 102," "zebras, 37." These are jumbled together with the thematic entries and the titles of poems in all caps and the names of persons mentioned or quoted. Moore's emphasis is so much on the accumulation of poetic things, it is likely her reader will soon begin to view those items of information as more pieces of language in the display cases running side by side down the page. By mostly identifying the themes she indexes with single moments in the text, she puts a clear contour on them, giving them a solidity and specificity that bolsters the sense that their immanent qualities as language and as apparatus are what really matters about them. The index's impracticality further prompts the reader to see

all of it this way. Since it is no use as a finding aid, there is nothing much to do but look at it, sound it out bit by bit or column by column, enjoy its most vivid or surprising or euphonic entries ("beavers, thoughtful, 86," "icehacks, 89," "SYCAMORES, SEE BRICKS"), its rhythms and juxtapositions ("Tolstoy"/"torso"/"tortoise"; "truths, 47" alongside "trousers, 87, 108").

That is, finally, what Moore's index is for. Even in the rare instances that an entry traces a motif or thematic connection through multiple poems, Moore is plainly more invested in the tableau and poetry of the list than its content. "Egyptian discernment, 56; low relief, 100; pulled glass, 14; vultures, 12" does not give the reader anything close to a thorough survey of the book's Egyptian motif, nor is it, in itself, a particularly useful précis of it. But it is kind of lovely. The same goes for "jade, black, 41; cockroaches, 55; water, 73." Moore's indexing brings the materiality of her writing into such intense focus that she obscures its rhetoric and associations. In doing that, she models a characteristically self-possessed and connoisseurial approach to negotiating overwhelming flows of information. She also aestheticizes what might be the most prosaic form there is, inaugurating a minor subgenre whose highlights include the index that serves as the ending to Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and Nicholson Baker's poem "From the Index of First Lines."[29]

Encyclopedic apparatus: The Notes to "Marriage"

Moore's quasi-encyclopedic method—her use of compilation as a basis for composition and continual, not to say consistent, self-annotation—is the engine of the unencyclopedic poetic project that the index to *Observation* encapsulates. The most important to underline about this use of encyclopedic forms and practices, typified by the book's endnotes, is her irreverence. She

plays freely, mischievously, with quotation and documentation. There is no saying for sure, but more likely than not, her substitution of "circular" for Bacon's "auricular" in the opening lines of "Marriage" is a misreading and mistranscription rather than an interpolation. Yet that is only because it would be unusual for her to make such a substantial change when first copying a quotation into one of her reading diaries. Otherwise, changing the meaning of her source material is entirely like her.

Moore rearranges, paraphrases, rewrites, and ventriloquizes the sources she cites in her notes. The notes amount to an elaborate performance of diligent documentation. Yet only a small handful of the thirty-three attributed quotations in "Marriage" are verbatim and few preserve the meaning of their originals in the way one would, for example, require with the handling of sources in a term paper. Going through the poem, checking quotations against works cited, it is the close matches that stand out as atypical. Sometimes Moore merely massages the text she is quoting to make it better fit her lines (e.g. at 64-65, 187, 226-227). More frequently, she substantially changes what it says. That she habitually gives quotations new meaning by recontextualizing them is a critical commonplace. How often she changes the plain meaning of her sources, and how drastically she sometimes changes it when she does, is generally overlooked or understated. Moreover, it is hardly ever noticed that she makes some of her quotations up entirely. Her notes look persuasively authoritative, and most of her sources are, or look as though they might be, obscure enough that it would be a bother to look them up. When it comes to using other people's words, readers generally take her at hers.

There is not enough room in this chapter to describe all of Moore's play with her sources in "Marriage," but a few examples ought to give a sense of how various it is and how integral to her process and project. The text that she cites most often in the poem is the Scottish

Nonconformist Richard Baxter's florid and impassioned devotional treatise from 1650, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*. She takes major liberties nearly every time she quotes it. Two diffuse and not particularly elegant passages about the folly of worldly attachment,

> And doth it not tell thee, that all is dirt and dung to Christ; that earth is a dungeon to the celestial glory? Art thou not a spirit thyself, and shouldst thou not love spiritually, even God who is a spirit, and the Father of spirits? Doth not every creature love their like? Why, my soul, art thou like to flesh, or gold, or stately buildings?

and

> If the honour of the ambitious, or the wealth of the covetous person do increase, his heart is lifted up with his estate as a boat that riseth with the rising of the water; if they have but a little more lands or money than their neighbours, how easily may you see it in their countenance and carriage![30]

appear utterly transformed between Moore's inverted commas. They become this carefully set jewel of a quotation, which could be a Caledonian cousin to the lapidary Chinese translations in Pound's *Cathay*:

> "that strange paradise
> unlike flesh, stones,
> gold or stately buildings,
> the choicest piece of my life:
> the heart rising
> in its estate of peace
> as a boat rises
> with the rising of the water" (48-54)

Moore has Eve use those words to describe married life as she wants to, but is not able to, experience it. She borrows some language and a kind of verbal color and energy from Baxter, but the quotation would not be recognizable as coming from him without her note.

Where Moore stays closer to Baxter's wording, she tweaks the text to change his meaning. She takes this extended, mixed metaphor for God's perfect love:

> See what a sea of love is here before thee; cast thyself in, and swim with the arms of thy love in this ocean of His love; fear not lest thou shouldst be drowned or consumed in it. Though it seem as the scalding furnace of lead, yet thou wilt find

> it but mollifying oil: though it seem a furnace of fire, and the hottest that was ever kindled upon earth, yet it is the fire of love and not of wrath, a fire most effectual to extinguish fire; never intended to consume, but to glorify thee. (410-11)

and impiously recasts it as a pithy, cynical metaphor for romantic feeling or sexual desire: "the *illusion* of a fire / effectual to extinguish fire" (116-17; my emphasis). Moore makes a similar tweak in using Baxter's description of the inconstant love he supposes most Christians requite God with—a love "seldom and cold, up and down, mixed, as aguish bodies, with burning and quaking, with a good day and a bad" (50)—to describe conjugal love. In "Marriage," the words "as anguish bodies, with burning and quaking" are boiled down to "malarial" (179). Moore's specification adds to the quotation a slight, mosquito-buzz suggestion of sex, one thing you would never find anywhere in Baxter— delicately suggesting that if Adam and Eve and their successors are unhappy, a prick may be to blame.

Elsewhere, Moore appears to make quotations up out of whole cloth. As Lawrence Rainey notes, a quotation she uses to limn Eve's everyday life, a bit of women's magazine prose that, lineated, recalls Eliot's breezy-banal sketches of social tedium—

> "four o'clock does not exist,
> but at five o'clock
> the ladies in their imperious humility
> are ready to receive you" (191-94)—

does not appear in the source she gives for it, an article about tea drinking customs published in France in 1921. Likewise, Rainey establishes that a fragmentary line Moore ascribes to a Victorian clergyman, George Adam Smith, "the Ahasuerus *tête-à-tête* banquet" (186), appears nowhere in Smith's published writings.[31] The reference to the Purim story, a story about female imposture that is a basis for carnivalesque ritual, when all that seems required in that context is a reference to *some* banquet, may be a hint that Moore is taking a liberty. One of the most famous phrases in "Marriage," "Men are monopolists" (204), which begins a quotation attributed to the

President of Bryn Mawr, Martha Carey Thomas, also appears to be Moore's invention. The rest of the quotation has some basis in the text of the speech Moore cites.[32] I have searched for the quoted line she uses to introduce a section of the poem about Eve's postlapsarian malaise, which she credits to "'George Shock," in hundreds of pages of works by her fellow Bryn Mawr alumna Katharine Riegel Loose, who wrote fiction about hardscrabble Pennsylvania German life under the pen name Georg Schock, and I have yet to find anything even close to it. It is nowhere in the short story "Old Eve," whose protagonist Loose compares to the Biblical Eve, or in any of the others she placed in major publications, or in her most celebrated novel, *Hearts Contending*. The line—"See her, see her in this common world" (42)—certainly sounds like Moore. There could be some reflexive playfulness, as there appears to be in her invocation of Esther, in her use of an obscure woman writer's male pseudonym to pass her own writing off as a quotation.

