

**The Smell of Modernism: Metaphor and the Olfactory,
1900-1945**

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the representation of odour throughout European literary modernism and other, interrelated fields of cultural production. While the introduction acknowledges Western culture's traditional subordination of olfaction and smell's ostensible alienation from language, this study argues that odour and language simultaneously display compelling similarities.

Chapter One examines Freud's influence in determining the modern conception of olfaction, as a figure of comparison with D. H. Lawrence and Bronislaw Malinowski. Freud's placement of odour as culturally and evolutionarily retrograde is questioned in Chapter Two, which notes the projected technological mastery of olfaction as a trope of utopian fiction, demonstrated in the writing of Aldous Huxley and John Galsworthy. Chapter Three shifts away from the identification of malodour as a source of modern anxiety to consider the dual commercial and aesthetic significance of perfume. However, these divergent encodings of odour are unified by literary modernism's persistent recruitment of olfaction as a metaphorical resource; the language of odour denotes a perceived inarticulable quiddity at the heart of the aesthetic object, a feature offered theoretical context by the writing of Walter Benjamin.

Chapters Four and Five develop the congruence between the formal properties of odour and language by addressing 'canonical' modernist literary encodings of olfaction. Proust's elision of the role of the sensorily-informed writer

with that of the translator supports the consonance of language and odour, a contention further extended in Chapter Five, which considers the olfactory representations of Joyce, and his recognition of the ambiguous semiology of odour as a marker of personal identity.

Finally, a conclusion emphasises this study's extension of the field of modernist olfactory representation beyond Joyce and Proust. The shared semiological instability exhibited by odours and language supports the broader recuperation of olfaction as a particularly apposite modernist sense modality.

Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Introduction: Speaking of odour: in search of olfactory modernism	7
Chapter One: ‘Smelling strangeness’: olfaction and the representation of cultural difference in Freud, D. H. Lawrence and Malinowski	29
Chapter Two: ‘The human stink!’: the malodours of modernism and olfactory utopias	84
Chapter Three: Marketing odour: modernist aesthetics, mass entertainment and the art of perfume	145
Chapter Four: ‘Où l’appréhender?’ holistic perception and the metaphoricity of translation in <i>A la recherche du temps perdu</i>	205
Chapter Five: A ‘passion for foul-smelling things’: blindness, olfactory ontology and the ambiguities of odour in Joyce	263
Conclusion: Recuperating the olfactory; reimagining the senses of modernism	317
Bibliography	335

Introduction

Speaking of odour: in search of olfactory modernism

This study will examine the representation of odour throughout European literary modernism and other, associated modes of cultural production at the beginning of the twentieth century. That is, I will assess the significance of olfaction as an underexplored but significant concern of modernist aesthetics, but will situate my investigation within the broader context of other discursive fields, such as anthropology, psychoanalysis, neuroscience, industrial chemistry and advertising. However, the selection of a specifically modernist context for the consideration of odour highlights the foundational problem of distinguishing between *fin de siècle* treatments of odour, and those identified as characteristic of modernism, a challenge compounded by the wider difficulty of assigning a definitive identity to modernism.

While noting the contribution of nineteenth-century writers and theoreticians in shaping the concept(s) of olfaction inherited by modernism, this thesis resists a detailed examination of the interplay between such texts as *À rebours*, *Degeneration* and *Les Fleurs du Mal* and later modernist representations of odour. This resistance is a response to the practical problem of adequately addressing those texts and cultural representations situated within the ambit of modernism, the declared intention of this thesis, rather than emphasising the influence of predecessors. However, the date range of 1900-1945 with which this thesis is concerned serves as a guide, rather than the imposition of rigid chronological boundaries; references to texts before and after this period are an inevitable feature of this study. Accordingly,

to paraphrase T. E. Hulme, I will contend primarily with the Geist of modernism, but fully acknowledge the precursive presence of its ghost.¹

However, an attempt to examine the representation of the olfactory as an object of concern (or disinterest) within modernism, invites the fundamental question of modernism's critical constitution. In other words, what broad assumptions underpin our understanding of what modernism *is*? And, interrelatedly, against what programme of aesthetics – literary, musical, dramatic, plastic or graphic – and other, associated influences – political, physiological, cultural, and linguistic – will the olfactory be contextualised?

An attempt to offer a detailed account of modernism's shifting status as an object of critical concern lies outside the scope of this thesis, but two general observations on the changing identity of 'modernism' are pertinent to the objective of establishing a 'modernist' framing of the olfactory. Despite evident dissent surrounding critical definitions of the phenomenon, a repertory of aesthetic conventions generally agreed as identifiably 'modernist' in character can be described, an identification which safeguards the prospect of modernism as a viable cultural construct from which an array of olfactory representations derive context. To reject a series of stylistic and formal features as characteristic of modernism risks erasing the term's critical viability, suggests Rita Felski: 'To dissolve the specificity of "modernism" [...] is to render an already vague term effectively useless by robbing it of any meaningful referent'.² Accordingly, Felski identifies a range of modernist attributes, or rather, a specific series of writing practices embodied by the

¹ 'No Geist without ghost' (T. E. Hulme, *Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art*, ed. by Herbert Read (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1936), p. 243).

² Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 25.

products of literary modernism. Such texts are, Felski contends, ‘formally self-conscious, experimental, antimimetic’ (p. 25). This list of attributes is expanded by Ann Ardis, who cites ‘aesthetic self-reflexiveness; nonlinear narrative organization; paradox, ambiguity, and uncertainty’ as the commonly identified hallmarks of literary modernism.³

It is a feature of current modernist criticism – the New Modernist Studies announced by Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz – to situate the ‘modernism’ described by Felski, Ardis and other scholars within a network of other, associated modes of textual production.⁴ As Nathan Waddell notes: ‘It has become necessary to take a broad view of early twentieth-century ‘advanced’ writing that sees its histories less in terms of a succession of isolated masterpieces and more in terms of a complex series of negotiations between various textual forms’.⁵ A critical emphasis upon a series of interconnected modernisms, rather than segregating modernism as a monolithic identity, offers a useful guiding rubric in mapping the encoding of olfaction across a range of discursive territories throughout the modern period.

However, the expansionist approach recommended by recent modernist criticism raises a further practical problem – how to justify the selection of a particular corpus of texts for consideration as exemplary representations of odour? It would be misleading to speak of a ‘canonical’ critical tradition of olfactory

³ Ann L. Ardis, *Modernism and Cultural Conflict, 1880-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 101.

⁴ Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz, writing in 1999, suggest: ‘Were one seeking a single word to sum up transformations in modernist literary scholarship over the past decade or two, one could do worse than light on *expansion*.’ (Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz, ‘The New Modernist Studies’, *PMLA*, 123 (2008), 737–48 (p. 737) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2008.123.3.737>>).

⁵ Nathan Waddell, *Modernist Nowheres: Politics and Utopia in Early Modernist Writing, 1900-1920* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 2.

modernism, given the comparative scarcity of existing scholarship regarding the interconnection of modernism and odour. Studies such as Constance Classen's *Aroma* and Jim Drobnick's *The Smell Culture Reader* offer admirable overviews of the cultural history of olfaction, but do not localise their consideration of odour within the context of modernism.⁶ Conversely, Alain Corbin's influential *The Foul and the Fragrant* terminates its exploration of olfaction at the conclusion of the nineteenth century; the collection of essays *Smell and the Ancient Senses* addresses odour as a concern of classical civilisations.⁷ Sara Danus, writing in *The Senses of Modernism*, compellingly argues that modernism is, in part, characterised by the technological mediation of perception, but makes scant reference to olfaction.⁸ *The Smell of Books*, Hans Rindisbacher's survey of olfaction as an object of cultural concern, passes through literary modernism, but does not contend with signature attributes of modernism *per se*, an omission to which I will presently return. It would seem, therefore, that olfactory modernism represents an intellectual territory ripe for more thorough exploration, an opportunity which this study embraces.⁹

An initial consideration of the encounter of literary modernists with odour invites reference to particular writers; Joyce and Proust, as Rindisbacher notes, are obvious and unavoidable examples, although surprisingly, given Rindisbacher's

⁶ Constance Classen, *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell* (London: Routledge, 1994); *The Smell Culture Reader*, ed. by Jim Drobnick (Oxford: Berg, 2006).

⁷ Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986); *Smell and the Ancient Senses*, ed. by Mark Bradley (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015).

⁸ Sara Danus, *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception, and Aesthetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

⁹ And which is supported by other, more recent scholarly activity undertaken by the Sensory Modernism(s) research group at the University of Leeds, of which this author is a founder member. 'Sensory Modernism(s): Cultures of Perception', a 2015 conference organised by the group at the University of Leeds, featured a range of presentations specifically concerned with the aesthetics of odour (Crispian Neill and Georgina Binnie, 'Sensory Modernism(s): Reflections And Further Directions', *James Joyce Broadsheet*, 2015, 3 (p. 3)).

recognition of their notional centrality, neither writer is granted an extensive critical examination in *The Smell of Books*.¹⁰ Joyce's evocation of odour has attracted critical interest, as I note in my final chapter, although the readings offered by Laura Frost and Hugh Davis do not address the dialogic relationship between the diminution of Joyce's eyesight and his postulated preoccupation with (mal)odour.¹¹ Although this thesis will explore the contribution of writers overlooked in prior examinations of the interconnection between modernism and the olfactory, such as Wyndham Lewis, Rider Haggard, H. D., and John Glogau, the undeniable engagement of Joyce and Proust with odour cannot be neglected. Consequently, these authors are merited extended critical evaluation in the final two chapters of this study, preceded by a wider-ranging consideration of other, less familiar literary exponents of olfaction, and of the cultural networks in which their writing is situated.

The extension of critical focus from Joyce and Proust to the entire corpus of European modernist literature in the first half of the twentieth century invites the question of methodology. By what means can such an examination be asserted as a critically valid survey of all encodings of odour between 1900 and 1945? Logically, such an encyclopaedic ambition would be unrealistic, at least within the purview of this thesis. Accordingly, my approach is selective, rather than comprehensive – a mapping of modernist representations of odour, rather than a definitive taxonomy. Inevitably, this process has entailed exclusion. Although women writers are not entirely neglected – H. D. and Amy Lowell are addressed in Chapter Three – this study is primarily masculine in focus. This (partial) omission of female modernists is

¹⁰ Hans J. Rindisbacher, *The Smell of Books: A Cultural-Historical Study of Olfactory Perception in Literature* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), p. 143.

¹¹ Laura Catherine Frost, *The Problem with Pleasure: Modernism and Its Discontents* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 33–62; Hugh Davis, “‘How Do You Sniff?’: Havelock Ellis and Olfactory Representation in ‘Nausicaa’”, *James Joyce Quarterly*, 41.3 (2004), 421–40 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25478069>> [accessed 5 October 2015].

partly a response to critical precedent, which demands the inclusion of Joyce and Proust. Moreover, in selecting other, canonical male modernists such as Lewis and D. H. Lawrence (to whom I will presently return), I have re-presented these familiar figures as olfactorily-concerned writers. Conversely, I am aware of an array of writers with whom this thesis will not contend, while acknowledging the legitimacy of their inclusion in future enquiries into olfactory modernism. For example, Virginia Woolf's *Flush* will not feature in this study, despite the text's evident engagement with odour. While the olfactory is clearly a focal interest of *Flush*, Woolf's questioning of human/animal relations is an equally influential concern of the novel, and urges consideration of the significance accorded to canines throughout literary modernism, a line of investigation which I have already addressed.¹² As this study is an examination of human, rather than animal perception, *Flush* remains beyond its immediate compass.

Conversely, I argue that D. H. Lawrence commands attention as an olfactorily-aware writer, and is accordingly a recurrent point of reference throughout this thesis. This is despite an apparent lack of prior critical consideration of odour as an object of representation throughout Lawrence's oeuvre, in contrast to other, associated sense modalities, such as the haptic.¹³ Of particular applicability, in relation to Lawrence's encoding of olfactory experience, is his wider valorisation of the somatic and sensorial as conduits to understanding, in contrast to the limits imposed by cerebration. It would be impossible to adequately describe the

¹² Crispian Neill, 'D. H. Lawrence and Dogs: Canines and the Critique of Civilisation', *Journal of D. H. Lawrence Studies*, 4.1 (2015), 95–118.

¹³ See, for example, *Haptic Modernism: Touch and the Tactile in Modernist Writing*: 'the work of D. H. Lawrence presents the most obvious opportunity to consider questions of touch and the tactile in modernist writing' (Abbie Garrington, 'D. H. Lawrence: Blind Touch in a Visual Culture', in *Haptic Modernism: Touch and the Tactile in Modernist Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), pp. 155–69 (p. 155)).

significance of the body as a motif prized by Lawrence, or the wealth of critical commentary on this feature of his writing; what follows is a summary of salient points to establish grounds for his inclusion in this thesis. Lawrence's championing of the senses as representative of non-rational systems of knowledge is, for example, demonstrated in *Twilight in Italy*. In particular, Lawrence's essay 'The Lemon Gardens' unambiguously endorses perception, rather than cogitation, as constitutive of human consciousness. 'The senses', Lawrence states, 'are the absolute, the god-like. For I can never have another man's senses. These are me, my senses absolutely me. And all that is can only come to me through my senses'.¹⁴ This declaration of an aesthetic grounded in the sensorial, rather than the intellectual, is echoed throughout Lawrence's writing, epitomised by his exasperation at the disjunction of the mind and body voiced in *A Propos of Lady Chatterley's Lover*: 'The mind has an old, grovelling fear of the body and the body's potencies'.¹⁵ Lawrence's assertion of *sentio ergo sum* is refined and granted odorous specificity in his poem 'Cabbage-roses', which implicitly questions the established subordination of olfaction within the sensorium, a foundational placement to which I will presently return. Here, that which is smelled is of equal relevance to that which is detected through the agency of vision. 'You may', Lawrence contends, 'smell the breath of the gods in the common roses'.¹⁶ To be deprived of an olfactory mode of apprehension is, Lawrence continues, to be afflicted by an 'amnesia | of the senses' (p. 565). Consequently, to experience a rose anosmically, the text implies, is barely to experience it at all, a

¹⁴ D. H. Lawrence, 'The Lemon Gardens', in *Twilight in Italy and Other Essays*, ed. by Paul Eggert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 114–32 (p. 117).

¹⁵ D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover and A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'*, ed. by Michael Squires (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 309.