There can be no doubt Moore makes up quotations. How about making up sources? When Adam feels "plagued" by the nightingale's song, she has him emote a line of fervid, translated-sounding iambic tetrameter: "It clothes me with a shirt of fire" (103, 108). A note refers the reader to "The Nightingale" by one Hagop Boghossian (105). In the first edition of *Observations*, from 1924—but not in Moore's 1925 revision of the book or in any subsequent presentation of the poem and its notes—she adds that "The Nightingale" is a poem in Armenian and that Dr. Boghossian is a professor in "the Department of Philosophy of Worcester College, Massachusetts."

Here is what I know. There is a Worcester College at Oxford and a city called Worcester in Massachusetts but no American Worcester College. Documents contemporary with the poem do sometimes refer to the Worcester Normal School, nowadays Worcester State University, as Worcester College. But it was a teacher-training school then. I do not yet know for sure whether

or not it had a philosophy department in the 1920s, but it looks as though there was no liberal arts curriculum at all until 1963, when the school, which had been renamed Worcester State Teachers College in 1932, became Worcester State College. Given its focus on primary and secondary education up to then, it seems unlikely the Worcester Normal School would have had an Armenian poet-philosopher on the faculty. There is also the College of Wooster in Ohio. In their 536-page finding aid for archival material related to faculty members, "Boheteguy, Henri G." follows "Boes, Kathryn E." The college yearbooks for 1921 and 1923, both of which include a list of faculty, are likewise Hagop-less. A Hagop Boghossian was a Livingston Scholar at Columbia in the 1914-15 school year, but that year's catalogue gives no indication what he studied. I have not found any early twentieth-century record of a poet or a philosopher by that name. Moore did correspond with an Armenian émigré poet named Leon Sorabian Herald, who might have introduced her to the work of a still more obscure countryman whose name is an anagram for "gosh: a song phobia." It could also be that her association with Herald prompted Moore to look at the British government's official report on the Armenian genocide, the so-called Blue Book that was published in 1916, was much written about, and circulated widely. It includes the testimony of "an old Armenian peasant of Van" named Hagop Boghossian. The ear-catching name might have stuck in her mind.[33]

Unencyclopedic Strategies: Documentation Without Intertextuality

An index made for looking at, not looking up. Tricky notes, doctored quotes. The phantom Armenian of Worcester College. Moore's use of the encyclopedic forms and practices is, to say the least, eccentric. It bespeaks unwillingness to concede poetic possibilities or privacy where

her position as a woman writing modernity might seem to offer a choice between the Woolfian beef and prunes of circumscribed ambition and dangerous exposure;[34] also, formidable craftiness in slipping that bind. Formal information management does a complicated sort of double duty in Moore's life and literary work, being the basis of a private discipline and a method of writing to be read. The two cannot be separated or easily reconciled. Writing about Moore's poetry, it is tempting to construe the discipline as subordinate to the method: to say that the compilation, annotation, and textual digestion that constitute most encyclopedic writing into the eighteenth century are the heart of a creative practice that extends to include everyday activities such as reading, letter writing, conversation, and keeping collections, and that absorbs those more intimate parts of Moore's life into her work. But that is only partly true. Her poetry is richly informed by her private immersion in a tremendous variety of information, and there is no untangling poetic practice from the personal engagement, since both are subsumed in her all-encompassing filing system; however, she takes extraordinary care to remove herself from the poems. This goes well beyond the nails-paring, shred-of-platinum impersonality that characterizes so much modernist literature. The poems are shaped by that protectiveness of her privacy as much as they are derived from her private investigations and record. This is irreducibly complicated, and that complication engenders a peculiar alternative to encyclopedic modernism, one that, unencyclopedically, eschews openness, intertextuality, and conspectus in favor of multifaceted privacy and privileges what encyclopedic form signifies over what it affords.

In adapting the encyclopedia to the purposes of modern literature, writers such as Joyce and Eliot attempt the sort of expansive world-writing that encyclopedists traditionally undertake, opening their work intertextually into cultural archives, knowing that, to some degree, it will be

swept up in the flow of information they would have it manage and see its meaning determined externally in ways that are beyond their agency. Moore uses the encyclopedia's traditional resources to construct exquisite complete circuits. She constructs hothouse information ecologies filled with orchids and rare fauna imported from the wider world. Though her poems abound with reference apparatus, they are, for the most part, referentially inert. Eliot's notes to *The Waste Land*, as I explain in the introduction, are an interminable project; Moore's notes to "Marriage" are sufficient and final. As Eliot says of her notes generally, they "give no encouragement whatever to the researcher of origins."[35] Like her index, they stymie the sort of research that turns readers away from the immediacies of the page.

Moore uses encyclopedic apparatus strategically, often against its traditional purposes. The most fundamental of these strategies is her use of documentation for unencyclopedic effect. By *documentation*, I mean two things, which are related: the certification that ordinarily comes with bibliographic documentation and the making of documentary matter. Documentation in the first sense sets expectations. Supplying roughly a page of bibliographic notes for every three pages of poetry that is dense with quotations emphatically tells readers that the author has been meticulous in tracking and reproducing the material she has incorporated intertextually. Giving a book of diligently annotated poems an elaborate index indicates that it has been fastidiously scrutinized at a granular level, bolstering its documentary credibility. In these ways, apart from its content or poetic peculiarities, Moore's encyclopedic apparatus signifies as apparatus. Diegetically, it helps determine how readers construe the speakers in her poems, which amounts to determining how they imagine and understand her. She heavily identifies herself with her speakers and distances them (and herself) from the voices through which they (she) speak(s) by selecting and arranging quotations. The book's apparatus invests her speakers with professorial

authority and a refined but somewhat detached kind of intellectualism. Her public persona, at least until she becomes a bona fide celebrity in the 1950s and 60s, largely derives from those speakers. More basically, her use of documentation prompts readers to trust her. Having so much conspicuous, unnecessary apparatus is a warrant of probity. A well-read reader may be especially liable to assume that her quotations are accurate because, as Leonard Diepeveen demonstrates with respect to Pound, Eliot, and E.E. Cummings, incorporating whole-cloth, unaltered quotations, with their alien texture and approximation of direct access to other subjectivities, is a hallmark of modernist poetry.[36] That Moore is Diepeveen's other major example, despite the thoroughgoing spuriousness of her quoting, suggests that her strategy is effective.

As regards the second sense of the word: documentation makes the words Moore puts between quotation marks read as quotations. "'See her, see her in this common world'" has an added contour or tincture or aura that Moore's epithet for Adam,

> the O thou
> to whom from whom,
> without whom nothing (61-63),

does not have, though Moore appears to have written the first line herself and the second one is, by her standards, a pretty faithful borrowing from Milton (cf. *Paradise Lost* 4.440-41).[37] Moore places some gatherings from her archive between inverted commas and gives notes for them, and she incorporates many others silently. Although Moore criticism tends to underestimate how much she alters her indicated quotations and to miss or overlook instances where she has likely fabricated them, it abounds with evidence of how often she works in unindicated quotations.[38] This strongly suggests she is documenting for the sake of the impression it creates, rather than trying to give her reader the information they need to follow her sources. Partly, this is an aspect of her strategic use of documentation to construct her persona and reinforce the credibility of her

quoting. But it also seems as though she creates documentary matter because it is the kind of thing she likes and, as much as anything else, it is her practice to fill poems with what she likes.