¹⁶ D. H. Lawrence, 'Cabbage-Roses', in *The Poems*, ed. by Christopher Pollnitz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), I, 565 (p. 565).

catastrophic reduction of sensory capabilities to which Lawrence ascribes terminal consequences:

you are like to die of malnutrition of the senses:

and your sensual atrophy

will at last send you insane. (p. 565)

Olfaction is, therefore, for Lawrence, pivotal in the generation of an ontology derived from sense data. And while vision and olfaction operate harmoniously in ‘Cabbage-roses’, Lawrence’s broader critique of the dominance of visuality throughout Western culture(s) provides a useful context when considering the viability of other, competing modes of perception, epitomised in the following chapters by olfaction. Sight, as Lawrence famously observed, ‘is the least sensual of all the senses’, a postulation which, as I will discuss in Chapters Two and Three, can be fruitfully read against the growing influence of visually-dependent modes of aesthetic expression throughout the early twentieth century, typified by cinema.¹⁷ To encounter an object as a purely visual percept is, suggests Lawrence, to engage with a partial and therefore inadequate representation. Accordingly, Lawrence’s hostility to the abstraction imposed by vision is complemented by an appreciation of the veridical *bona fides* of odour. To encounter an object through the nose, Lawrence opines, is evocative of the real, of that which transcends mimesis. Conversely, ‘the camera’, Lawrence laments, ‘can neither feel the heat of the horse, his strange body; nor smell his horsiness; nor hear him neigh’.¹⁸ Of importance here, in relation to the

¹⁷ D. H. Lawrence, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious; And, Fantasia of the Unconscious*, ed. by Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 102.

¹⁸ D. H. Lawrence, ‘The Painted Tombs of Tarquinia 2’, in *Sketches of Etruscan Places and Other Italian Essays*, ed. by Simonetta De Filippis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 113–33 (p. 127).

arguments advanced by this thesis, is Lawrence's tacit recommendation of sensory holism, rather than the segregation of individual sense modalities. As this study progresses, it will emerge that modernism's understanding of olfaction is always already informed by the interplay of other, competing sense modalities, an interrelationship which underscores the representation(s) of odour offered by Proust and Joyce. Furthermore, Lawrence's emphasis upon the limitations of the technology of photography as an aesthetic medium prompts consideration of the contemporaneous cultural context(s) which inform his remarks. That is, of the wider placement of the sensorium in relation to the socio-historical circumstances of modernism, and more specifically, the conditions of possibility underpinning the literary encoding of odour throughout this period. These I will now outline.

An initial distinction can be made between contingent historical circumstances unique to the modern period, and more embedded aspects of olfaction, those established and sustained long before the advent of the twentieth century, and those – such as the physiology of olfaction – which transcend time and cultural boundaries. It can be assumed that all humans prior to and including the period addressed by this thesis employed (and will continue to employ for the foreseeable future) the same chemoreceptive mechanism for detecting odours. However, this apparent stability is belied by the varying degrees of olfactory acuity proposed by modern commentators. Accordingly, Chapter One will examine the attribution of an enhanced sense of smell to the subjects of ethnographic study, while, simultaneously, heightened olfactory capabilities are associated with progressive technological development by an array of literary modernists, a point to which I will presently return.

If the olfactory system represents a physiological constant, the experience of olfaction (and of other sense modalities) is by contrast culturally mediated, routed through social protocols, and – particularly germane in the case of odour – through subjective association and memory. Classical and Enlightenment precedent offers an influential modelling of odour based upon binary oppositions; the subordination of olfaction in relation to the ‘higher’ sense modalities of vision and hearing, and the categorisation of odours as either foul or fragrant. Plato’s *Timaeus*, for example, disallows the prospect of odour as a neutral property, by noting ‘the only obvious distinction there is, between pleasant and unpleasant scents’.¹⁹ While reductive, this influential opposition underlies the structure of this thesis. Accordingly, my second and third chapters will address noisome and agreeable odours respectively. Odours, Plato further suggests, are inherently ambiguous and resistant to classification – ‘all the various scents are nameless, because there aren’t a specific number of types of scent nor are they straightforward’ – a descriptive challenge which remains intact, and which rehearses the idiosyncratic interrelationship of olfaction and language, a point of central importance throughout this thesis (p. 65). The olfactory, Plato argues, is dogged by imprecision, an attribute which militates against the recruitment of odour in the service of aesthetics, in contrast to the (literal) clarity afforded by vision. Beauty, *Phaedrus* tacitly asserts, cannot be apprehended through the agency of olfaction: ‘we apprehend it [beauty] through the clearest of our senses, clear and resplendent. For sight is the keenest mode of perception vouchsafed us through the body’.²⁰

¹⁹ Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*, trans. by Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 65.

²⁰ Plato, *Plato’s Phaedrus*, trans. by R. Hackforth (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 93.

The marginalisation of odour endorsed by classical philosophy and aesthetics is reiterated within Enlightenment evaluations of olfaction. Kant's brief critique of olfaction rehearses Plato's binary pairing of hedonic/repulsive odours, but further diminishes the capacity to smell as a relict and unnecessary sense modality: 'Which organic sense is the most ungrateful and also seems to be the most dispensable? The sense of smell. It does not pay to cultivate it or refine it at all in order to enjoy; for there are more disgusting objects than pleasant ones'.²¹ Olfaction, Kant suggests, enforces an unwanted erasure of distance between subject and object: 'taking something in through smell (in the lungs) is even more intimate than taking something in through the absorptive vessels of the mouth or throat' (*Anthropology*, p. 50). Olfaction, as Kant recognises, is dependent upon the incorporation of odorous molecules diffused from an odorant, a destabilising of the smeller's autonomy recognised and reiterated by Adorno and Horkheimer: 'When we see we remain who we are, when we smell we are absorbed entirely'.²²

The disquieting intimacy of olfaction is a product of the evanescent properties of odour, a characteristic which in turn informs Hegel's exclusion of odour as a legitimate artistic medium. Hegel offers a structuring of the sensorium based upon a division between the theoretical and practical senses, with olfaction and taste representing the latter, and correspondingly incapable of maintaining an appropriate distance between subject and object: 'we can smell only what is in the process of wasting away, and we can taste only by destroying'.²³ The unstable and entropic nature of odour decried by Hegel accordingly supports the delimiting of

²¹ Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. by Robert B. Loudon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 50–51.

²² Max Horkheimer, Theodore W. Adorno and G. S. Noerr, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 151.

²³ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), I, p. 138.

olfaction (and taste, and touch) from aesthetic production. In contrast to sight and audition, these senses ‘cannot have to do with artistic objects, which are meant to maintain themselves in their real independence and allow of no purely sensuous relationship’ (*Aesthetics*, I, p. 39).

This (necessarily) brief survey of odour’s placement within the domains of philosophy and aesthetic theory consequently informs the representation of olfaction – or lack thereof – throughout the early twentieth century. The lineage of odour-criticism – epitomised, in this tradition, by the continuity of negative framings of the olfactory from Plato to Kant – provides an epistemic grounding for attempts to create a textual rendering of olfactory experience. As I will demonstrate, recurrent references to particular attributes of odour – impermanence, lack of adequate descriptors, sensual intrusiveness, and formal intractability – provide the *a priori* which ground the cultural encoding of olfaction within modernism. The Platonic/Hegelian delimiting of odour as a legitimate aesthetic medium is, for example, reiterated by Herbert Read as self-evident: ‘people are driven into admitting that eating and smelling and other physical sensations can be regarded as arts [...] this theory can quickly be reduced to absurdity’.²⁴ What then, of specifically modern determinants, those socio-cultural circumstances peculiar to the early twentieth century?

Although modernism may have inherited an apparently stable – albeit limited and/or negative – repertory of conceptualisations of odour, this olfactory tradition is mediated by particular emphases and reinterpretations local to the moment of modernism. In the case of osphresiological science the literature of the period rehearses Locke’s prior acknowledgment of the classificatory difficulties associated

²⁴ Herbert Read, *The Meaning of Art* (London: Faber & Faber, 1931), p. 3.

with odour: ‘The variety of smells, which are as many almost, if not more than species of bodies in the world, do most of them want names’.²⁵ Attempts by neuroscientists to provide a definitive, scientific, classification of odours hinged on the search to identify commonalities between aromas, to aggregate them according to shared characteristics, whether derived from their molecular weight or more suggestively, in the context of odour’s interrelationship with visibility, from their congruence with different light wave-lengths.²⁶ The frustration of the ambition to provide a coherent and credible taxonomy of disparate odours is noted by Dan McKenzie, who, writing in *Aromatics and the Soul* (1923), admits: ‘To the physiologist [...] olfaction is the most mysterious of all the senses’.²⁷

However, of particular relevance to the arguments proposed by this thesis is the question of odour’s amenability to technological control. As I will discuss in Chapter Three, perfume assumes an increasing economic and cultural significance throughout the first half of the twentieth century, a development enabled by the ingenuity of industrial chemists and the successful marketing of their olfactory creations. The appeal of odour as a source of sensory pleasure, as I will demonstrate in Chapter Two, is paralleled by an equally influential olfactory anxiety focused upon bodily and industrial pollutants.

The success of perfume’s mass-production depended (and continues to depend) upon fidelity to an original exemplar, a reproducibility at odds with the inability of modern technology to record odours. By 1900, reliable techniques for recording and transmitting visual and auditory information were a cultural

²⁵ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding In Four Books* (London, 1768), I, p. 86.

²⁶ Stanley Finger, *Origins of Neuroscience: A History of Explorations into Brain Function* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 179–180.

²⁷ Dan McKenzie, *Aromatics and the Soul* (London: Heinemann, 1923), p. 99.

commonplace; the first practical means of photography was invented by Louis Daguerre in 1839, and Thomas Edison's phonograph – capable of recording and reproducing sounds – in 1877. The growth in popularity of photography throughout the nineteenth century enabled the co-option of photographic images to support experiments in the persistence of vision, using the principles embodied by devices such as the phenakistoscope and the zoetrope.²⁸ By the close of the century, the viability of moving pictures had been established, and by 1927, the technological achievements of recording and reproducing sounds and images were unified by *The Jazz Singer*, the first full-length film to feature synchronised dialogue.²⁹

The ease and ubiquity of the mechanical reproduction of images and sounds existed (and continues to exist) in contrast to the failure of technology to provide a comparable means of recording and transmitting odours. Such a development, at least within the context of modernism, is anticipated, accorded imminence across a range of cultural axes, but remains unrealised save as a future projection, denying olfaction an influential role within popular culture as a broadcast medium comparable to film and radio. Velimir Khlebnikov, writing in 'The Radio of the Future' (1921), identifies odour as a point of resistance to mechanical transmission, an engineering challenge submissible to Russian Futurist science: 'In the future, even odors will obey the will of Radio: in the dead of winter the honey scent of linden trees will mingle with the odor of snow; a true gift of Radio to the nation'.³⁰ The arrival of the 'smellies', following the advent of the 'talkies', is confidently predicted

²⁸ Deac Rossell, *Living Pictures: The Origins of the Movies* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 19.

²⁹ James W. Roman, *Bigger than Blockbusters: Movies That Defined America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2009), p. 11.

³⁰ Viktor Vladimirovič Khlebnikov, 'The Radio of the Future', in *Collected Works of Velimir Khlebnikov*, ed. by Charlotte Douglas, trans. by Paul Schmidt (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), I, 392–96 (p. 395).

by Chaplin in 1931.³¹ Similarly, Cecil Day-Lewis, writing in 1935, foresees a holistic form of popular entertainment in which odour plays an influential role: ‘we shall see and hear and smell the author’s characters’.³² It is the asymmetry between the visceral affect inspired by olfaction – the most intimate sense modality, as Kant suggests – and its troubling lack of amenability to the type of technological manipulation I have described above, that I will address throughout this study.

Modernism’s interrogation of the apparent lack of an odorous counterpart to cinematography suggests a questioning of representational boundaries; of what the technological/aesthetic resources available throughout the early twentieth century can meaningfully communicate. This reimagining of cinema to better convey the intensity of olfactory experience alludes to a further, foundational context, that of the role of modernism’s broader re-negotiation of established aesthetic traditions in shaping the literary encoding of odour. In other words, it is crucial to consider modern conceptions of literature and language when investigating the era’s representation of olfaction. How, one might ask, can literature convey olfactory experience when, following classical precedent, it is always already compromised by a limited repertory of descriptors? The influence of technology and language, as intermediary filters in the experience of perception, are elided by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards in *The Meaning of Meaning*: ‘language, though often spoken of as a medium of communication, is best regarded as an instrument; and all instruments are

³¹ Charlie Chaplin, ‘When the “Smellies” Arrive’, *The Straits Times*, 25 February 1931, p. 6 <<http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Article/straitstimes19310225.2.14.aspx>> [accessed 12 August 2015].

³² Cecil Day-Lewis, ‘The Revolution in Literature’, *The Living Age*, 1 May 1935, 225–59 (p. 258) <<http://www.unz.org/Public/LivingAge-1935may-00255>> [accessed 25 April 2016].

extensions, or refinements, of our sense-organs'.³³ While resisting a transparent and reductive framing of language as merely 'technology', I argue that it is relevant to note Ogden and Richards' inability to offer a conclusive identification of where sense-organs originate, and technological or linguistic augmentations end. This ambiguity is demonstrated by the modulation from 'extensions' to 'refinements' which underscores the successful embedding of technology within modern culture, but which additionally offers tacit support for the co-option of language *as* a sense modality, or at least as an inescapable adjunct in the experience of perception – a proposition to which I will return throughout this thesis.

Odour, it can be contended, exemplifies that which frustrates the representational capabilities of language. Accordingly, one might initially assert that language and olfaction are characterised by their discordant relationship in contrast to the harmonious interdependence of text and vision/audition. We may read a book, or listen to its recitation; we cannot decipher a text olfactorily because no such means of odorous inscription exists. This thesis will therefore survey literary modernism's response to this problem of representation and gauge the success or futility of this enterprise.

As noted earlier, a tentative consensus in relation to the attributes of 'literary modernism' can be asserted. Here, in the context of odour's challenge to textual enclosure, it is relevant to identify a further general feature; a questioning of language's capabilities as a system of signification. Woolf, for example, writing in *The Waves* (1931), links the dissolution of material certainties – 'I begin to doubt the fixity of tables, the reality of here and now' – with an accompanying destabilisation

³³ C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning: A Study of the Influence of Language Upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1923), p. 98.

of language.³⁴ ‘Who is to say’ Bernard asks, ‘what meaning there is in anything? Who is to foretell the flight of a word? It is a balloon that sails over tree-tops’ (*The Waves*, p. 74). As I will demonstrate, a comparable querying of language is articulated – *enacted* – by Joyce and Proust, epitomised by the engagement of both writers with that which is excluded from linguistic analogue, of which olfaction is a particularly apposite example. Comparably, Wittgenstein, writing in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921), suggests an ineffability recalcitrant to linguistic enclosure, embodied in his oft-repeated assertion: ‘What we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence’.³⁵ More specifically, Wittgenstein cites odour in *Philosophical Investigations* as *the* sense modality which resists a linguistic correlative, and is therefore connotative of the ‘silence’ of incommunicability identified in the *Tractatus*:

Describe the aroma of coffee! – Why can’t it be done? Do we lack the words? And for what are words lacking? – But where do we get the idea that such a description must, after all, be possible? Have you ever felt the lack of such a description? Have you tried to describe the aroma and failed?³⁶

While Wittgenstein’s observation apparently rehearses the familiar, conflictual interrelationship of language and olfaction, I argue that his description supports the simultaneous designation of odour as a master-signifier for that which cannot be assigned a satisfactory linguistic sign. An appealing logic suggests itself; if the olfactory is defiant of textual evocation, then it can be presumed that the formal

³⁴ Virginia Woolf, *The Waves*, ed. by James M. Haule (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press for Basil Blackwell, 1993), p. 186.

³⁵ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. by D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 151.

³⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. by G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 159.

properties of odour – evanescence, resistance to analysis and mechanical reproduction – might serve, in the case of literary modernism, as a conceit for other, consonant representational challenges or extra-lingual qualities. It is this hypothesis – that the response of modernist aesthetics to odour is innately contradictory, combining the will-to-represent with an appreciation of the *non-significatory* properties of olfaction – which is a principal contention of this thesis. Thus, I argue that odour evades representation but equally, stimulates aesthetic ingenuity in addressing this difficulty. What, then, of the strategies deployed by writers and artists when attempting to evoke olfactory experience? Put another way, to what extent did the attributes of literary modernism identified by Ardis *et al* – ‘aesthetic self-reflexiveness; nonlinear narrative organization; paradox, ambiguity, and uncertainty’ – enable a reconfiguration of odour’s amenability to representation, or did other, less self-consciously experimental forms substantially influence the modern conception of odour?

In addressing the *how* of modernism’s efforts to encode odorous percepts, it is useful to foreground this question by acknowledging a modernist desire to unify ostensibly rival aesthetic modes. John Cournos’ *Babel* (1922), for example, describes the apparent imminence of a universal language of the arts as a consequence of the linking of scientific and aesthetic progress. The text predicts the erasure of aesthetic difference, the primary driver of which is science, and its attendant univocality: ‘science has made the world one, and has given the world one speech’.³⁷ The adoption of scientific protocols within aesthetics – the corollary of the global reach of industrialisation – enables the (satiric) fulfilment of the modernist project of a universally available language: ‘Universal speech in the arts is being accomplished

³⁷ John Cournos, *Babel* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922), p. 30.

at last' (*Babel*, p. 30). As I argue in the penultimate chapter of this study, the prospect of a universally-accessible aesthetic language is a focal concern of Proust, but this unitary ambition obtains additional significance when read against the representational intransigence with which odour is associated. If olfaction is always already evocative of that which circumvents textual evocation, this subsequently enforces either its *non*-signification – we must, *qua* Wittgenstein, remain silent in relation to the experience of odour – or, alternatively, the co-option of similetic/metaphorical language to surmount this challenge. Thus, the olfactory can only be approximated, signalled by reference to that which it is *not*. It is important to note that my conception of metaphor throughout this thesis is that of a feature of literary, rather than instrumental discourse. Critics such as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, and Zoltán Kövecses have stressed the ubiquity of metaphor as constituent of language, thus discounting its segregation as an innately literary construct.³⁸ While acknowledging the validity of this framing, this study endorses the dissenting model proposed by Paul Ricoeur. Writing in *The Rule of Metaphor*, Ricoeur identifies metaphor as profoundly implicated in the constitution of literary discourse. Such writing is, he states, significant of multiple meanings: 'play on words, implication, metaphor, and irony are some particular cases of this polysemy'.³⁹ Literary metaphor, suggests Ricoeur – and by extension, literary discourse – is differentiated from 'instrumental', 'non-literary' communication by degree, rather than kind. The use of metaphor becomes recognisably literary (if not quantifiably so) when recruited to conjoin hitherto separate semantic properties. Unfamiliar metaphor, states Ricoeur, is confirmation of its literary bona fides: 'If, indeed, one's intention is

³⁸ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 3; Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 49.

³⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*, trans. by Robert Czerny, Kathleen McLaughlin, and John Costello (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 106.

to draw a line within the domain of metaphor between the class of familiar metaphors and the class of new metaphors, one should say that the first time that a metaphor is made up, the modifier receives a connotation that it never had until then' (p. 113). In the case of olfaction, language's analogical properties offer a means of communicating that for which no precise linguistic correlative exists; consonantly, the drive to unify disparate aesthetic modes suggests the recruitment of a stable signifiatory sense modality – vision or audition – to meaningfully encode the fugitive properties of odour. This is, as I will demonstrate, a persistent and contested characteristic of the modernist co-option of odour in the service of aesthetics, but which is also exhibited across a wide array of discursive fields and cultural networks, including synaesthesia's debated status as a conscious, associative process, or conversely, a genuine clinical phenomenon.

In turn, the interplay of sense modalities occasioned in the representation of odour suggests the operation of the sensorium as a harmonious, rather than a conflictual system, an affirmation of sensory holism voiced by Merleau-Ponty: 'An object is an organism of colours, smells, sounds and tactile appearances which symbolize, modify and accord with each other'.⁴⁰ This endorsement of holism, rather than the segregation of the sensorium into isolated modes of perception, echoes the mandate for aesthetic unification proposed by an array of modernist writers and artists, but more locally, resonates with the interrelated modernist contention that the work of art is an indissoluble entity, irreducible to its contributory elements. Framed in this way, art and literature are validated through their assertion of a quality (or qualities) that resist an authoritative exegesis. As this study develops, it will be seen that this prizing of a notional ineffability inhering within art is explicitly commended

⁴⁰ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1978), p. 38.

by such writers as T. S. Eliot, H. D., and Proust, but is also lent theoretical support by the writing of Walter Benjamin. ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’ (1936) and ‘The Task of the Translator’ (1923) demonstrate a shared preoccupation with the incommunicable properties of art and language; in other words, those attributes strongly consonant with the qualities of odour that foreground this thesis – an impalpability which can be recognised but defies explication and demands a recourse to analogical language.

This brings us, once more, back to the foundational, asymmetric relationship of olfaction and language and the response of literary modernism to this inherited difficulty. However, it must be cautioned that although the model of language I will compare with formal properties of odour is clearly Saussurean in its foundational pairing of sign and object, a more nuanced examination of Saussurean linguistics and its applicability to the phenomenology of odour remains beyond the purview of this thesis. Rather than initiating a cursory investigation of odour’s significance within the field of linguistics, my intention is to establish the viability of an initial, overlooked and compelling connection between language and olfaction.⁴¹

Yet, in asserting the primacy of a dialogic relationship between an established tradition of odour’s *non*-articulation and the moment of modernism – the repertory of emerging technical and aesthetic innovations available at the beginning of the twentieth century – we sidestep a further, influential aspect of the modernist representation of olfaction. While odour is, I argue, emblematic of what modernism *might* achieve artistically and technologically, it is necessary to foreground this

⁴¹ A more forceful, causal relationship is proposed by John H. Kenneth, who directly implicates olfaction in the development of language: ‘many words are vocalisations and articulations of simple reactions to olfactory stimuli’ (John H. Kenneth, ‘Relation of Language to Physiological Stimuli’, *Nature*, 116.2925 (1925), 748–49 (p. 748) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/116748b0>>).

paradigm by first noting a dissenting counter-narrative prevalent throughout modern culture, in which olfaction is connotative of the archaic – a sense modality relegated and rendered irrelevant following the advent of civilisation. It is, therefore, appropriate to begin by considering the contribution of a figure heavily implicated in the depreciation of olfaction as a primitive and irrational mode of perception; that is, the influence of Freud in shaping the modernist conception of odour.

Chapter One

‘Smelling strangeness’: olfaction and the representation of cultural difference in Freud, D. H. Lawrence and Malinowski

It is necessary first to qualify the epistemological authority embodied by Freud’s influential framing of olfaction by noting the surprising sparsity of odour references throughout his writing. Contemporaneous sexologists such as Havelock Ellis and Iwan Bloch offer extensive considerations of odour as an object of erotic interest.¹ By contrast, Freud’s engagement with the olfactory is fleeting, demonstrated as an incidental feature of a number of case histories, or, as Rindisbacher notes, as a footnote supporting a broader argument (*The Smell of Books*, p. 150). There is, therefore, an asymmetry between the meagreness of Freud’s pronouncements in relation to olfaction, and the currency they obtain within subsequent critical accounts of the cultural significance of odour, a tendency reiterated by this study. This linkage accordingly invites the question of *how* Freud’s casting of olfaction became institutionalised as a theoretical model through which ensuing enquiries into odour’s representation are detoured. Before doing so, however, it is helpful to summarise the main points of Freud’s odour paradigm addressed by this chapter, which I will read alongside the writing of Lawrence (*The Lost Girl*, *Mornings in Mexico*, *Studies in Classic American Literature* and *The Plumed Serpent*), and the anthropology of Bronislaw Malinowski.

¹ See Iwan Bloch, *Odoratus Sexualis* (Whitefish, Mont.: Kessinger Publishing, 2006); Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis, 1914), IV, pp. 44–112.

Freud situates the concept of olfaction within the context of anthropology by describing its relegation to a minor role in the development of civilisation, with the suppression of olfaction serving to emphasise the visual as a source of sexual stimulation. This transition is attributed to the literal elevation of man, described in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930): ‘The diminution of olfactory stimuli seems itself to be a consequence of man’s raising himself from the ground, of his assumption of an upright gait; this made his genitals, which were previously concealed, visible’.²

However, in acknowledging the prevalence of Freud’s evolutionary interpretation of olfaction as a construct through which odour criticism is invariably routed, it is important to note that the designation of olfaction as a primitive sense modality is not an exclusively Freudian innovation, eloquent of a moment of intellectual rupture. Darwin, writing on olfactory prowess in *The Descent of Man* (1871), observes: ‘He [man] inherits the power in an enfeebled and so far rudimentary condition, from some early progenitor, to whom it was highly serviceable, and by whom it was continually used’.³ A comprehensive evaluation of Freud’s indebtedness to established theoretical models is not necessary here – of relevance, however, is the incorporation of pre-existent constructs pertaining to olfaction by psychoanalytic discourse, and their consequent identification as a feature of Freudian rhetoric.

² Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Vintage; The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), XXI, p. 99.

³ Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1896), p. 18.

Freud's abnegation of odour is retrospective not only in his reconstruction of an unrecoverable evolutionary transition. The transcendence of olfaction as a consequence of human development additionally echoes comparable classical valuations of bipedalism (and a correspondent abandonment of odour) as a defining attribute of human beings and consequently significant of a universal ordering: 'alone of the animals [man] is upright, on account of the fact that its nature and substantial being are divine'.⁴ The structuring of olfaction offered by Freud is evocative of sensorial atavism, but also admits the presence of odour as an inescapable constituent of modernity. Olfaction, suggests Freud, remains an occult and troubling influence upon the governance of human sexual and excremental protocols, prompting the question of 'whether the atrophy of the sense of smell [...] and the consequent organic repression of his [man's] pleasure in smell may not have had a considerable share in the origin of his susceptibility to nervous disease'.⁵

While an evident connection can be established between Freud's speculative observations on olfaction and their broader reception among literary and cultural historians, it is less easy to identify a direct correlation between modernist literary and psychoanalytic conceptions of odour. In part, this is attributable to the relative neglect of odour as an object of aesthetic interest, but also underscores the more general difficulty of establishing lines of influence between different fields of knowledge, a challenge I will address in Chapter Three of this thesis, in relation to

⁴ Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals*, trans. by James G. Lennox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 97.

⁵ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Vintage; The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), x, p. 248.

the interconnections between science and aesthetics.⁶ In the context of the present discussion, it is useful to emphasise the repeated assertion by early twentieth-century writers on the successful embedding of Freudian rhetoric in every aspect of modern life. Bernard DeVoto, assessing Freud's reputation after his death in 1939, suggests that the latter's reconfiguration of the psyche is 'now implicit in the way men habitually think about one another'.⁷ Consequently, DeVoto observes, the influence of Freudian rhetoric is omnipresent, demonstrated in 'an advertisement on a billboard', or 'two minutes' conversation on a subway' (p. 10). Cognately, the significance of Freud's theories of mind are stressed by Day-Lewis. They may, he proposes, 'prove as important as those of the industrial revolution or the discovery of America'.⁸ Similar hagiographic pronouncements abound. 'Freud is the God of Psychoanalysis', suggests Cornelia Stratton Parker in 1925; 'It is he [Freud] alone who has revolutionized the mental sciences', declares A. A. Brill.⁹

Conversely, dissenting views of Freud acquiesce to the widespread dissemination of his ideas, but indicate a polarisation of opinion in relation to the reputation of their progenitor: 'whether he [Freud] was a charlatan or a man of

⁶ A challenge articulated by Michael Whitworth, in relation to the comparable appropriation of scientific metaphors by literary modernists: 'We can glimpse fragments of the mechanism – an author reading science in one place, an expository metaphor emerging in their writing elsewhere – but never the full machine' (Michael H. Whitworth, *Einstein's Wake: Relativity, Metaphor, and Modernist Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 231).

⁷ Bernard DeVoto, 'Freud's Influence on Literature', *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 7 October 1939, 10–11 (p. 10) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/SaturdayRev-1939oct07-00010>> [accessed 3 December 2015].

⁸ Cecil Day-Lewis, 'The Revolution in Literature', *The Living Age*, 1 May 1935, 225–59 (p. 257) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LivingAge-1935may-00255>> [accessed 25 April 2016].