Moore's aesthetic appreciation of the quotation, the note, the index, the index heading, and even the locator number as things in language with a particular form, weight, and valence is palpable in *Observations*. That appreciation is no doubt related to the enthusiasm for filing systems that so determined how she worked and lived. She has a feeling for the immanent qualities of documentation, and it colors her writing. Consider how differently "See her, see her in this common world" or "It clothes me with a shirt of fire" would read coming directly from the speaker of "Marriage." Or think of Moore's most famous footnote and use of quotation without a source. When she includes the "original" 1924 version of "Poetry" as an endnote to the violently redacted three-line version she presents as authoritative in her *Complete Poems*, she places the crucial phrase "imaginary gardens with real toads in them" in quotation marks where before they had been spoken directly.[39] She does not supply a source for the phrase and no one has ever been able to identify one, though critics have searched far and wide. She takes care to revise the line she is ostensibly deleting by giving it a documentary inflection. This, along with making the poem a note and presenting it as a discarded variant, creates a multilayered documentary effect.

Where the index to *Observations* reads sort of like good proto-postmodern poetry, it is at once because of how unlike an ordinary index and how utterly like one it is. Moore is attuned to the weird music of even the most prosaic reference apparatus. She accentuates it without being so obviously intentional that she makes the index unconvincing. In stretches such as

> LIKE A BULLRUSH, 35
> LIKED BY YOU, TO BE, 34
> Lindenmeyr, 102
> lion, land, 93; St. Jerome's 93;
> rampant 93
> LION, SICK, 20, 98

lions, land, 93; water, 93
LITERALIST, PEDANTIC, 30, 99
literature, 53

she draws out and pleasingly intensifies the quiddity of documentation. Part of that is making it feel random. Her play with that sort of immanent documentariness is more aleatory but often as artful as anything in Baker's index poem, with his juxtapositions of opening lines to nonexistent poems like

Ha! Small wonder joists are suspect here, 73
Habit, trial and error, jurisprudence, 161
Hack on, hack on, you specimen of waste, 80
Handel bites the bag, and Bach, 193

and

High birds perform fine surgeries in the air, 113
Him I know, at least the type, 84
Hog-wild at Skinny's, the balding white men bob, 106
Hop, skip, and scumble, 28
How awful! Why'd he say that? Is he just, 44.[40]

As discussed above, she uses the index to foreground the materiality of her poetry. The thing to note here is that it is a specific type of textual materiality with deep roots in the encyclopedic tradition. For Moore the documentary is a poetic register as well as a bibliographic mode. Her version of encyclopedism affords her access to that register without opening her work up to the deep constitutive enmeshment in canonical archives that encyclopedism normally requires.

Moore's strategic use of documentation to authorize and position her poems' speakers and herself and to produce immanent effects adds up to a performance of compilation without the intertextual extension that normally comes with it. Documentation is for her a way of collecting and framing, displaying the things in her poems as things, even as she tweaks and fixes the sort of thing they are. In this, the method of writing and private discipline that overlap in her filing system blur together. Her curiosity is omnivorous, but she exerts careful control in allocating her

attention and organizing the things she has gleaned. Poems like "Marriage" emerge from her crafty, discriminating negotiation of information overload and model a way of writing the world and a reading practice derived from it. As such, they present a direct alternative to literary modernism's prevailing, more-or-less enthusiastically overload-embracing encyclopedism.

Unencyclopedic Strategies: Imposture and Preemption

Moore's alternative to encyclopedic modernism involves recourse to the wealth and variety of poetic possibilities that it does because of two other strategies related to her use of documentation for effect. She derives authority from her tricky use of encyclopedic compilation and the kind of apparatus that traditionally serves to secure an encyclopedic project its place at the center of an intertextual network that doubles as a metonymic reconfiguration of culture. That recourse to the encyclopedic repertoire, along with the persona she develops in playing at documentary diligence, enable her to assume the polyphonic range of encyclopedic writing without entangling herself in that sort of extensive Mendelsonian or Blantonian reference work. She does this, and gets away with it, by adopting imposture as a core creative principle and preempting readers' recognition of it.

As the rare assiduous reader of notes and indices, Moore knows that hardly anyone looks at them carefully, and she also knows as a woman poet that her use of sources will never receive the kind of scrutiny that, for instance, Eliot's does. She turns this knowledge to her advantage, availing herself of the freedom to ventriloquize and invent sources that spurious documentation affords her. This massively enlarges her palette verbally, rhetorically, syntactically, and in terms of the possible dramatis personae of her poems. She speaks through Bacon, Baxter, Boghossian.

She gets to write spiritually inflamed early modern rhetoric, continental salon talk, epigrammatic pronouncements from the president of a venerable northeastern women's college. And she does it all while keeping her cool as the cerebral, desexualized personification of what Ezra Pound describes as pure logopoeia, "poetry that is akin to nothing but language, which is a dance of the intelligence among words and ideas and modification of ideas and characters."[41] Because she keeps up that distant, somewhat ironical pose, or partial pose, the tone and content of her quotations do not reflect on her personally, nor does the huge outlay of gumption it takes to mostly write them herself.

Covert imposture allows Moore to take liberties that would most likely doom a woman writer's reception if she were open about taking them. History strongly suggests that for any woman who presumed to present herself as an encyclopedist like Eliot or Pound, let alone a creatively plagiaristic one, the inescapable question *Who do you think you are?* would be a brick wall. By finding a way to avoid the question, Moore's answer gets to be *Whomever I want*. This is in stark contrast to the stifling, legally and socially ordained impostures Eve has to perform: politely describing marriage as the sacred, heart-buoying paradise outside Paradise that she wishes it were (48-54); acting as though she has nothing to say while Adam talks and talks; waiting with the other wives; pretending to be a "model of petrine fidelity / who 'leaves her peaceful husband / only because she has seen enough of him'" (255-57); and seeming to lose herself when she tries to assert herself in private (204-08, 224-32, 241-48).

Moore demonstrates how imposture can multiply the number of registers and voices in which and subject positions from which a woman writer can speak poetically. This is a kind of theater, not a way of including history on anti-patriarchal terms or subverting the epistemic claims of a traditions made by men. It restores none of "the accumulation of unrecorded life"

Woolf finds missing from the archive; it does not repair or redeem historical erasure. Yet it does give Moore access to, and even a kind of ownership of, the polyphonic possibilities that writing out of the archive has always afforded sufficiently privileged men, and only them. A poet such as Pound or Eliot can generally expect posterity to supply the words of a historical counterpart through whom he can speak in the idiom of any time and station. Women's words largely having gone unrecorded throughout most of history, and the situation in modernity not being so much better, Moore cannot draw on the archive in the same way. Mostly starting from real sources but speaking for herself, she devises a way to write credibly from positions quite unlike her own and generate the archival language her poems need.