⁹ Cornelia Stratton Parker, 'The Capital of Psychology', *The Survey*, 1 September 1925, pp. 551–54 (p. 552) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/TheSurvey-1925sep01-00551>> [accessed 3 December 2015]; A. A. Brill, 'Freud, Man and Theorist', *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 17 January 1925, p. 460 (p. 460) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/SaturdayRev-1925jan17-00460a02>> [accessed 3 December 2015].

genius has not yet ceased to be a topic of heated controversy'.¹⁰ Space does not permit an extensive analysis of Freud's migration into popular consciousness. However, a syllogism can be asserted as a means of counteracting the apparent lack of direct references to Freud's concept of odour by exemplars of olfactory representation such as Joyce and Proust. If Freud is credited with modifying and informing key aspects of modern existence, following the argument of these commentators, then this logically suggests that his presentation of odour – despite its originally restricted expression – accordingly informs the conceptual casting of odour within literary modernism. This contention is supported by the recurrent identification of Freud's pervasive influence upon modernist literary discourse. Thus, DeVoto asserts a causal link between the writing of Joyce and Proust and their alleged indebtedness to Freudian theory: 'Neither would have written as he did without the instruments that Freud fitted to their hands' ('Freud's Influence on Literature', p. 10).

A more nuanced account of the confluence of psychoanalysis and literature is offered by Helen V. McLean, who identifies a natural affinity between the two disciplines: 'Of all artists, the writer should be most influenced by Freudian concepts'.¹¹ Unlike DeVoto, McLean does not directly implicate Freud in the development of Joyce and Proust's respective oeuvres, but instead identifies a commonly-held interest in the promptings of the unconscious mind. This denial of a direct Freudian influence in the creation of modernist literature is however, compromised by the conclusion of her article, which reiterates the apparently

¹⁰ Francis Bartlett, 'Freud's Contribution', *The New Masses*, 17 October 1939, p. 25 (p. 25) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/NewMasses-1939oct17-00025>> [accessed 3 December 2015].

¹¹ Helen V. McClean, 'Freud and Literature', *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 3 September 1938, pp. 18–19 (p. 18) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/SaturdayRev-1938sep03-00018>> [accessed 4 December 2015].

inescapable nature of psychoanalytic discourse. As she suggests, ‘Even those individuals who deny consciously that there is any validity in Freudian concepts utilize unconsciously in their thought and speech that which has seeped into our way of thinking and speaking’ (p. 19). In this instance, Freudian rhetoric becomes Freudian in action; it emerges, unwilling, in the minds and language of the detractors of psychoanalysis, following its unsuccessful repression.¹²

This précis of Freud’s agency in implicitly shaping the modernist conception of olfaction in turn alludes to a number of principal concerns addressed by this thesis. These include; the role of odour in influencing the interplay between disparate discursive domains such as literature, anthropology and psychoanalysis; the congruence between the highly-personalised, subjective nature of olfactory experience and the primacy of individuation advanced by psychoanalytic science, and the role of olfaction in accentuating and maintaining cultural and ethnological divisions. I have noted the critical invocation of Freud as an influence – beneficial or otherwise – upon literary modernism. More pertinent in this instance, I argue, is the fictionality which pervades Freud’s disparagement of olfaction as a primitive and irrational sense modality; his account ‘seduces in its confident reductionism and suggestive possibilities’.¹³

On one hand, critical opinion identifies and applauds the shared ambition of psychoanalysis and literature to uncover, in DeVoto’s words, ‘the dark places of the mind’ (‘Freud’s Influence on Literature’, p. 10). However, this endorsement is qualified by its tacit assertion of a hierarchical relationship. Literature is sanctioned

¹² For example, Ellmann notes that the creation of *Finnegans Wake* was informed by Joyce’s interest in dreams, despite the latter’s ‘distaste for Freud’ (Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 546).

¹³ William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 73.

precisely because it conforms to Freudian theory: ‘Freud regarded the artist as a dynamic psychologist, who reaches intuitively and in the round conclusions no less valid than those which the analyst comes to’ (p. 10). By contrast, the animus directed at Freud’s speculative palaeopsychology – epitomised by his reconstruction of the olfactory’s repression – suggests an impermissible fictionality at play, which accordingly undermines the (contested) scientific credibility of psychoanalysis.¹⁴ Central to this erosion of authority, DeVoto suggests, is Freud’s shift from empirical observation to imaginative conjecture: ‘[Freud] erected a whole school of anthropology whose activity was purely deductive’ (‘Freud’s Influence on Literature’, p. 11). His comments are echoed in a damning review of *Moses and Monotheism*: ‘Starting with certain conjectures which in themselves are questionable, an elaborate structure of speculation is built upon the quicksands of analogy’.¹⁵ While the critical reception of Freud’s writing does not suggest a comparable hostility in response to *Civilization and its Discontents*, the unsubstantiated anthropology embodied by his footnote on olfaction rehearses the contentious narratives of *Totem and Taboo* (1913) and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939). The perils latent in the ‘quicksands of analogy’ underscore the dangers epitomised by Freud’s incursion into anthropological discourse, but also allude to the recourse to analogical, similitic language characteristic of the textual encoding of olfaction, a point to which I will return throughout this thesis. Freud’s fictionalised account of humankind’s transcendence of olfaction – an event which ‘seems’ to have

¹⁴ Psychoanalysis was formally recognised as a science by the American Psychiatric Association in 1934, but attracted (and continues to attract) denigration as a pseudoscience. A representative critique is provided by George Matheson Cullen, who, writing in 1921, dismissed Freud’s theories as a ‘lascivious farrago of nonsense’, a ‘monstrous system’ and a ‘real danger to society’ (George Matheson Cullen, ‘Psycho-Analysis Attacked’, *The Living Age*, 9 July 1921, pp. 103–8 (p. 107,108)).

¹⁵ Philip A. Taylor, ‘Freud’s Last Book’, *The New Masses*, 17 October 1939, p. 26 (p. 26) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/NewMasses-1939oct17-00026>> [accessed 4 December 2015].

occurred – deviates from the will-to-objectivity of the text, but also marks an attempt to diminish the problem of odour. A powerfully affective and potentially threatening sense modality, olfaction is relegated by Freud to an ambiguous point in human evolution, and it is with his prehistoric placement of odour that this chapter will primarily contend.

It is at this point that I want to introduce Lawrence as a figure of comparison with Freud. As noted in my introduction, Lawrence’s self-declared anti-rationalism and championing of instinctual, rather than intellectual knowledge, can be productively read alongside modernist conceptualisations of olfaction, which share a cognate awareness of odour’s appeal to the sensuous, rather than the ratiocinative. Civilization’s enforced renunciation of the instinctual life is lamented by Lawrence as a vitiating process: ‘We are the sad results of a four-thousand-year effort to break the Old Adam, to domesticate him utterly. He is to a large extent broken and domesticated’.¹⁶ A cognate assertion of rationality over intuition is proposed by Freud: ‘Civilization has been attained through the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction, and it demands the same renunciation from each newcomer in turn’.¹⁷

Despite this apparent congruity, it is also necessary to acknowledge the marked antipathy of Lawrence to the widespread assimilation of psychoanalytic theory, an aversion which achieves polemic expression in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. Lawrence, echoing the commentators cited above, recognises the ubiquity of Freudian rhetoric: ‘The Œdipus complex was a household word, the incest motive a commonplace of tea-table chat’ (*Psychoanalysis and the*

¹⁶ D. H. Lawrence, ‘Introduction to Pictures’, in *Late Essays and Articles*, ed. by James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 168–74 (p. 173).

¹⁷ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. by James Strachey (London: Vintage; The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), XIV, p. 282.

Unconscious, p. 7). Moreover, in dismissing Freud as a ‘psychiatric quack’, Lawrence suggests the popularity of psychoanalysis is based upon its linguistic appeal as much as the veracity of its claims (p. 7). The ‘dream-horrors’ retrieved by Freud during the process of psychoanalytic enquiry serve, for Lawrence, to underline the limitations of psychoanalytic discourse: ‘Once all the dream-horrors were translated into full consciousness, they would sublimate into – well, we don’t quite know what [...] Such is the charm of a new phrase that we accepted this sublimation process without further question’ (p. 9). Thus, the legitimacy of psychoanalysis, Lawrence implies, is founded upon a collective acceptance of its terminology as axiomatic. Suggestively, when viewed in the context of Freud’s asserted significance in framing the modernist conception of odour, Lawrence recruits the language of olfaction to dismiss the aims of psychoanalysis. It is, Lou suggests in *St. Mawr*, an enterprise motivated by prurience – ‘morbid interest’ – rather than scientific or therapeutic imperatives.¹⁸ Accordingly, the text states, the psychoanalyst is primarily attracted to the ‘privacies’ and ‘dirty linen’ of the subjects of psychoanalytic enquiry, an ascription of sordor which subsequently modulates into explicit foetor as the narrative progresses (p. 44). ‘If you cut a thing up’, Lou continues, ‘of course it will smell. Hence, nothing raises such an infernal stink, at last, as human psychology’ (p. 44).

Both Freud and Lawrence view olfaction as representative of that which is screened, or defiant of representation. For the former, it is a signifier of modern neuroses; Lawrence’s presentation of odour, by contrast, is informed by his sensitivity to the inability of language to satisfactorily render olfactory experience. Consequently, his writing asserts the value of the olfactory as a means of fruitfully

¹⁸ D. H. Lawrence, ‘St. Mawr’, in *St. Mawr and Other Stories*, ed. by Brian Finney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 19–156 (p. 44).

highlighting the limits of language as a mode of representation. In the case of Lawrence, odour serves as a metaphor for the constraints that prevent the author from successfully manipulating language to bridge the gap between sign and object, or interrelatedly, of negotiating the moment of difference engendered by cross-cultural contact.

The (dis)affinities between Freud and Lawrence's treatment of olfaction can be explored through a comparison of the case history that formed the basis of Freud's initial articulation of his theory of repression with Lawrence's novel *The Lost Girl*. Freud recounts the story of the governess Lucy R., who complained of olfactory hallucinations. These, Freud believed, found their origin in her unrequited love for her employer and the spectacle of his rage when a female acquaintance of the family kissed his children on the mouth without permission.¹⁹ Freud notes that a key aspect of Lucy R.'s olfactory hallucination was the odour of burnt pudding, which she had previously encountered while debating whether to resign from her post in Vienna in response to her employer's actions. In his account of Lucy R.'s case history, Freud articulates and confirms his understanding of olfaction as a signifier of the past, whose presence is allusive: it represents (and screens) something other than itself.²⁰ For Freud, olfaction is always already implicated by its visual or textual representation in the dialogue between the psychiatrist – who imposes a retrospective order and theoretical clarity on a set of phenomena – and the patient, whose experience of odour is evident only at a remove (whether through

¹⁹ Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud, *Studies On Hysteria*, trans. by James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, The Hogarth Press, 1957), p. 120.

²⁰ Odour's fixity within the past and reliance on the past for its intelligibility is, of course, also recognised by Henri Bergson; see *Time and Free Will: An Essay On the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. by F. L. Pogson (1910; London: George Allen & Unwin, 1950), p. 161.

hallucination or recollection) through the recitation of the case history, a procedural obligation in the psychoanalytic encounter.

Freud's account of Lucy R. pinpoints the moment of odour's transmission, or rather approximation, through modes of communication which are inimical to its status as non-reproducible through the signification of language. Odour is extra-textual and therefore exists only as a textual representation created by the dialogue between Freud and Lucy R., and through its subsequent theoretical abstraction. However, as part of a text that is necessarily reliant upon the visual for its creation, reproduction and dissemination, olfaction begins to assert its non-textual nature through the means of its representation, eventually characterising the very language with which Freud describes its agency in repression.

Freud fixes the odour of burnt pudding as an historical event; in *The Lost Girl*, Lawrence locates Alvina's half-disgust at the aroma of a burned herring within the context of a rhetorically-enacted event that forms part of a present narrative continuum in the novel. Tellingly, however, olfaction in the novel also alludes to past events and cultural preconceptions, accenting the sense impression with Freudian undertones:

She enjoyed the smell of a toasted bloater, rather burnt. So common! So indescribably common! And she detested bloaters, because of the hairy feel of the spines in her mouth. But to smell them like this, to know that she was in the region of "penny beef-steaks", gave her a perverse pleasure. (p. 31)

The bloaters represent a specific set of social relations: their odour was frequently invoked in contemporary literature in association with working-class culture.²¹ However, although their odour is indicated and identified within Lawrence's text, it is once again resistant to textual representation. Alvina's enjoyment of an odour so redolent of class distinctions – it is '*indescribably common*' – is informed by her received knowledge of precisely these associations. That is, the odour's qualities and significance to Alvina are partially dependent upon her cultural conditioning. Her appreciation of an experience that transgresses entrenched boundaries of social propriety is mirrored in her attraction to Ciccio, who is represented as desirable precisely because he is alien, and therefore aesthetically and culturally separate from her: 'A stranger – and so beautiful [...] She hated his beauty. It shut her apart' (p. 161). Ciccio's appeal is rooted in difference, and at first couched in the language of emetic disgust. This recalls Mary Douglas's formulation of 'matter out of place', which stresses that dirt's designation as such (and consequently the arousal of repugnance) is determined by context.²² As we see in *The Lost Girl*, 'Ciccio's velvety, suave heaviness, the very heave of his muscles, so full and softly powerful, sickened her' (p. 161). Alvina's reaction to Ciccio, and to the odour of bloaters earlier in the novel, is determined and characterised by the fact that both are deemed inappropriate to their respective contexts. In the case of the bloaters, this is reaffirmed by Lawrence's suggestion of their haptic reception; Alvina's aversion to them is due to the 'hairy feel of the spines in her mouth'. Yet both their odour and their tactility – rather like her first sight of Ciccio – arouse a 'perverse pleasure'. Again, this is not to suggest that Alvina's enjoyment of the odour of burnt herrings is

²¹ See Maroula Joannou, *Ladies, Please Don't Smash These Windows: Women's Writing, Feminist Consciousness, and Social Change, 1918-38* (Oxford: Berg, 1995), p. 75.

²² Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 35.

a transparent exposition of, for example, Freud's writing on the perverse.²³ Yet the emergence of this partial or fragmentary congruity between Lawrence and Freud is suggestive because it mirrors key components of the two writers' ideologies and aesthetic practices: in particular, Lawrence's engagement with the flexibility and constraints of language, which manifests itself in the polyvocality of his own texts, and Freud's conception of the psyche as fundamentally divided, determined by a dissent productive of the occult and the repressed through metaphor and symbol in the form of dreams, fetishes and psychological transference.

Casting Lawrence's texts, by extension, as 'neurotic' depends upon a recognition that their presentation of competing tensions is achieved knowingly, and that the resolution of these tensions does not rely upon the privileged scientific abilities of the clinician. In *The Lost Girl*, Lawrence's description of Alvina's response to arriving in London is suffused with the language of olfaction, highlighting the ability of the odorous to signify areas that remain outside the limits of textual representation. However, an underlying ambiguity remains as to precisely what these odours are evocative of, a narrative fallibility recognised throughout this thesis. The bloaters are associated with 'penny beef-steaks', which are a site of indeterminate meaning. The term is glossed in the Cambridge edition of *The Lost Girl* as referring either to the cheapest cut of beef-steak or, more provocatively, to contemporary slang usage: "beefsteak" meant prostitute in the early twentieth century; the whole phrase may also be slang for pawnbrokers' (p. 367). Given the widespread conception of prostitution as transgressive, the association of the bloaters

²³ In this instance, Freud's understanding of 'perversity' can be abbreviated to denote the pursuit of sexual gratification outside those sexual behaviours deemed socially normative. That Freud's understanding of the concept is more richly nuanced, and evolved throughout his career, is described by Louise Carignan in 'Splitting of the Ego and Perversion', in *On Freud's 'Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence'*, ed. by Thierry Bokanowski and Sergio Lewkowicz (London: Karnac, 2009), pp. 155–71 (p. 155).

with a term alluding to sexual licence and thus social disorder prefigures the sexual, social and cultural disruption effected by Alvina's departure to Italy with Ciccio. When Alvina encounters the bloaters, however, odour is still a latent force, encoding at a seemingly trivial point in the narrative the events that later form the novel's main narrative trajectory. It is tempting to see this formative olfactory event and its re-presentation later in *The Lost Girl* as mimetic of the process of Freudian repression. However, drawing such a parallel creates an artificial distinction between the 'manifest' and 'latent' language of the text, and thereby overlooks Lawrence's own handling of language, which is predicated on his desire to enforce a pause before the meaning of any word is resolved. His polyvalent placement and contextualisation of words – which I will explore more fully, presently, with reference to Wittgenstein's questioning of 'ordinary' language – ensures that both the manifest and the latent layers of the text are equally legitimate: differentiated yet united by the questioning of signification that informs Lawrence's writing.

My introductory comparison of Freud and Lawrence lends literary specificity to the more general acknowledgment of the successful assimilation of psychoanalytic concepts across a range of cultural axes. I will return to Lawrence later in this chapter, but it is therefore relevant, at this juncture, to offer a further context against which the dissemination of Freudian theory, particularly Freudian olfactory theory, can be read. Freud's retrospective, reconstructive anthropology questions epistemological boundaries by encroaching on the domains of other, competing social sciences, a symptom of the pervasive influence of psychoanalysis.²⁴ This incursion provoked criticism from several contemporary anthropologists, notably

²⁴ 'The basic Freudian ideas have worked into education, the law, economics, history, sociology, criminology, and all other studies of society' ('Freud's Influence on Literature', p. 11).

Bronislaw Malinowski, who in 1923 made a vehement attack in a letter published in *Nature* magazine on what he considered to be Freud's fallacious use of ethnology to support his theoretical propositions. At the same time, however, Malinowski conceded the significance of Freudian theory when it did not trespass upon the intellectual territory claimed by anthropology, noting that 'Freud has given us the first concrete theory about the relation between instinctive life and social institution'.²⁵

The timing of Malinowski's attack is significant. In the previous year – the *annus mirabilis* of modernism – he published his seminal monograph *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), an account of the culture and customs of the inhabitants of the Trobriand Islands north-east of Papua New Guinea. The text's ambition is clear from the outset. Its opening chapter, 'The Subject, Method and Scope of this Enquiry', attempts to delineate and legitimise the role of the professional anthropologist through an insistence upon fieldwork and a consequent privileging of the anthropological gaze over that of the untrained observer.²⁶ Malinowski discounts 'white informants' as a source of ethnographic knowledge on the grounds that their understanding of tribal life is distorted by their cultural biases. Such accounts, Malinowski states, are 'full of the biased [sic] and pre-judged opinions inevitable in the average practical man, whether administrator, missionary, or trader, yet so strongly repulsive to a mind striving after the objective, scientific view of things'.²⁷ Here, Malinowski's championing of objectivity is unmistakably ocular in emphasis.

²⁵ Bronislaw Malinowski, 'Psycho-Analysis and Anthropology', *Nature*, 112.2818 (1923), 650–51 (p. 650) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/112650a0>>.

²⁶ Malinowski's insistence upon the centrality of fieldwork can be contrasted with the nature of his first published monograph, *The Family among the Australian Aborigines* (1913), whose findings were derived from contemporary ethnological publications, rather than from the direct experience of the anthropologist-author.

²⁷ Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), pp. 5–6.

His idealisation of a ‘scientific view of things’ not only differentiates the anthropologist from the layman, but tacitly asserts the scientific reliability of one sense modality to the detriment of others. That is, the primacy of vision in contrast to olfaction as a properly ‘scientific’ mode of apprehension, a point to which I will return later in this chapter, in relation to Malinowski’s *non*-scientific writing. Here, it is relevant to emphasise Malinowski’s reification of the anthropologist as the representative of a scientific caste, which also finds expression in his questioning of Freudian theory, which is couched in the language of pathogenesis: ‘The infection by psycho-analysis of the neighbouring fields of science—notably that of anthropology, folklore, and sociology—has been a very rapid and somewhat inflammatory process’ (‘Psycho-Analysis and Anthropology’, p. 650). Malinowski implies that, in contrast to the objective figure of the anthropologist, whose assertions derive veracity from their origins in empirical observation, Freudian psychoanalysis is coloured by an impermissible religiosity transcended by the advent of systematic fieldwork: ‘The votaries of Freud [...] have displayed in their missionary zeal an amount of dogmatism and of aggressiveness’ (p. 650).²⁸

Malinowski’s critique of Freud offers a salutary empirical check to the latter’s imaginative interpretation of human origins, at least in terms of their relationship with ‘present-day savages’ (‘Psycho-Analysis and Anthropology’, p. 650). Malinowski claims that Freud’s ethnographic assertions in *Totem and Taboo* ‘will not stand the test of evidence’, as they contain ‘glaring surface absurdities’ (p. 650). He confers authority on his critique with reference to the value and necessity of

²⁸ Malinowski’s (derisory) comparison of psychoanalysis with religion is echoed by contemporaneous commentators: ‘The history of psychoanalysis is very nearly comparable to the history of any new religion’ (Walter Béran Wolfe, ‘Twilight of Psychoanalysis’, *The American Mercury*, August 1935, 385–94 (p. 393) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/AmMercury-1935aug-00385>> [accessed 19 May 2016]).

physical encounters with the ethnographic subject; unlike Freud, he points out, he has ‘actually been engaged in fieldwork among the natives of Eastern New Guinea’ (p. 650). This statement of legitimacy gains additional credibility from its incorporation within institutionalised anthropological discourse. Malinowski notes that the evidence for his rejection of the Oedipus complex – posited by Freud as a universal of human psychological development – is provided in full in his forthcoming monograph: ‘a book shortly to be published on the sexual life and family organisation of these natives’ (p. 650). The book in question was *Mutterrechtliche Familie und Ödipuskomplex* (1924). In this instance, Malinowski’s policing of the intellectual boundaries of the discipline makes him the voice of anthropology; he constructs himself as a mediator between an unqualified endorsement of psychoanalysis (which would threaten the autonomy of anthropology) and an outright rejection of the discipline (which would disregard the fertile conditions of possibility offered by psychoanalytic representations of repression and sublimation as theoretical models for incorporation into anthropological discourse).

Freud’s speculative reconstruction of the prohibitions placed upon biological life by social practices (and, by extension, his understanding of the body as representative of a nexus of cultural controls rather than existing purely in terms of physiological contingency) was cast as untenable by modernist anthropology. More precisely, objections were raised to Freud’s failure to fulfil the precondition of observation that underpinned (and continues to underpin) modernist anthropology’s claims to legitimacy as a scientific discipline. The fictionality ascribed by anthropologists to Freud’s account of odour’s subordination to the visual contains an additional, tacit commentary on the wider cultural placement of olfaction, and the

legitimacy of its presence within different discursive territories. There is a conflict between Freud's offering of what *might* have been, and the insistence of modernist anthropology that the viability of such a hypothesis must rely upon a rigorous, informed analysis of cultures deemed to be analogous to earlier, pre-civilised states of human development. The equivalency of vanished, prehistoric cultures and indigenous peoples is endorsed by Freud in his suggestion that the psychology of 'savages' must have 'a peculiar interest for us if we are right in seeing in it a well-preserved picture of an early stage of our own development'.²⁹

In the context of a perceived correspondence between the prehistoric past and the anthropological present, Freud's emphasis on odour as pivotal to the emergence of protocols governing the control of sexual and excremental impulses accordingly invites consideration of odour's presence (or absence) in contemporary ethnological texts as a means of identifying (and stigmatising) indigenous peoples. For instance, those belonging to indigenous cultures may, these texts assert, be distinguished by their possession of an enhanced capacity to detect and discriminate between odours, or by a characteristic body odour perceived to be a marker of racial origin.

The utility of the olfactory as a marker of ethnological difference *par excellence* is contested in contemporary anthropological texts, but is, as I will demonstrate, an accepted leitmotif of popular fiction of the period.³⁰ For example, Rider Haggard, whose colonially-inflected adventure novels I will presently consider

²⁹ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Vintage; The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), XIII, p. 1.

³⁰ It is important to qualify the use of the phrase 'popular fiction', and to recognise the implications here of its placement within a cultural hierarchy whose division of 'high' and 'low' occupies an ambivalent critical status. This division is, for example, defended in Clement Greenberg's seminal 1939 essay 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', and contested by, for example, Sascha Bru and others in *Regarding the Popular: Modernism, the Avant-Garde, and High and Low Culture* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012).

in conjunction with Malinowski's writings, repeatedly references olfactory acuity as a source of ethnic distinction. For Haggard, it is a consequence and a symptom of non-Western acculturation. Allan Quatermain, the narrator of *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), describes the olfactory prowess exhibited by his 'Hottentot' guide Ventvögel as they face death by dehydration in the desert: 'Ventvögel was lifting his snub nose, and sniffing the hot air for all the world like an old Impala ram who scents danger'.³¹ Here, the difference between human and non-human attributes is elided through the agency of odour. Following the guide's assertion that Ventvögel can '*smell* water', the narrator notes approvingly that 'we felt quite jubilant, for we knew what a wonderful instinct these wild-bred men possess' (p. 79).

Tellingly, given the context of a colonial encounter between economically-motivated white explorers and their native guides, the ascription to the latter of heightened sensory powers is accompanied by a simultaneous questioning of these abilities. The opposition between visuality and olfaction as rival modes of perception is presented by Haggard as a direct conflict between the sensory experiences of the explorers and their guides: 'It was all very well for Ventvögel to say that he smelt water, but look which way we would we could see no signs of it' (p. 81). The explorers' belief in the natives' superior olfactory abilities is offset by their doubt as to the legitimacy of these abilities without the sanction of visual corroboration. The text tacitly suggests that Quatermain and his coterie of explorers are incapable of apprehending the landscape in anything other than visual terms: 'So far as the eye might reach there was nothing but arid sweltering sand and karoo scrub. We gazed about anxiously [...] not a drop of water could be seen' (p. 81). Equally revealing, in

³¹ Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines* (London: Cassell & Company Limited, 1907), p. 79.

terms of the colonial ramifications of competing sense modalities, is the depiction of Ventvögel's detection of water as correct but non-directional: 'he lifted his ugly snub nose and sniffed. "I smell it, Baas," he answered; "it is somewhere in the air"' (p. 81). It is only through the intervention of the (white) explorers, who correctly guess that the oasis is located on a nearby hill, that a source of water is identified and disaster averted.

This simultaneous acceptance and questioning of the olfactory is recurrent in Haggard's writing. In *She and Allan*, Quatermain once again describes a 'savage' capacity for olfaction, but rejects its claims to authority in the absence of visual evidence. While planning to rescue Inez Robertson from her cannibal captors, the Amahagger, Quatermain records that Hans, his native accomplice, can smell their presence: "'Amahagger there all right, Baas, I smell them.'" ³² In response, Quatermain acknowledges the physical possibility of this instance of olfaction while denying its credibility as evidence in lieu of visual perception: 'This of course was possible, since what wind there was blew from the direction of the fire, although I whose nose is fairly keen, could smell nothing at all. So I determined to wait and watch a while' (p. 108). For the civilised subject, he implies, proof is obtained through the eyes rather than the nose. The dichotomy established here between the indeterminacy of olfaction and the empirical clarity of vision is powerfully expressed in the narrative as the Amahagger are literally illuminated, validating and equally superseding Hans's initial detection of the tribe using smell:

A branch of resinous wood of which the stem had been eaten through by the flames, fell upon the ashes of the fire and burnt up with a brilliant light. In it

³² Rider Haggard, *She and Allan* (London: Hutchinson & Co, [n.d.]), p. 108.

we saw that the Amahagger were sleeping in a circle round the fire wrapped in their blankets. (p. 108)

Suggestively, Quatermain's apparent scepticism concerning olfaction's reliability as a sense modality is subverted by his own identification of an odour characteristic of his native companion. Huddled close to Hans as they debate an appropriate course of action, Quatermain speaks 'In the tiniest of whispers with my lips right against his smelly head' (pp. 110-111). Close contact with non-Europeans is, the text asserts, intimately implicated by odour perception despite the relegation of olfaction as a mode of apprehension proper to savages, and the diminution of odour within discourses which framed the representation of the modern, 'civilised' subject.

As previously noted, the attribution of heightened olfactory abilities to the subjects of ethnographic study was contested in neuroscientific and anthropological literature at the beginning of the twentieth century. Critics called for the application of a rigorous scientific methodology to confirm or disprove the existence of differences in sensory ability between different races. This issue – and the binary opposition it suggested between the primitive and civilised – was addressed by Robert Woodworth in his paper 'The White Man Versus The Savage' (1910). Here, Woodworth contrasts the unreliable narratives of contemporary travellers who claim to have witnessed heightened sensory powers among primitive peoples, with the absence of data gathered under controlled conditions or subject to statistical analysis.³³ Woodworth's identification of a body of partial and incomplete knowledge to be supplemented by the observations of a professional cadre of ethnologists anticipates Malinowski's later championing of rigorous anthropological

³³ Robert S. Woodworth, 'The White Man versus the Savage', *Scientific American*, 70.1800supp (1910), 14–15 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican07021910-14supp>>.

practice over the testimonies of untrained commentators: ‘the manner in which my white informants spoke about the natives and put their views was, naturally, that of untrained minds, unaccustomed to formulate their thoughts with any degree of consistency and precision’ (*Argonauts*, p. 5).