Many of the pivotal moments and most memorable lines in "Marriage" are quotations Moore has more or less fabricated: "of circular traditions and impostures" (14); "See her, see her in this common world" (42); "that strange paradise / unlike flesh, gold, or stately buildings" (48-49); "It clothes me with a shirt of fire" (108); "The fact of woman / is 'not the sound of the flute / but very poison'" (201-03; ascribed by Moore to *The Syrian Christ* by A. Mitram Rhibany, a book in which the words "flute" and "poison" do not appear); "Men are monopolists" (204), "Some have merely rights / while some have obligations" (236-37; Moore's note says she is paraphrasing an Edmund Burke quote that Rainey pretty definitively shows she made up).[42] In contradistinction to Joyce, who tends to trawl his sources for bits of language that have a verbal flavor or cadence or idiomatic tint that suits his purposes, Moore very often supplies those qualities when she plays with quotations. Quotation brings out another facet of her collectorly interest in the information that crosses her desk, but she collects occasions for poetic language, or inklings of it, at least as much as textual found objects.

The tendency among readers to register notes without carefully consulting them goes a long way toward assuring that Moore's impostures will largely escape notice. So does the fact that she need not worry her poems will receive the critical scrutiny comparable work by a man would receive. Still, Moore does a lot to preempt readers from checking her sources—actively discouraging Eliot's notional researcher of origins. If his notes are signs that point his readers into the archive, hers are more like object labels in a museum case. Eliot's annotation of *The Waste Land* encourages reference, comparison with intertexts, and reflection on his use of sources. He quotes enough widely familiar texts (*The Tempest*, *The Flowers of Evil*, "London Bridge is Falling Down") that he is likely to get readers thinking that way without their having to look anything up other than mentally. His notes typically begin "Cf." and include references by chapter, page, or line number: an invitation to play the game that Blanton describes and make complicated intertextual puzzling an integral part of reading the poem.

By contrast, Moore gives her readers a minimum of information. Often, as with Bacon, "George Shock," William Hazlitt, et al., she only cites the quoted author's name. These tend to be her better-known sources, which is also to say, writers whose books her readers are likelier to have at hand. By being so unspecific, she makes it hugely difficult for readers to find the original of a quotation but easy for them to assume it must be somewhere, even if they know the author's work and do not recognize it. There is no *Hmm, I don't remember that line* when the line could come from anywhere in the author's corpus. Sometimes, as with Milton, Moore simply does not treat borrowings as quotations when they might incite intertextual comparison from memory. With other sources, mainly those for which the author's name would not mean anything to most readers (Baxter, Philip Littell, Rhibany), she only gives the title of the work cited—no chapter or page number. Citing Baxter's gigantic treatise, she does not even specify the volume. Whether it

is because her citations are vague or obscure, or a combination of both, they are almost always a pain to look up.

Moreover, Moore's notes are often just inaccurate or evasive enough that they might frustrate a reader going to that trouble. She gives the subtitle rather than the title of the *Scientific American* article about that woman "able to write simultaneously / in three languages— / English, German, and French" (25-27), and the year she gives is off by a digit. She does not mention the woman's name, which would point towards many more sources. She misspells "Georg Schock." She cites the Martha Carey Thomas speech that does not contain the phrase "Men are monopolists" by the year it was given instead of saying where the text was published. For a self-annotating poet to obfuscate with one note may be regarded as carelessness; for her to do it again and again looks like misdirection. Moore's errors and evasions seem especially likely to be intentional and strategic in light of the care she takes in documenting her reading in her diaries and effectively proofreading the tables of contents, indices, and so forth of other people's books as she reads them. Also, she makes suspicious changes to her own index between its first and second printings of *Observations*. She deletes three notes, from the poems "New York" and "Novices," that have an extended dash in place of a source, suggesting she is quoting her own inventions for effect.[43] She may have decided this was giving too much of the game away. So, too, with her redaction of the details about Worcester College and teaching philosophy from the note about Hagop Boghossian.[44]

Unencyclopedic Strategies: Privacy and Affiliation

But why invent Boghossian? Why ventriloquize Baxter and Thomas? And why go to such lengths to be so cagey about it? For one thing, in doing so, Moore disguises the qualities readers find most lacking in her work. The most consistent contemporary criticism of her early publications, which is repeated even by critics who admire them, is that she is too cerebral, unfeeling, frigid. Those early reviewers complain that her poetry is "arid" and contains only "traces of emotion" (Pound); that it is "a product oftener of the faculties than of the nerves and heart" (Mark van Doren in *The Nation*); that she "does not seem to have very much to say… that is inspired by poetic emotion" (Frederick T. Dalton in the *TLS*); that although she "has elected to offer her highly intellectualized dissertations as poetry… she is not a poet," on account of her too-cold sensibility (Louis Untermeyer).[45] That she is intellectual to the point of chilliness has been a critical commonplace ever since, a given about her work that is often related to her lifelong celibacy. Over the near-century since *Observations* appeared, it has come to be repeated as an observation much more often than as a judgment, but it remains a basic premise of her reception. And, certainly, she is cerebral, one of the most cerebral poets of her time.

Yet "Marriage," like many of her poems, is full of intense feeling. There is Eve's sad untruthful description of marriage as a return to Paradise, cobbled out of lines from Baxter; Boghossian's exclamation, repeated by Adam; the college president's speech, rewritten as a private tirade for Eve; Eve's despairing monologue about herself near the end of the poem ("I am such a cow..." [274-80]), which Moore quotes, unverifiably, from private conversation with a friend.[46] These are much more than traces of emotion. Yet Moore positions herself apart from them. Whatever else might account for that, she must have understood the danger in being a

woman writer of too much feeling. Imposture licensed by her unencyclopedic strategies gives her safe recourse to affects that could be considered hysterical or embarrassingly effusive or ever-so-interestingly but unseriously sexual. Better, she seems to surmise, to be thought of as a kind of Greek statue but have your poems read seriously than risk being marginalized for any of the too many reasons a woman poet displaying the wrong strong affect might be. And where is the harm, if that cool persona matches her connoisseurial style and she can invent an Armenian professor, and get away with it, when she wants to put a flaming hairshirt in a poem?

By distancing the speaker of "Marriage" from most of the strong feeling in the poem, Moore positions herself to make a provocative, emotionally freighted argument while ostensibly batting the subject of marriage around intellectually. That she attenuates her argument this way seems of a piece with the self-protective cultivation of privacy, for her persona as for herself personally, that also seems to be a reason she generally reserves her most deeply felt writing for quotations. It bespeaks ambivalence, too, though her thinking has a clear bent. In her version of the Genesis story, the apple is an "invaluable accident / exonerating Adam" (58-59). Eve stands outside the chronology in which the Fall of Man and the fall of the Tower of Babel engender culture. When Adam comes along, she is already a kind of encyclopedist, filling pages in English, German, and French. Her feeling for beauty, which comes on so intensely it continually wrecks her, may not be the Biblical knowledge of good and evil, but it seems to be a moral grounding:

> Below the incandescent stars
> *below the incandescent fruit*
> the strange experience of beauty;
> its existence is too much;
> it tears one to pieces
> and each fresh wave of consciousness
> is poison. (35-41, emphasis mine)

You do not get the sense the apple teaches her anything she does not already know. "Colubrine" Adam is the real snake in the garden (65). For all the convoluted rhetoric that follows, the story in the poem is very simple: marriage stops Eve writing, and she and Adam are unhappy, she more deeply than he. The emotion Moore invests in her quotations accumulates around those facts, gives them their weight, for the reader who brings them into focus.

"Marriage" is, among the many things that it is, a poem about choosing a complicated privacy. Eve is trapped and thwarted by the core circular tradition that constitutes gendered civilization. Moore keeps clear of literature's circular traditions. (Her celibacy is suggestive in this connection, but the poem would have us mind our own business.) She constructs elegant closed systems, materializing and modeling a private reconstruction of culture for a public whose responses she is carefully guiding. Much as, throughout her career, she asserts her prerogative to revise and re-revise poems even after readers have taken the usual sort of possession of them and to cull her authorized corpus,[47] in appropriating other people's writing and playing fast and loose with it, she insists that her poetry does not belong to the culture.