A less critical assessment of the alleged sensory capabilities of colonial subjects is offered by Herbert Spencer, who states that the enhanced senses of non-Europeans were accompanied by a corresponding atrophying of intellectual powers.³⁴ The hypothesis that olfactory abilities are modified by evolutionary imperatives was granted anatomical credence by John Haycraft: ‘In the case of man [...] the olfactory sense organ is evidently one which has undergone involution. This is evident, not only from a study of the nose itself, but also from a study of the central nervous system’.³⁵ Woodworth does not entirely discount the possibility of an ethnically-determined predisposition towards visual acuity: ‘We may perhaps conclude that eyesight is a function which varies in efficiency with difference in race’ (‘The White Man versus the Savage’, p. 14). Crucially, however, he proposes a new, democratic structure for the senses, concluding that variations in sensorial capabilities are the product of statistical distribution rather than racial characteristics: ‘On the whole, the keenness of the senses seems to be about on a par in the various races of mankind’ (p. 15). In refuting the existence of enhanced olfaction among primitive peoples, Woodworth highlights the fallacious conditions of ‘naturalness’ and ‘necessity’ established for this argument, which echoes the Freudian account of olfaction’s relegation to the earliest and thus lowest stage of the evolutionary

³⁴ ‘There are many testimonies to the acute senses, and quick perceptions, of the uncivilized, and also to their acute and minute observation [...] this dominance of the lower intellectual life hinders the higher intellectual life’ (Herbert Spencer, *Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1890), pp. 348–49).

³⁵ John Haycraft, ‘The Sense of Smell’, in *Text-Book of Physiology*, ed. by E. A. Sharpey-Schäfer (London: Y. J. Pentland, 1900), II, 1246–58 (p. 1248).

continuum. ‘On account of the high olfactory powers of dogs and some other lower animals’, Woodworth explains, ‘it has often seemed natural and proper that this sense should be highly developed among savages’ (p. 14). Yet Woodworth rejects this paradigm, arguing that olfaction, along with other sense modalities, is in fact a culturally-determined attribute, rather than a strictly demarcated physical characteristic. Noting that there is ‘no higher acuity of smell among negroes and Papuans than among Europeans’, he points to the refinement of olfaction as a product of environmental and social pressures: ‘No doubt [...] special interests and training are responsible’ (p. 14). Yet despite the apparently conclusive nature of Woodworth’s findings, and his rejection of anecdotally-derived narratives in favour of empirical observation, the debate on whether enhanced olfaction was a racial, biological endowment or a product of culture remained ongoing within the domains of anthropology, medicine and psychology throughout the early twentieth century.

Writing for *Nature* (1926), J. H. Kenneth alludes to the ongoing work of ethnologists to investigate the grounds for understanding heightened olfaction as the property of a select racial group. Kenneth highlights odour’s resistance to scientific schematisation – ‘the nature of olfactory stimulation is not yet satisfactorily understood’ – and credits anthropological investigation with an influential role in correcting this deficiency: ‘Observations on the senses of the Todas [...] and experiments on javanese and Europeans [...] adumbrate a more extensive investigation of olfactory acuity in the different races of mankind’.³⁶ Luigi Luciani, writing in 1921, anticipates Woodworth’s rejection of theories ascribing physiological variation to the difference between European and non-European races.

³⁶ John H. Kenneth, ‘Odours and the Sense of Smell’, *Nature*, 117.2947 (1926), 591–92 (p. 591) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/117591a0>>.

According to both Woodworth and Luciani, such theories were representative of outmoded scientific precepts and derived their (erroneous) authority from unreliable narratives:

Owing to the glowing accounts given by various explorers of the activity of the organs of sense [...] possessed by certain primitive peoples, scientists came to believe that these races were really endowed with organs of sense of a higher order than those usually found in civilised nations.³⁷

As I have noted, Freud's reconstructive anthropology – localised in his association of bipedalism with the marginalisation of olfaction – offers the clarity of a universal symbolism that implicitly resists the efforts of contemporaneous anthropologists to record sensorially-based cultural differentiation. Bipedalism is associated with a reduced olfactory sense, all humans are bipedal, and therefore, following this syllogism, *all* humans have limited olfactory capabilities, regardless of their ethnic derivation. The unverified – and unverifiable – nature of Freud's theory of olfaction prompts comparison with the construction/retrieval of the primal scene as (in one sense of the term) that which has never been seen, and can never be corroborated through direct observation.³⁸ Viewed in this way, Freud's account of the prehistoric abandonment of olfaction imposes an unbridgeable distance between civilised subjects and the sensory and cognitive particularities of their hypothetical progenitors. As part of the project of Freudian psychoanalysis, this divide is negotiated through the identification and analysis of narratives of dissidence, typified by the patient's case history. The moment of discontinuity proposed by Freud in the

³⁷ Luigi Luciani, *Human Physiology* (London: Macmillan & Company, 1921), p. 348.

³⁸ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Vintage; The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), I, p. 248.

history of olfaction, and the gnomonic and unsubstantiated nature of this phenomenon – the diminution of olfaction only ‘seems’ to have resulted from the human adoption of an upright gait – accordingly creates an ambiguity intolerable to the desired objectivity at the heart of anthropological praxis.

Yet the demand for scientific rigour that characterises modernist anthropology and forms the basis of its claim to legitimacy as a distinct and valid form of discourse is balanced by an appreciation of multivalence. Accordingly, the anthropologist is required to act simultaneously as an objective observer and an empathetic participant in the culture under scrutiny. As noted earlier, Malinowski’s endorsement of a ‘scientific view’ necessary to safeguard the proper objectivity of anthropology suggests an implicit disjunction between the legitimacy of vision and the inadmissibility of olfaction as a ‘scientific’ sense modality. The foundational lack of available linguistic correlatives for olfactory experiences, and their idiosyncrasy of affect, suggests a sense modality inimical to ‘objective’ discourse, a point to which I will return throughout this study. In this instance, it is useful to contrast the intimacy of olfaction with the distance imposed by vision. Accordingly, while vision implies the maintenance of a distance appropriate to the generation of anthropological discourse, olfaction, by contrast, embodies an immersive experience, a moment of absorption, to paraphrase Adorno and Horkheimer. The implicit conflict between these two conceptual positions and the danger each presents to the anthropological project – namely, of the isolation or merger of the anthropologist with the culture under study – is acknowledged by Malinowski in his conclusion to *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*:

Though it may be given to us for a moment to enter into the soul of a savage and through his eyes to look at the outer world and feel ourselves what it must feel to him to be himself – yet our final goal is to enrich and deepen our own world’s vision, to understand our own nature and to make it finer, intellectually and artistically. (pp. 517-518)

At this juncture, it is relevant to reintroduce Lawrence, by virtue of his shared recognition of the difficulty that afflicts attempts to fully represent the culturally unfamiliar. As I will presently discuss, Lawrence’s fictional and discursive texts engage with this dilemma through their evocation of linguistic and sensory dissonance, but more broadly, are mimetic of the paradox that characterises the moment of anthropological contact, and its attempt to draw together apparently irreducible oppositions. The collection *Mornings in Mexico* (1927) vehemently rejects the possibility of a conceptual commonality between the coloniser and the colonised, asserting, on the contrary, that the meaning-making systems embedded within different cultures (particularised in this instance by Meso-American Indians and Europeans) are mutually incomprehensible: ‘The consciousness of one branch of humanity is the annihilation of the consciousness of the other branch’.³⁹ However, the text’s bleak insistence that ‘there is no bridge, no canal of connection’ (p. 61) is at points tempered by a more enabling ambivalence, a decentring force: ‘The only thing you can do is have a little Ghost inside you which sees both ways, or even many ways’ (p. 61).

The prospect of harmony between distinct cultures is treated even more pessimistically by Lawrence in *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923), which

³⁹ D. H. Lawrence, *Mornings in Mexico and Other Essays*, ed. by Virginia Crosswhite Hyde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 61.

offers a sustained critique of the perceived romantic primitivism of writers such as Melville and Crèvecoeur. In his essay on the former, Lawrence echoes the belief that the subjects of ethnographic study embody characteristics typical of earlier stages of human development, and therefore represent a distant point of origin long since transcended by white European culture: ‘I could never go back. Back towards the past, savage life. One cannot go back’.⁴⁰ Yet despite his implicit placement of Western civilisation at the apex of history’s continuum, Lawrence disavows connotations of racial or cultural superiority. Difference, Lawrence suggests here, can be recognised without a corresponding investment in the power relations that underpin its existence: ‘There are these people, these “savages”. One does not despise them. One does not feel superior. But there is a gulf. There is a gulf in time and being. I cannot comingle my being with theirs’ (p. 126).

The irreconcilable divide between subject and object imagined in Lawrence’s *Studies in Classic American Literature* runs counter to the longing for an impermissible fusion that permeates the conclusion of *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. This longing is suggested by the text’s modulation from the scientifically objective to the subjective and aesthetic in its appeal to relativism: ‘it is the possibility of seeing life and the world from the various angles, peculiar to each culture, that has always charmed me most, and inspired me’ (*Argonauts*, p. 517). The desire expressed by Malinowski, and its sentimental framing – the prospect of cross-cultural contact has ‘charmed’ and ‘inspired’ him rather than providing grounds for a strictly scientific, visually-derived analysis of Melanesian society – is refuted tersely by Lawrence as an untenable paradox in his essay on Crèvecoeur. Crèvecoeur, Lawrence states, wished to maintain the integrity of his status as a civilised subject,

⁴⁰ D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, ed. by Ezra Greenspan, Lindeth Vasey, and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 126.

yet ‘At the same time he wanted to *know* the other state, the dark, savage mind. He wanted both. Can’t be done’ (*Studies*, p. 39). Knowledge, in this instance, signifies more than the accumulation of facts and their subsequent interpretation and schematisation. It points to a deeper empathetic awareness – echoed by Malinowski’s desire to ‘enter into the soul of a savage’ – that for Lawrence is always already encoded as an unattainable longing. Crucially, the expression and negotiation of this longing is intimately informed by the conditions imposed by language, and the limits of its representation, a point which obtains particular relevance in the context of the limited semantic field associated with olfaction.

The awareness of language as a nodal point of disparity, the medium through which cultural antagonisms are contested and reified, finds particular expression in Lawrence’s story ‘The Woman Who Rode Away’. Numerous readings of the text have subordinated the significance of its representation of the inadequacy of translation, preferring instead to emphasise Lawrence’s sexual politics and his characterisation of women as the focus of critical interest.⁴¹ However, in light of contemporaneous developments in anthropology, the motif of translation within ‘The Woman Who Rode Away’ should also be understood to address not only the properties of language as a fundamental constituent of the power relations implicit in the encounter between the coloniser and the colonised, but also the varying cultural significance of rival sense modalities.

At the beginning of the story, Lawrence is at pains to highlight the linguistic variability and contingency of the English language, prior to his later contrast

⁴¹ See Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), p. 292. See, also, Laura Catherine Frost, ‘Orgasmic Discipline: D. H. Lawrence, E. M. Hull, and Interwar Erotic Fiction’, in *The Problem with Pleasure: Modernism and Its Discontents* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 89–129 (pp. 111–13).

between English and the language of the Chilchui: “Adios,” came the greeting in the full, restrained, Indian voice. “Adios,” she replied, in her assured American woman’s voice’.⁴² Later, the Indians ask “Usted es Señora? You are a married lady?” (p. 46). The glossing in English of their original Spanish further reinforces the motifs of translation and exchange which prefigure the denouement of the story. The significance of this gap in understanding beyond that of a merely mechanical inconvenience is noted by Malinowski, who locates the lack of a shared language at the heart of cultural dissonance: ‘the stranger who cannot speak the language is to all savage tribesmen a natural enemy’.⁴³ Yet, as Jeff Wallace observes, the act of translation is a fraught enterprise, which, in the context of the colonial encounter is connotative of a damaging cultural imperialism: ‘Translation [...] always involves appropriation, the transformation of an experience into the structures of ‘our own’’.⁴⁴ Central to Lawrence’s story is the failure or unreliability of language as a means of negotiating (and describing) the moment of cross-cultural encounter. The problem of understanding and evoking cultural difference is expressed and symbolised by the mistranslation that recurs throughout the story, which was also addressed in contemporary anthropological writing. The lack of equivalent English terms for native expressions held particular danger for the anthropologist, with inadequate translation leading not only to linguistic inaccuracy, but also to scientific and cultural misunderstandings.⁴⁵ This relationship can be extended to the presentation of

⁴² D. H. Lawrence, *The Woman Who Rode Away, and Other Stories*, ed. by Dieter Mehl and Christa Jansohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 45.

⁴³ *The Meaning of Meaning*, p. 477.

⁴⁴ Jeff Wallace, *D. H. Lawrence, Science and the Posthuman* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 180.

⁴⁵ Kate Sturge suggests, for example, that Malinowski’s literal translation of Kiriwinian grammar is ‘duplicitous’, creating ‘a pidgin-like effect [...] since although they were intelligible and presumably coherent when spoken, the Kiriwinian words once transformed into the English ‘crib’ become deficient in sophistication and coherence’ (Kate Sturge,

sacrifice in ‘The Woman Who Rode Away’; the woman’s misreading of the tribe’s intentions prevents her from recognising the significance of this misinterpretation within a wider complex of conditions. In addition, it prevents the narrative from achieving a true identification with, and rendering of, the idiosyncrasies of regional Indian culture.

The exotic attributes of the fictional Chilchui society – its hostility to Europeans, its mythology and its sacrificial practices, exemplified by the innominate woman’s climactic (but unseen) sacrifice at the hands of the Cacique – present an empathetic and representational challenge addressed in part through the *non-*linguistic agency of odour and the opportunities it provides for sensual union and the dissolution of identity. It is revealing that the woman’s gradual – and terminal – immersion into the Indians’ culture brings about an enhancement of her olfactory ability. The narcotic administered to the woman by her Indian captors induces a heightening of her sense modalities and a corresponding awareness of her environment mediated through odour rather than visuality, replacing the latter’s spatial and abstract associations with a new system of perception. After consuming the psychoactive drink, the woman is rendered immobile: ‘relaxed, confused, victimised’, and passively ‘smelling the scent of burning cedar-wood, or pine-wood’ (p. 56). Olfaction, in this instance, moves beyond the mere detection and recognition of odour objects to encompass a wider environmental awareness: ‘keenly she detected the smell of smoke, and flowers, and evening falling’ (p. 56). This extension of the odorous – which also tracks the woman’s metamorphosis from colonial observer to participant and point of focus within the Indians’ religious

protocols – is eventually emblematic of a broadening of cultural sympathies, a development indicated by the woman’s ability to smell – and by implication, to understand – the cosmology of the Chilchui. As the day of her sacrifice approaches, she is able to ‘smell the sweetness of the moon relaxing to the sun in the wintry heaven’ (p. 63).