So, Moore thwarts the researcher of origins and declines to play by the rules for quotative poetry Mendelson and Blanton define, developing instead a modest alternative to intertextuality. Lynn Keller argues that with "Marriage" Moore uses intertextuality in the strict sense, as Julia Kristeva defines it—treating all language as "a mosaic of quotations" in which individual authority is subsumed in always-ambivalent, basically social interplay—as a way of unsettling and undermining the lineages and hierarchies established by literary tradition. For Keller, Moore's continual citation of sources that are obscure and in some cases not conventionally noteworthy, together with her pointedly silent appropriation of more canonical texts, particularly *Paradise Lost*, effects a leveling that signifies polemically.[48] That seems plausible up to a point,

and it suggests another worthwhile angle of interpretation for the index.[49] But Moore's poetry is so self-consciously marginal and "Marriage" so insistent that the power relations which exclude women from that sort of competitive cultural redefinition are so deep as to be intractable, it is difficult to see how any Kristevan undermining she might attempt in the poem could be more than an undercurrent of quiet, futile refusal. She no more has the power to undo circular traditions than she does to recenter them, and she knows it.

What Moore is doing seems nearer to what Kristeva does in the essay in which she advances her theory of intertextuality and coins the term, "Word, Dialogue, and the Novel." There, she purports to be glossing Bakhtin, but is clearly not doing that. Her theory is broadly Bakhtinian in the basic thinking about language and culture it embodies, but no way is it implicit in his writing, as she says it is.[50] In plausibly citing him as her direct source, she gathers authority for her argument that would be difficult for her to come by as a young female scholar, but the importance of the contribution that she is making is clear. The theory travels as her theory, but Bakhtin remains attached to it, as something more than an acknowledged influence. This strategy, call it affiliation, involving a more constitutive sort of choice, signifies differently as self-definition.

Moore's choice of citations in "Marriage" does not involve an attempt to redefine or subvert an established canon, or to otherwise make meaning by metonymically reshaping an archive, yet she does seem to use some choices to indicate some affinities and values. Here again, her method is collectorly rather than intertextually constructive. The effect is subtle, suggestive. It is a small thing, happening mainly in the notes, out of all but the most careful readers' view, often seemingly incidental or intuitive, but at times likely to be deliberate. For instance, that Moore cites Bacon at the poem's focal moment of self-definition is an indication

he is, perhaps surprisingly, an important model for her. In a *Dial* essay from 1924, the year of *Observations*, she praises him for his "scholarly style," his "exact diligence," the "renovating quality in [his] work," and "his insight into human idiosyncrasy." She allows that his prose can be cold but argues that "expressions of deep conviction, in all ages, weather coldness," and she records that he believed "unexpected and alternative variation" to be poetry's defining quality.[51] This all sounds like someone we know. Bacon seems to embody for Moore the best qualities a receptive reader is likely to find in her poetry and to value a signal quality of her poetry above all others. Presumably she identified with him intensely. But who, besides a *Dial* reader with a great memory, would think of Bacon in reading Moore? Along with the rest of what it does, her quotation gives the reader a little nudge toward that thought.

Moore goes on using citation to indicate affiliations, rather than develop meaning by way of connections that extend her text beyond itself. She does this in attributing that line about Eve that she appears to have written herself to Katharine Reigel Loose, a/k/a Georg Schock, a/k/a "George Shock." Where she could name any plausible source to make the line check out as an obscure quotation, she chooses a woman writing as a man, a fellow Bryn Mawr graduate. She emphasizes Loose's imposture, reminding readers who know Schock's identity of it by putting the name in quotes. This seems to be a hint at what she is up to with sources such as Baxter and Boghossian, aimed at those careful readers who might pick up on it. Some other affiliations that the poem marks, such as with Disraeli, Edmund Burke, and Martha Carey Thomas, seem to more straightforwardly invoke people we know she especially admired. The rationale for other affiliations, as with Baxter and George Adam Smith, are more difficult to figure. There might or might not be one. As the strategy is of a piece with the obscure personal, partly private and intuitive negotiation of information flows Moore performs, even a careful reader will not be able

to explain every instance. The strong indication that the poem has private meanings inaccessible even to the closest reader and most assiduous researcher of origins is yet another hint at what her avoidance of circular traditions requires.

NOTES

[1] Marianne Moore, *Observations* (New York: The Dial Press, 1924; New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2016), 75, lines 1-17. As I will discuss, Moore often continued to revise poems after she had published them—sometimes, as in the famous or infamous case of "Poetry," repeatedly and for decades. She made some small changes to "Marriage" and her endnotes to it in 1925, when she lightly revised *Observations*, but mostly left it alone over more than four decades of republication. Except where I have a particular reason to look elsewhere, I will be citing the 2016 trade edition of the book, edited by Linda Leavell, which incorporates those revisions. I will refer to Robin G. Shulze's edition of Moore's earliest poems, *Becoming Marianne Moore* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2002), which includes a facsimile of the 1924 text, when I note differences between the two editions. *New Collected Poems*, edited by Heather Cass White, uses the 1925 text of the poems and the 1924 text of Moore's notes—a smart choice for reader's edition, since the 1924 text is riddled with misprints but includes some interesting and revealing notes that Moore excised in 1925, but an invitation to confusion in a dissertation chapter that has points to make about the difference between the two editions. Subsequent references will be made in the text, by line number for the poem and by page number for its notes.

[2] For example, Rosanne Wasserman, "Marianne Moore's 'Marriage': Lexis and Structure" in *New Interpretations of American Literature*, eds. Richard Fleming and Michael Payne (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1988), 159; Lynn Keller, "'For Inferior Who Is Free?' Liberating the Woman Writer in Marianne Moore's 'Marriage,' in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, eds. Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein (University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 241n11; Darlene Williams Erickson, *Illusion is More Precise Than Precision: The Poetry of Marianne Moore* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992), 105; Elizabeth W. Joyce, *Cultural Critique and Abstraction: Marianne Moore and the Avant-Garde* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1998), 74; and Victoria Bazin, *Marianne Moore and the Cultures of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2010), 138.

[3] Ange Mlinko, "Willing to Be Reckless," review of *New Collected Poems*, by Marianne Moore, ed. Heather Cass White, *Poetry* 211, no. 3 (December 2016): 295; Joyce, *Cultural Critique and Abstraction*, 74. Moore tends to view marriage as being full of paradoxes, not tautologies. The interpretation that Joyce suggests is close to being a tautology.

[4] For example: Margaret Holley, *The Poetry of Marianne Moore: A Study in Voice and Value* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 71; Joyce, *Cultural Critique and Abstraction*, 74; Ellen Levy, *Criminal Ingenuity: Moore, Cornell, Ashbery, and the Struggle Between the Arts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 41.

[5] Robert Adamson and John Malcolm Mitchell, "Francis Bacon" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911). The excerpt comes from Robert Spedding's *The Letters and Life of Francis Bacon* (London: Longman, Green and Roberts, 1861) and, fittingly for an important source for a Moore poem, is included in a footnote. Moore's

transcription is in Reading Notebook VII:01:04, which is held at the Rosenbach Library in Philadelphia.