Yet, despite the text’s apparent realignment of Western sense modalities, the unbridgeable alterity represented by the Chilchui remains intact, exemplified by the violent conclusion of the narrative, but also by Lawrence’s prevailing awareness of the impossibility of transcending an acquired cultural preconditioning. A persistent trope throughout ‘The Woman Who Rode Away’ is that of glass; the Indians offer themselves as a mirror that both reflects and refracts Western motivations and assumptions. The Cacique’s face is like ‘dark glass’ (p. 54), he has a ‘glassy, dark face’ (p. 54), and the woman’s emotional experience is mediated by her response to his ‘black, glass-like, intent eyes’ (p. 63). As stated in my introduction, it is a hypothesis of this thesis that the modernist response to olfactory experience is suggestive of an *agon*, in which a will-to-represent is paired with an equally insistent appreciation of the incommunicable. In turn, this dichotomous relationship is echoed in the broader tendency towards paradox displayed throughout modernist aesthetics, an attribute critically identified, as noted, as constitutive of modernism.

Interrelatedly, Anne Quéma has noted the inherent instability at the heart of those texts designated as constitutive of the modernist canon. The incorporation of apparent oppositions, which decentres any claims to textual autarchy, is shown by Quéma to generate an energising conflict of meaning: ‘modernism also derives its singular dynamism from its fascination for contradictory yet irreducible systems of

thought and representation'.⁴⁶ In Lawrence's writing, these antagonisms are enacted at the level of language, whose primacy as the exclusive means of supporting a text's claims to represent the materiality of existence is qualified by its limitations and intractability as a definitive system of signification. This awareness of the mutability of language – characteristic both of modernism and more locally, of Lawrence's oeuvre – can in turn be framed theoretically with reference to Wittgenstein's philosophy of language.⁴⁷

Writing in 'Pornography and Obscenity' (1929), Lawrence announces his reluctance to uncritically accept the received association between a sign and an object. Instead, he demands a more rigorous selection of language in order to deny its obvious meanings, while simultaneously accepting the validity of an individual's idiosyncratic use of language – which constructs both idiolect and authorial identity – as an enabling, creative, activity: 'The word [...] will take the individual off on his own journey, and its meaning will be his own meaning, based on his own genuine imagination reactions'.⁴⁸ I will return to this example of Lawrence's presentation of language in Chapter Four, by demonstrating its applicability to the writing of Proust. For now, it is relevant to emphasise the comparability of Lawrence's conception of language with Wittgenstein's understanding of 'ordinary' language – that is, the recuperation of 'words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use' as an

⁴⁶ Anne Quéma, *The Agon of Modernism: Wyndham Lewis's Allegories, Aesthetics, and Politics* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1999), p. 26.

⁴⁷ For a further discussion of the applicability of Wittgenstein – and Heidegger's – theories of language to Lawrence's writing, see Crispian Neill, "'The Incident [...] Is Spoiled Inevitably in the Telling": Language-Games and Narrative Identity in Charlotte Mew and D. H. Lawrence', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, 38.2 (2013), 45–57.

⁴⁸ D. H. Lawrence, 'Pornography and Obscenity', in *Late Essays and Articles*, ed. by James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 233–53 (p. 237).

aid to philosophical investigation.⁴⁹ However, Wittgenstein's recognition of language's flexibility is qualified by a frustration at its refusal to be incorporated into a fixed and logical schema of philosophical enquiry.⁵⁰ As Wittgenstein observes, 'there are words of which one might say: They are used in a thousand different ways which gradually merge into one another. No wonder we can't tabulate strict rules for their use'.⁵¹ Wittgenstein's inability to define the limits of individual words is projected as a consequence of the multiplicity of meanings with which a lexical item is invested, a plurality compounded by the forces of selection and combination that guide the placement of words within a narrative. However, this frustration takes a very different form in Wittgenstein's treatment of olfaction. Here, the excessiveness of signification is no longer at stake; on the contrary, representation is inhibited by a *lack* of appropriate signifiers. The absence of a language of odour excludes olfaction from Wittgenstein's examination of sense data in *The Blue Book* and *The Brown Book*, which is always already dependent on a textual representation, and thus privileges the visual even as it attempts to describe other sources of apprehension and intellection. Wittgenstein does not even mention olfaction when considering 'sense data', which in any case are constrained within a tightly ordered structure, namely 'the grammar of those words which describe what are called "mental activities": seeing, hearing, feeling, etc' (p. 70). For Wittgenstein, olfaction remains unsaid, relegated to the domain of 'etc.', a suggestive area of indeterminacy which

⁴⁹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. by G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 48.

⁵⁰ Wittgenstein, states Terry Eagleton, 'is the philosopher of poets and composers, playwrights and novelists' (Ludwig Wittgenstein, Terry Eagleton and Derek Jarman, *Wittgenstein: The Terry Eagleton Script, the Derek Jarman Film* (London: BFI Pub, 1993), p. 5). However, it is important to recognise that conversely, 'Wittgenstein said relatively little about literature [...] there are only a few theoretical remarks, and no developed theory on the role which language plays in literary contexts' (*The Literary Wittgenstein*, ed. by John Gibson and Wolfgang Huemer (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 2–3).

⁵¹ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books: Preliminary Studies for the 'Philosophical Investigations'* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960), p. 28.

offers a refuge from the restrictions of his proposed tabulation of ‘strict rules’. As proposed in my introduction, if silence is the appropriate reaction to that which defies linguistic representation, then olfaction offers itself as a means of alluding to that which lies outside the remit of language, and its habitual reliance upon visual rather than olfactory sense data, a point to which I will return throughout this study.

Tellingly, when viewed in the context of the Lawrence’s creation of the Chilchui to evoke linguistic and cultural dissonance, Wittgenstein similarly and repeatedly posits the existence of a hypothetical tribe or alien culture in *The Brown Book* with the intention of bringing about a re-envisioning of the reader’s ordinary language. The reader is invited to ‘Imagine a people in whose language there is no such form of sentence as “the book is in the drawer”’ (p. 100). As Michael North notes, Wittgenstein’s method was informed by contemporary developments in anthropology.⁵² In particular, as North further observes, *Argonauts* deploys a comparable strategy for generating an empathetic awareness of the anthropological fieldworker’s situation; or, more precisely, of their physical and cultural relocation into an environment of difference: ‘Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone on a tropical beach, next to a native village’ (*Argonauts*, p. 4). The process of evocation, of inviting the reader to collude in an act of interpretation – here, the beach will be the *reader’s* tropical beach – disrupts the inclination to objectivity that is characteristic of the scientific monograph, an empirical form of discourse described by Malinowski as ‘a long abstract discussion’ (*Argonauts*, p. 4), and lacking the impact of a fictional rendering of place.

⁵² Michael North, ‘Translation, Mistranslation, and the Tractatus’, in *Reading 1922: A Return to the Scene of the Modern* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 31–64 (p. 41,43).

Wittgenstein's deployment of the motif of a fictional tribe as a means of re-energising the nature of 'ordinary language' fulfils his wish for a 'notation which stresses a difference more strongly, makes it more obvious, than ordinary language does, or one which in a particular case uses more closely similar forms of expression than our ordinary language' (*Blue Book*, p. 59). Given the significance of odour in representing that which is culturally unfamiliar, olfaction offers to Lawrence the kind of ideal notation described by Wittgenstein. Odour becomes a conspicuous marker of difference by highlighting those distinctions not easily reproducible through textual signification. The fictional ethnographies of Lawrence and Wittgenstein illustrate their shared conception of language as indicative of cultural plurality, which encourages consideration of the interplay between anthropology and language in odour's representation. Anthropology's mandate to recognise and signal alterity – an obligation that, *qua* Malinowski, underpinned the claims of the discipline to epistemological authority – was shaped by its awareness of language's postulated ontological influence, a contention which I will address more fully in the final two chapters of this thesis in relation to the writing of Joyce and Proust. Here, this linkage of language and ontology illuminates the encoding of olfaction within rival linguistic systems, and the disparity in the English language between the affective power of odour and the meagreness of its vocabulary. Accordingly, the presence (or absence) of a rich terminology for the odorous in a given language would be assumed to track the prominence (or subordination) of odour within the culture affiliated with that language.⁵³ Such an interrelationship is demonstrated by Alfred Radcliffe-Brown's examination of the significance of odour among the Andaman

⁵³ See Asifa Majid and Niclas Burenhult, 'Odors Are Expressible in Language, as Long as You Speak the Right Language', *Cognition*, 130.2 (2014), 266–70 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2013.11.004>>.

islanders, of which a key feature is his account of prohibitions relating to the odour of food, and the displeasure that it is believed to provoke among the islanders' deities. Radcliffe-Brown notes that after eating the flesh of a dugong, the islanders remain close to the site of its consumption, on the grounds 'that the spirits of the jungle and the sea may smell them, attracted by the odour of the food they have eaten and may cause them to be ill'.⁵⁴

Radcliffe-Brown contends that the encoding of odour as an idiosyncratic cultural and semantic property informs the placement of the olfactory within Andaman society, whose keen awareness of odour generates a characteristic – non-European – language to describe the operation and effects of olfaction. As *The Andaman Islanders* (1922) observes: 'When a man feels unwell he often smears red paint on his upper lip [...] In this way, the natives say, the "smell" of the paint cures his sickness' (p. 179). Here, inverted commas frame the semantic slippage of the word 'smell', highlighting the difference between the complex of associations evoked by the term 'smell' within Andaman society and its role within the anthropological discourse that both contains and brings to light this difference in meaning. Radcliffe-Brown's argument derives force from his awareness that the Andaman concept of olfaction transcends that which *we*, the intended readership of the monograph (with our particular cultural preconditioning), understand by odour. This localised recognition of odour's variability as a linguistic and sociological construct supports the relativism advocated by Malinowski and contested by Lawrence in the moment of inter-cultural contact. As Radcliffe-Brown puts it, 'We must be careful [...] not to assume that an Andaman Islander means by "smell" exactly what we mean by it and nothing more' (p. 268). The implicit aims of this

⁵⁴ A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders: A Study in Social Anthropology* (Anthony Wilkin Studentship Research, 1906) (Cambridge: The University Press, 1922), p. 116.

argument – which expands the lexical field associated with odour through consideration of its role and status within a range of languages – are to mitigate the restraints on olfactory description imposed by the English language, and to question its hegemony as an authorising construct, particularly in relation to its presentation of varying olfactory acuities among different races.

The limitations imposed by the visual medium of text on the evocation of odour through the English language are acknowledged by Lawrence at the beginning of ‘Corasmin and the Parrots’, following his ascription to Mexico of a ‘faint, physical scent [...] as each human being has’ (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 11). Lawrence casts doubt on the authority of this description by conceding the inability of language – *his* language – to fully communicate the nature of the olfactory: ‘this is a curious, inexplicable scent’ (p. 11). He attempts a taxonomy of the scent’s constituent elements, which, lacking the categories available to an established system of notation, soon dissipates into inconclusiveness: ‘resin and perspiration and sun-burned earth and urine, among other things’ (p. 11). Mexico’s scents defy schematisation, just as Mexico itself is not reducible to its contributory components but gestures metonymically outwards. Lawrence’s incorporation of the allusive nature of odour into his narrative already encodes this problem of representation, in that olfaction is itself only approachable through the analogue of language, and thereafter difficult to quantify textually.

Yet, Lawrence’s knowing enactment of odour’s resistance to linguistic analogue is also informed by his recognition of the unavoidable necessity of using language for the evocation of olfaction, epitomised by the intractably visual medium of text. The need to modify ordinary language to protect ‘difference’ – in the Wittgensteinian, rather than Derridean sense – creates the implicit writerly obligation

to represent by means of varied rhetorical strategies, typified, in the case of Lawrence, by his use of shifting narrative viewpoints. Lawrence begins his essay ‘The Mozo’ with the demotic observation that ‘the Aztec gods and goddesses are, as far as we have known anything about them, an unlovely and unlovable lot’ (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 35). The use of the inclusive ‘we’ marks the cultural boundaries of the narrative viewpoint, suggesting that this particular cultural preconception requires an imaginative rehabilitation, via representation, of the Aztec pantheon. This gap in knowledge (which itself alludes to the problem intrinsic to the anthropologist’s desire to represent that which has never been observed, namely tribal societies uncontaminated by colonial contact) is to be addressed through a process of re-imagining, and consequently privileging, specific modes of discourse. ‘In their [the Aztec people’s] myths, there is no grace or charm, or poetry,’ the narrator states (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 35). Implicit here is a mandate for narrative to move beyond the confines of ordinary language, to represent and reinvest mythological structures with meaning through an appropriate form of notation.

This rendering of Meso-American mythoi has in turn informed critical interpretations of *Mornings in Mexico*, which tend to identify Lawrence’s adoption of varying narrative standpoints as evidence of his ‘ethnological pretensions’.⁵⁵ Viewed in these terms, Lawrence’s evocation of an alien consciousness, or, more particularly, an alien system for the notation of sense data and its intellection, is either naïve positivism or an attempt to co-opt the role of the modernist anthropologist, who asserts (and relies upon) the ability to fully empathise with indigenous cultures as well as simultaneously employing the full range of analytical

⁵⁵ Carey Snyder, “‘When the Indian Was in Vogue’: D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, and Ethnological Tourism in the Southwest”, *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, 53.4 (2007), 662–96 (p. 667) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/mfs.2008.0005>>.

tools necessary to describe their cultural mores in scientific discourse. However, Lawrence's imputed assumption of anthropological authority is problematised by his explicit admission in 'Indians and an Englishman' that 'I am no ethnologist', and his awareness that the discourse of anthropology employs narrative strategies explicitly identified as a process of fiction-making or aestheticising indigenous cultures: 'The anthropologists may make what prettiness they can out of myths' (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 133).