[6] Erickson, *Illusion Is More Precise*, 105

[7] See, for example, Robert L. Fowler, "Encyclopaedias: Definitions and Theoretical Problems," *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts: Proceedings of the Second COMERS Congress, Groningen, 1-4 July 1996*, ed. Peter Binkley (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 27-29; Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information Before the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 12; Jay Dickson, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know: *Ulysses* and the *Enkuklios Paideia*" forthcoming in "Encyclopedia Joyce," a special issue of *JJQ: The James Joyce Quarterly*.

[8] An impressive exception is the pithy but richly historicized etymology section of the Wikipedia entry "Encyclopedia."

[9] The sixth edition of *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, from 1879, is a particularly important source for Moore. In "Marriage" it is her source for the description of Hymen, "a kind of overgrown Cupid" (105). Her copy of *Roget's Thesaurus*, held at the Rosenbach, has two words underlined, "dacylomancy" and "ornithomancy," divination by birds and "by a suspended ring," respectively, along with the definition of Alectryomancy, "by a cock picking up grains," and—proof of her assiduousness—she indexes the definition on the endpapers.

[10] Edward Mendelson, "Encyclopedic Narrative: From Dante to Pynchon" *MLN* 91, No. 6 (1976): 1267-1268.

[11] C.D. Blanton, *Epic Negation: The Dialectical Poetics of Late Modernism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 76.

[12] Blanton, *Epic Negation*, 28.

[13] Moore's note (104) identifies the relevant article by its subtitle—the title is "Doing Two Things at Once"—and it gives the wrong year. The article, by Dr. Alfred Gradenwitz, appeared in January 1923, not 1922.

[14] The literature documenting women's exclusion from and marginalization within literary culture in every period is extensive and depressing. Joanna Russ's *How to Suppress Women's Writing* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983) gives a concise, engagingly polemical rundown of the various forms that suppression takes. It would make for an ideal introduction to the subject. Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) and Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's three-volume *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989, 1991, and 1994) are major treatments by seminal feminist critics. John Guillory lists a number of feminist critiques of canon formation, by the likes of Lillian Robinson, Deborah Rosenfelt, Florence Howe, and Christine Froula in *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983),

343n5. Jessica Berman's essay "Practicing Transnational Feminist Recovery Today," in the inaugural issue of the new journal *Feminist Modernist Studies* (1.1-2 [2018]: 9-21) takes stock of several generations of scholarship that has sought to recognize excluded and marginalized women modernists and recover their work and points to important work that remains to be done.

[15] Introducing a special issue of *Modernist Cultures* from 2015, Scott McCracken and Jo Winning propose "the long modernist novel" as an alternative category for construing early-twentieth-century novels, such as Richardson's, that are not encyclopedic in form but "attempt and fail to achieve the impossible" in other ways—particularly in trying to represent or convey immensities of time. ("The Long Modernist Novel: An Introduction," The Long Modernist Novel, *Modernist Cultures* 10, no. 3 (November 2015): 269.)

For a strong reading of *The Making of Americans* as a long modernist novel, see Georgina Nugent Folan's article "Lexis as Census: James Joyce and Gertrude Stein's Approaches to the Peopling of *Ulysses* and *The Making of Americans*," forthcoming in "Encyclopedia Joyce," a special issue of the *James Joyce Quarterly* slated for 2019.

[16] The available volumes are the first one, *Pointed Roofs*, and *The Tunnel*, which is of special historical interest for having been serialized alongside *Ulysses*. I asked the Broadview rep at the Modernist Studies Association conference in November 2016 whether there would be any more, and he told me not to get my hopes up.

[17] Of course, all else was not always equal. Racism likewise limited who could hope to be taken seriously as an encyclopedist, perhaps more than sexism did. Class was also an important factor. Note, for example, that one of modernism's few canonical encyclopedic presentations of African-American culture, the anthology *Negro*, was edited by Nancy Cunard, a white woman who rejected her upper-class upbringing but maintained many of its privileges. I am bracketing off the part racism plays in of modernism's encyclopedic turn and the reaction against it, but I hope to return to fill in that part of the story in a future iteration of this project.

[18] Artily ventilated narrative of a lonesome, intellectual young man's not-quite-coming-of-age? Check. Divagations of a memorious, omnisympathetic middle-aged flâneur in stream-of-consciousness style? Check. Meditation on the genesis of great literature via imaginative speculation about the Shakespeare family? Quasi-cubist juxtaposition of multiple perspectives in scene of class crossing in the modern city? Extended analogy between fiction and another artistic medium developed through a correlated poeticizing of narrative prose? Mimetic potted history of English literature culminating in a visionary crack-up at the level of mediation? Check, check, check, check.

It is possible to go eighteen-for-eighteen—above, I had in mind *Jacob's Room*, Clarissa's walk in *Mrs. Dalloway* and "Street Haunting: A London Adventure," "Kew Gardens" and the passing of the important person's car in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the Judith Shakespeare section of *A Room of One's Own*, Lily Briscoe and the style of *To the Lighthouse*, and the pageant play in *Between the Acts* (specifically, the mirror scene as an analogue to the last pages of "Oxen of the Sun")—but the real point is the broad similarity in formal inventiveness and ambition that makes the game possible.

[19] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929; rpt. New York: Penguin, 2004). Subsequent references will be made in the text. For just a small sampling of the bearing out see note 14.

[20] As Woolf puts is, taking the perspective of a young man who can be confident the Museum belongs to him, in *Jacob's Room* (1922; rpt. New York: Harvest, 1950):

> There is in the British Museum an enormous mind. Consider that Plato is there cheek by jowl with Aristotle ; and Shakespeare with Marlowe. This great mind is hoarded beyond the power of any single mind to possess it. Nevertheless (as they take so long finding one's walking-stick) one can't help thinking how one might come with a note- book, sit at a desk, and read it all through. (108)

[21] Rachel Bowlby, *Feminist Destinations and Further Essays on Virginia Woolf* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), xxii.

[22] Virginia Woolf, *Orlando: A Biography* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1928; rpt. Orlando, FL: Mariner Books, 2006), 224

[23] Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1938; rpt. New York: Harvest Books, 1963), 166n36.

[24] Virginia Woolf, *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*, The Hogarth Essays (London: The Hogarth Press, 1924), 12.

[25] *The Autobiography of William Carlos Williams* (New York: New Directions, 1951; rpt. 1967), 146. "Marianne Moore, like a rafter holding up the superstructure of our uncompleted building, a caryatid, her red hair plaited and wound twice about the fine skull..."

[26] Louis Zukofsky's comparatively staid, concordance-like index to his long life-poem *"A"* (1928-74; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) is the other major example in the modernist canon (807-26).

[27] Linda Leavell, *Holding on Upside Down: The Life and Work of Marianne Moore* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2013), 103-107.

[28] For an extended discussion of the *Ulysses* schemata, see the first pages of Chapter I.

[29] Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire* (1962; rpt. New York: Vintage, 1989), 303-15; Nicholson Baker, "From the Index of First Lines" *New Yorker* 26 Dec. 1994-2 Jan. 1995, 83.

[30] Richard Baxter, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest, Or A Treatise on the Blessed State of the Saints in Their Enjoyment of God in Glory* (1650; rpt. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1909), 416 and 425. Subsequent references will be made in the text.

[31] Rainey is the rare scholarly annotator of the poem who does not merely reproduce Moore's own notes. (More about this tendency farther on.) In *Modernism: An Anthology* (Malden, MA:

Blackwell, 2005), his notes on "Marriage" note several of Moore's departures from her sources, though he passes over some eyebrow-raising quotations ("George Shock," Hagop Boghossian) without comment (652-61).

[32] M. [Martha] Carey Thomas, "Present Day Problems in Teaching," *Mount Holyoke Alumnae Quarterly* V, no. 4 (January 1922): 193-199.

A reminder to be alert to the ways that, in Moore's time as in ours, advocacy for the rights of women can be aligned with support for the oppression of other groups: last year, in the aftermath of the violent demonstration by white supremacists in Charlottesville, VA, Bryn Mawr began the process of removing Thomas's name from its Great Hall and Library, on account of her having "openly and vigorously advanced racism and anti-Semitism as part of her vision of the college" (current college President Kim Cassidy qtd. in Susan Snyder, "Bryn Mawr Confronts Racist Views of Former Leader," *Philadelphia Inquirer* Aug. 24 2017).

[33] Sources consulted in my still-ongoing pursuit of the elusive Boghossian include the history of Worcester State University and its precursors given on the school's website, at https://www.worcester.edu/Our-History/; Frank J. Morrill, William O. Hultgren, and Eric J. Salomonsson's book *Worcester* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005); the aforementioned finding aid for faculty information supplied by the College of Wooster's archives (prepared by Denise Monbarren, May 2018); the 1921 and 1923 editions of the College of Wooster's yearbook, *Index*; the *Catalogue of the Officers and Students for Columbia College, for the Year 2015* (*Columbia University Bulletin of Information* 15.9, March 20, 1915; a Hagop Boghossian is mentioned on 502); and *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 2015-16* [the Blue Book] by Viscount Bryce (London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1916; another Hagop Boghossian is quoted on 72).

[34] Woolf on the austere dinner she is served at the underfunded women's college she visits in *A Room of One's Own*, as a figure for how women's art suffers when they are made to settle for less: "The lamp in the spine does not light on beef and prunes" (18).

[35] T.S. Eliot, "The Frontiers of Criticism," 1956, *On Poetry and Poets*, 1957 (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2009), 121.

[36] Leonard Diepeveen, *Changing Voices: The Modern Quoting Poem* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993).

[37] Keller notes this in "For Inferior Who Is Free?" (233).

[38] The seminal example is Patricia C. Willis's article "The Road to Paradise: First Notes on Marianne Moore's 'An Octopus,' *Twentieth Century Literature* 30.2/3 (Autumn 1984): 242-266.

[39] Marianne Moore, *Complete Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), 267.

[40] Baker, "From the Index of First Lines," 83.

[41] Ezra Pound, "Others" Imagisme," *Poetry* 1.6 (March 1918), 57.

[42] A. Mitram Rhibany, *The Syrian Christ* (Houston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1916); Rainey, 658.

[43] *Becoming Marianne Moore*, 99, 101-02. Going by Rainey's notes, only two of three instances appear to be self-quotations.

[44] *Becoming Marianne Moore*, 103.

[45] *The Critical Response to Marianne Moore*, ed. Elizabeth Gregory, Critical Responses in Arts and Letters 39 (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 22-23, 32-33, 33-34, 47-50.

[46] I *think* that the woman she cites, M.H. Tolman, is a friend, as that is what the quotation seems to indicate, though, Moore being Moore, one needs to be careful. Going by some old issues of the *Smith College Alumnae Quarterly*, it appears that M.H. Tolman, who went by Mollie, was an intelligent, independent woman with a similar education to Moore's who lived across the Brooklyn Bridge from Moore when she was writing "Marriage."

[47] From T.S. Eliot's introduction to her early *Selected Poems*: "The original suggestion was that I should make a selection.... But Miss Moore exercised her own rights of proscription first, so drastically that I have been concerned to preserve rather than abate" ([New York: Macmillan, 1935], xiv).

[48] Keller, "For Inferior Who Is Free?" 229-39.

[49] Namely: that it could be seen as a picture of that leveling, insofar as it gives equally random and largely cursory attention to canonical authors and conventionally important subjects ("Dante, 4," "Flaubert, 104," "Shakespeare, 81"; "knowledge of principles, 17, 97," "politics, 102, 109") and to seemingly insignificant matters and utter or relative unknowns ("chipmunk, 93," "Goliath thistles, 89," "nonchalance, 22"; "Boghossian, H., 105," "Pycraft, W.P., creepy maneuvers, 85, 107; spider fashion, 85, 107").)

[50] Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," 1966, in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 64-91.

[51] Marianne Moore, *Collected Prose*, ed. Patricia C. Willis (New York: Viking, 1986), 98-100.

CODA

ON PLENITUDE

Often, the first question I am asked when I begin to tell someone what my dissertation is about is: "What do you mean by encyclopedia?" Most people quickly realize that, whatever it is I do mean, it cannot be what they were thinking. Something like the explanation I give in the first paragraph of the introduction would be most accurate, but that is a lot for casual conversation. I usually answer with some variation on a point I make in the first chapter: encyclopedias are books that want to be libraries, that try to be as full of everything, that would be wanderable and welcome curiosity the way that a library does. That seems to me as clear and memorable a one-sentence answer as I can muster. And, as I have discussed, it is historically accurate: encyclopedic form first emerges in catalogues for libraries and compendia of library research. In its genre's first golden age, in the Middle Ages and the early modern period, encyclopedists self-consciously aspired to create failsafes against the destruction of major libraries. The encyclopedic novel begins with Quixote's library. Curiously, the *Encyclopédie* does not have an entry for "Library"—where you would expect to find "Bibliothèque," you get "Bibliotaphe," an entertaining short polemic against "buriers of books" who refuse to share their rarities with other readers.[1] Yet in the crucial entry "Encyclopedia," one of Diderot's many rationales for writing an encyclopedia is that "as the centuries continue to unfold, the number of books will grow continually, and one can predict a time will come when it will be almost as difficult to learn anything from a library as from the direct study of the whole universe."[2]

This recalls an encyclopedia in modern literature I have not yet mentioned. In the short story "The Library of Babel," Jorge Luis Borges imagines a library exactly as comprehensive as the whole universe, if we take the universe to contain all possible worlds, that is as inimical to readers looking to learn something as Diderot supposes. The story's narrator explains:

> the Library is 'total'—perfect, complete, and whole—and its bookshelves contain all possible combinations of the twenty-two orthographic symbols (a number which, though unimaginably vast, is not infinite)—that is, all that is able to be expressed, in every language. *All*—the detailed history of the future, the autobiographies of the archangels, the faithful catalog of the Library, thousands and thousands of false catalogs, the proof of the falsity of those false catalogs, a proof of the falsity of the true catalog, the gnostic gospel of Basilides, the commentary upon that gospel, the commentary on the commentary on that gospel, the true story of your death, the translation of every book into every language, the interpolations of every book into all books, the treatise Bede could have written (but did not) on the mythology of the Saxon people, the lost books of Tacitus.[3]

This is a wonder—and all but useless to would-be readers. "For every rational line or forthright statement there are leagues of senseless cacophony, verbal nonsense, and incoherency" (114). The library is a monkey's paw realization of the cultural desire for totality. Whatever epistemic ideal it achieves, exactly, it is the antithesis of what encyclopedism strives for.

Throughout this dissertation, in characterizing the synoptic ambitions of encyclopedic modernists—the non-totalizing alternatives to totality toward which Eliot, Joyce, and Benjamin extend in their world writing—I have recurred to the word *plenitude*. At first, I favored it because it seemed to chime with other apt keywords for modernism's constructive engagement with the encyclopedia, such as *generosity* and *hospitality*, and to evoke plenty as a social good. Encyclopedism is, at base, a tendency that aims to make a home for readers in the archive; to make its resources usefully available to them. Encyclopedic works are resource-intensive, and the archives and institutions on which they depend invariably reinforce privilege. The encyclopedic turn in modernist literature is, consequently, often problematic in ways that undercut its best

aspirations, as discussed in chapters three and four. Nevertheless: *plenitude* was, to my ear, the word that best conveyed the spirit of those aspirations and that made the clearest contrast with *totality*, the unavoidable term in critical discussion of biggest-picture synopsis in modern culture that I was looking to supplant.

When I applied some scrutiny to that intuitive choice, I found *plenitude* to be even more apposite than I had initially supposed. The principle of plenitude, an important idea in the thought of Joycean favorites Saint Augustine and Giordano Bruno, among others, holds that the universe must contain every possible entity.[4] God, being God, sees all of it. From our mortal, local perspective, plenitude looks like abundance and increase that bespeaks ineluctable progress toward fullness and diversity. Though that world-picture must be incomplete, it should always have us looking from more to more. Plenitude, on this understanding, is a concept that reconciles our intimation of totality and desire for it with the recognition that we can only experience it on a human scale.

Borges's total library and Chinese encyclopedia are metaphors that instructively stretch that line of thinking to the limits of what is imaginable. This is explicit, as well as being obvious, in "The Library of Babel." The story begins: "The universe (which others call the Library)" (112), then, having made that conflation, becomes solely about the library. Borges's claim in his foreword to *The Garden of Forking Paths* that he is "not the first author" of the story suggests that he means for the story to be understood as rehearsing long-circulating ideas about plenitude.[5] First, he imagines what having access to totality, at least so far as it could be recorded in writing, would really be like. It is awful. Presented with all possible permutations of a symbolic system that appears to be Latin script with more limited punctuation, "Man, the imperfect librarian" scours the stacks for intelligible information and, overwhelmed by the

massive preponderance of semantic noise and unreadable language he finds, tends to superstition, wild casuistry, existential despair, frenzies of book destruction and violence against other readers, madness, and, ever more frequently, suicide. It seems to the story's narrator that the cost of having total knowledge will likely prove to be human extinction. Perfect plenitude, the kind that God is theorized to know, is revealed to be a nightmare basis for culture, a suffocating superintensity of information overload.

Naturally, the narrator dreams of an encyclopedia that would solve the problem:

> On some shelf in some hexagon, it was argued, there must exist a book that is the cipher and perfect compendium of all other books, and some librarian must have examined that book; this librarian is analogous to a god. In the language of this zone there are still vestiges of the sect that worshiped that distant librarian. Many have gone in search of Him. For a hundred years, men beat every possible path and every path in vain. […] It is in ventures such as these that I have squandered and spent my years. I cannot think it unlikely that there is such a total book on some shelf in the universe. I pray to the unknown gods that some man—even a single man, tens of centuries ago—has perused and read that book. If the honor and wisdom and joy of such a reading are not to be my own, then let them be for others. Let heaven exist, though my own place be in hell. Let me be tortured and battered and annihilated, but let there be one instant, one creature, wherein thy enormous Library may find its justification. (116-17)

This turn in the story conveys several key points about encyclopedic plenitude. Here are four. First: beyond a certain degree of comprehensiveness, an encyclopedia becomes a library, necessitating an encyclopedia to digest it. The story is so suggestive in this connection partly because its argument to absurdity troubles the distinction between the library and the encyclopedia that is so foundational to the encyclopedic tradition's self-conception. Second: a total encyclopedia, or any work that truly encompassed totality, would require a superhuman reader. The narrator and his fellow cultists search the library for "the Book-Man" who has read their notional *Encyclopedia Babelica*. They do not think of reading it themselves. Third: the desire for totality—which the narrator shares with Georg Lukàcs and those writers on the

encyclopedia who likewise look to modern literature for equivalents to bygone, ostensibly totality-capturing genres such as epic and scripture—is a desire less for total knowledge than for reassurance that the world is coherent or at least intelligible. It would be enough for the narrator just to know that someone, sometime had read the encyclopedia. The life-consuming need is not to learn from them but to feel secure in their authority.

Finally, deep between the lines: writing plenitude on a human scale requires formal variety and plasticity. The limits to Borges's metaphor signify. Given the constraints that determine the library's contents—each book being 410 pages of forty lines, and seemingly no other books ever being written by the library's denizens—and how much would have to be included in a digest of its holdings, the dreamed-of encyclopedia cannot possibly exist. At least, it cannot exist as the single, complete book that the narrator and his fellow seekers long to find. They seem to accept the composition of books in the library as a set of formal norms. Some such constraints are necessary to make the metaphorical library imaginable as a real physical space—there would otherwise have to be an infinite number of books, requiring infinite space—but the constraints are also what makes the problems the library poses unsolvable. There does not seem to be any practicable way of reckoning with those problems without discovering or devising forms different from those that compose the structure in which everyone is trapped. For some reason, that is not an option. Information overload is the salient problem that determines their predicament. Formal stasis is the hidden one. A question hangs in the background of the story: if the total library's holdings are infernally, maybe apocalyptically frustrating, why do the people there not invent their own literature, one whose forms are not impossibly incommensurate with their capacities for reading and understanding? They do not, and it is convincing that they do not. There is in this an ironically grim suggestion about what it means to want totality.

In contrast, the work of the "unknown (or apocryphal) Chinese encyclopedist" described in "John Wilkins' Analytical Language"—with its taxonomy of animals that includes "those that belong to the emperor," "embalmed ones," "suckling pigs," "stray dogs," "those that are included in this classification," "innumerable ones," "those drawn with a very fine camel's-hair brush" and the rest—is an absurd exposition on plenitude as we are able to apprehend it.[6] Borges vividly makes the point that putting any immensity of information in manageable order requires a measure of arbitrariness, which is to say, some concession to the necessity of partial knowledge. We might say, glancing back at "The Library of Babel": without such arbitrariness, you will just turn libraries into other libraries, not encyclopedias. In its silliness, which accentuates that arbitrariness, Borges's Chinese encyclopedia also points up how encyclopedism diffuses authority as a consequence of eschewing totality for plenitude. That silliness is a leveling invitation to the reader to approach the text with like irreverence. And—the point I made in connection with Joyce bears repeating here—to be able to convey plenitude to that irreverent, active reader, the encyclopedia must explode unitary, determinate form. None of that would be acceptable to the denizens of the total library. But that is the point of the comparison. As Borges understands, encyclopedic plenitude is not partial totality but a something to want (or want to resist) in its own terms.

NOTES

[1] "Bibliotaph," 1765, trans. Erik Liddell, from the *Encyclopédie*, vol. 17, *The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project* (Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, University of Michigan Library, 2006). No author is given for the entry.

[2] Denis Diderot, "Encyclopedia," 1755, trans. Ralph H. Bowen, in *Rameau's Nephew and Other Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001), 299. I have amended Bowen's translation slightly, because he changes the library Diderot that specifically mentions to "books." In the original, the passage reads: "Tandis que les siècles s'écoulent, la masse des ouvrages s'accroît sans cesse, & l'on prévoit un moment où il seroit presqu'aussi difficile de s'instruire dans une bibliotheque, que dans l'univers."

[3] Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel," 1941, trans. Andrew Hurley, *Collected Fictions* (New York: Penguin, 1998), 115. Subsequent references will be made in the text.

[4] For an extended treatment of the principle of plenitude, which was once an extremely famous book, see Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936).

[5] Jorge Luis Borges, foreword to *The Garden of Forking Paths*, 1941, trans. Andrew Hurley, *Collected Fictions* (New York: Penguin, 1998), 67.

[6] Jorge Luis Borges, "John Wilkins' Analytical Language," 1942, trans. Eliot Weinberger, *Collected Non-Fictions*, ed. Eliot Weinberger (New York: Viking, 1999), 231.