Lawrence's shifting narrative stance is productively addressed by reading *Mornings in Mexico* in the light of its component texts' underlying preoccupation with language as a system of representation, and considering the connection between representations of odour and the lacunae that indicate attempts to communicate that which falls outside the remit of textual notation. Addressed in this way, Lawrence's critically-identified 'ethnological pretensions' constitute a particular rhetorical style employed for specific and local effect, rather than a uniform narrative identity. As Fiona Becket points out, 'Throughout Lawrence, the language subverts, tells against, unitary, univocal systems of understanding'.⁵⁶ This rejection of univocality is evident in the deliberate contrast between Lawrence's representation of the Mexican Indians' repudiation of Western systems of measurement, and his deployment of precisely this form of measurement in the opening lines of 'The Hopi Snake Dance'. The motif of measurement has a particular resonance when viewed in the context of language-games, as the allocation of units and notation to variables such as time, space and mass often reflects an arbitrary system of signification. For example, the designation of a specific distance as 'a mile' is a discretionary ascription. Its validity as a symbol is constructed, rather than axiomatic. As Wittgenstein suggests, 'words

⁵⁶ Fiona Becket, *D. H. Lawrence: The Thinker as Poet* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), p. 197.

have those meanings which we have given them; and we give them meaning, by explanations [...] Many words in this sense then don't have a strict meaning' (*Blue Book*, p. 27). The recognition that measurement, like language, is dependent on context, is expressed in 'The Mozo' as a mode of difference which suggests that cultural differences are enacted in language, above all else, rather than enjoying an absolute existence: 'the white man has a horrible, truly horrible, monkey-like passion for invisible exactitudes' (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 37).

The narrative of 'The Hopi Snake Dance' avoids claims to omniscience by acknowledging its dependence on received information: 'The snake dance (I am told) is held once a year' (p. 79). It thereby emulates the earlier, Frazerian model of anthropology that modernism sought to transcend through first-hand observation. This disavowal of narrative authority is further elaborated in Lawrence's provision of successive interpretative positions from which to view the dance: 'One may look on from the angle of culture [...]. Or there is still another point of view, the religious' (p. 80). This deliberate effort to avoid fixing a locus of authority within the text prevents an easy schematisation of the essay into a specific 'they' (the spectators and Lawrence) who come to watch a specific 'them' (the Indians), because Lawrence repeatedly undermines his own putative status as a privileged and knowledgeable spectator.

The paradoxes and competing forces at the heart of Lawrence's construction of narrative identity have a particular resonance in comparison with Malinowski's writings, and their varying encodings of sense data, epitomised by the dichotomous relationship between vision and olfaction. A key feature of the project of modernist anthropology was the discipline's drive to define its own discursive territory at the moment of its emergence, and as noted, to repel intellectual interlopers, personified

by Freud. In common with all scientific discourse, the emergent anthropology of the early twentieth century – epitomised by *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* – depended upon the assumption of a univocal authority for its epistemic value, and its positioning as a separate mode of discourse from that of fiction.⁵⁷ The attempt to construct a linear narrative from impartial observation, interpretation and analysis was cast by Wittgenstein as a battle against the incorporation of the poetic. ‘Philosophy, as we use the word, is a fight against the fascination which forms of expression exert upon us’ (*Blue Book*, p. 27). But, as noted, Wittgenstein also deployed such fictive constructions as the invitation to ‘imagine’ a separate tribal culture in order to comprehend a hypothetical dislocation of quotidian language use.

Here, I want to emphasise the distinction between ‘poetic’ and ‘objective’ discourse, or more accurately, the sensory emphases which they embody. If it is accepted that visually-derived observations are integral to the creation of objective discourse, what mode of discourse, it might be asked, is inspired by olfactory impressions? As asserted in my introduction, the lack of appropriate signifiers for odours prompts a recourse to analogical language to address this lacunae, a signature example of which is literary discourse. Viewed in this way, the odorous and the literary are unified by their exclusion from the domain of the scientific monograph, a linkage which obtains particular relevance in relation to Malinowski’s private diary, which was written during his fieldwork in Melanesia and published after his death in 1967. Interestingly, it contains precisely that which is inadmissible within the

⁵⁷ See Ilse Nina Bulhof and E. J Brill: ‘precision, brevity and logical reasoning support the impression that science is logically consistent and values the natural and objective [...] these devices are supposed to prevent ambiguity by making the meanings of word, terms and sentences unequivocal and logical’ (Ilse Nina Bulhof and E. J Brill, *The Language of Science: A Study of the Relationship between Literature and Science in the Perspective of a Hermeneutical Ontology, with a Case Study of Darwin’s The Origin of Species* (Leiden/NL: E.J. Brill, 1992), p. 146).

confines of a scientific text, and thus offers a fruitful, odour-inflected commentary on the determinedly authoritative text of Malinowski's monograph. The private diary chronicles the author's depression, sexual longings and professional ambitions, and the intermittent suspicion and contempt he expresses towards the objects of his ethnographic scrutiny. The text's subjectivity and repeated cycles of exaltation and despair tell against its ostensible ambition to impose a structural coherence on the life of the anthropological fieldworker: 'the purpose in keeping a diary and trying to control one's life and thoughts at every moment must be to consolidate life, to integrate one's thinking, to avoid fragmenting themes'.⁵⁸

The danger attending fragmentation haunts *A Diary*, particularised in Malinowski's fear of the corrosion of his professional identity, an anxiety intimately communicated in the text's repeated assertions of his physical and cultural isolation in Melanesia. At the beginning of his first fieldwork expedition, he notes that 'I felt I was taking leave of civilization' (p. 5). Such segregation is an inevitable consequence of the demand by modernist anthropology for the abstraction of the fieldworker from their cultural ambit and immersion within an unfamiliar society. It elicits from Malinowski the correspondingly resolute desire to maintain the integrity of his persona across a range of interdependent axes: professionally, sexually and textually. At one point he notes the need to 'work intensively if I am to keep my self-respect' (p. 206, emphasis in original). Informing this equation of productivity with self-worth is professional ambition, to which Malinowski ascribes a certain moral dubiety: 'External ambitions keep crawling over me like lice [...] Thought about how one day [I] will be in *Who's Who*' (p. 291). This imaginative self-positioning within a cultural hierarchy is suggested more brutally elsewhere in the

⁵⁸ Bronislaw Malinowski, *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), p. 175.

Diary, evoking a Darwinian struggle for supremacy in which rivals are vanquished physically rather than intellectually: ‘It is one of my traits that I think about people who are hostile to me more than I do about friendly ones. All those whom I have to convince, rape, subjugate’ (p. 174). Yet alienation, in this instance, is equally productive of a projected victimisation. The will to power and scope of anthropological ambition expressed by Malinowski – ‘the revolution I want to effect in social anthropology’ (p. 289) – are offset by his self-representation as a martyr. Suffering from enervation as a result of tropical heat and illness, he states that ‘I awoke feeling as if just taken down from the cross’ (p. 53). The messianic overtones of his enervation are extended by his later assertion on suffering from a ‘characteristic lack of energy’ that ‘even trifles [...] appear a monstrous cross on the Golgotha of life’ (p. 73).

The antagonisms that form a structuring principle of the *Diary*, of which Malinowski’s alternating self-portrayal as persecutor and victim provides a localised example, create a narrative composed of dissenting drives, which not only countermands the theoretical groundings of the narrator’s disposition – ‘My whole ethics is based on the fundamental instinct of unified personality’ (p. 296) – but also informs Malinowski’s later indictment of Freud for his infringement upon anthropological territory. The desire and subsequent failure of *A Diary*’s narrator to maintain a coherent selfhood are expressed – and find the condition of *possibility* for their expression – through the model of Freudian psychoanalysis, mirroring the cultural ubiquity of psychoanalytic rhetoric throughout modern culture cited earlier in this chapter. In the light of Malinowski’s subsequent assumption of anthropological authority in his criticism of Freud, in which he fashions himself as a representative of the anthropological *doxa*, it is telling that Freud becomes

coterminous with psychoanalysis in *A Diary* through his association with the suppression of sexuality and its consequent oneiric re-emergence. After an episode of sexual temptation in which the object of Malinowski's desire is labelled 'That lousy girl', he resolves 'absolutely never to touch any Kiriwina whore' (p. 256). This rejection – and the narrative's wider effort to exclude the sensuous and irrational from a self-imposed 'system of specific formal prohibitions' – generates a subversive counter-narrative epitomised by Malinowski's lack of control over the content of his dreams: 'Woke up at night, full of lecherous thoughts about, of all the people imaginable, my landlord's wife! This must stop!' (p. 165). Even more disturbing, for Malinowski, are dreams that defy interpretation and do not provide a specific focus of anxiety. He describes such dreams as 'Freudian' in their potent merger of sexuality and disgust:

This morning I woke early [...] and had two horrid [...] dreams. In the first one, which was of the Freudian type, feeling of sinfulness, evil, something loathsome, combined with lust – repulsive and frightening. What does it come from? And this feeling of wickedness, which rises to the surface. (p. 290)

Implicit in this description is the narrator's slippage from his former status as the source of intelligibility within the text to a position of impotence, a position of susceptibility congruent with the enforced sensory proximity characteristic of olfaction. He has failed to intercept and arrest the progress of an erotic dream, and subsequently to decipher the meaning of the dream and generate a textual exegesis. Malinowski's account of the dream stresses the intangible and inarticulable – 'something loathsome' – which in turn signal a troublingly indefinite point of origin, prompting an equally ambiguous response upon waking: 'What does it come from?'

The unsettling nature of the dream invites its interpretation as an undesirable and external visitation. However, Malinowski's citation of Freud points to a tacit awareness of the role of the oneiric within psychoanalytic discourse, which calls for a structured and intellectually rigorous interpretation of dreams to excavate and illuminate the workings of the subconscious. This recognition, which additionally suggests Malinowski's internalisation of Freud as coterminous with psychoanalysis, holds the promise of therapeutic insight into 'this feeling of wickedness', which despite the efforts of the text to grant it representation (and therefore containment), remains intractably latent. It can be acknowledged as it 'rises to the surface', but is never fully exposed, and consequently lacks full articulation. In the context of *A Diary*, the dream is symptomatic of the text's ongoing transition between narrative codes – of which Malinowski's apparently casual invocation of Freud is an example – and its efforts to regulate these competing utterances to satisfy an authorial insistence upon consolidation and unity. It seeks to resist fragmentation to fulfil the self-declared ambition of the text to 'serve as a means of self-analysis' (p. 284).

The incompatibilities that pervade Malinowski's diary mirror its formal contrast with his monograph, but also underline the narrative prohibitions that support the authority of scientific discourse, typified, as noted, by the exclusion of olfactory sense data and its implied recourse to similetic language. The banishment of subjectivity and aesthetic self-reflexivity find extensive expression throughout *A Diary* in its continuous commentary on its own status *as* a text, and the rhetorical and literary devices that inform its construction. Malinowski describes, with self-reproach, experiencing 'continual novelistic fantasies' (p. 245), an admission that highlights two powerful and apparently incompatible drives governing the construction of *A Diary* and *Argonauts*: the desire to be a consumer of texts and the

desire to produce them. A persistent trope throughout *A Diary* is the equation of reading with moral laxity. Reading is repeatedly designated as a frivolous distraction from the serious work of anthropology, reflecting a lapse in self-control comparable with that of sexually licentious behaviour. In both cases, indulgence is followed by a resolution to abstain, a narrative arc that also informs Malinowski's perception of the structuring of high and low art: 'I may read poems and serious things, but I must absolutely avoid trashy novels. And I *should* read ethnographic works' (p. 249). For Malinowski, the obligation to engage with serious literature is offset by the persistent lure of 'trashy novels', which offer illicit relief from the pressures of fieldwork – 'Tried to drown my despair by reading stories' (p. 40) – but equally provide a retrograde and impermissible representation of anthropological themes.⁵⁹ Tellingly, Malinowski recalls with chagrin 'the time I made the mistake of reading a Rider Haggard novel' (p. 7), an act which obtains additional significance in the light of the former's contentious framing of enhanced olfactory capabilities as a marker of racial identity, but which also underscores the congruence, in this instance, between odours and 'trashy novels' as non-intellectual modes of experience.

The threat of contamination posed by colonially-themed literature to the process of anthropological fieldwork, and by extension to the construction of the fieldworker's identity as a rigorous and impartial observer, is accorded a hypnotic power by Malinowski: 'I was strongly under the spell of *Kim* – a very interesting novel, gives a great deal of information about India' (p. 41). Again, it is telling that

⁵⁹ Malinowski's introduction to *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* reflects his desire to secure a legitimate authority for anthropology by condemning its popular appeal as symptomatic of prurience or sensationalism: 'Sexual licence, infanticide, head-hunting, couvade, cannibalism and what not, have made anthropology attractive reading to many, a subject of curiosity rather than of serious scholarship to others' (Bronislaw Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1926), p. 1).

evocations of odour are tolerated in Kipling's novel, but are prohibited from the anthropological monograph: *Kim* accords a mesmeric power to olfaction which recalls the perceived threat embodied by popular fiction to Malinowski's professional identity. The novel notes that Kim, subjected to a 'whiff of musk, a puff of sandal-wood, and a breath of sickly jessamine-oil', undergoes a sensory immersion which effaces his assumed authority: 'the smells made him forget that he was going to be a Sahib henceforward'.⁶⁰ The temptation embodied by popular novels, and their status as an immersive and damaging distraction from the demands of fieldwork, are compared with the inability of literary products cast as classic or canonical to inform the creation of anthropological texts. For instance, Malinowski rejects Montaigne as a potential literary exemplar: 'read *Lettres persanes*, but I found none of the ideas I was looking for, only lewd descriptions of harems' (p. 251). Shaping this commingling of disgust and desire is an awareness and appreciation of the influence of literary discourse and its potential (albeit constrained) mobilisation for rhetorical effect within the monograph; the latter expressed, as noted, in Malinowski's injunction to 'imagine yourself'. *A Diary* describes a more explicit interplay between literature and anthropology, wherein that which is designated as symptomatic of low culture – 'bad' literature – nevertheless offers a repository of motifs which can be incorporated into anthropological discourse: 'I read [...] an idiotic novel in which I found one or two excellent phrases' (p. 75).

The conflicted status of literary discourse throughout *A Diary* – regarded as a source of both shame and aesthetic solace – finds a cognate expression in Malinowski's self-representation as a writer, and implicitly, as an artist subject to the

⁶⁰ Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1901), p. 235.

requirements of the literary rather than an ethnographer striving for the univocality of scientific language, a discursive mode characterised, as I have proposed, by the exclusion of olfactorily-derived observations. Following his arrival at the Papuan island of Kiribi, Malinowski offers an aesthetic judgement: 'Excellent setting for a novel' (p. 211). This instance of literary particularity, which mediates the experience of Melanesia through artistic imperatives, is extended by Malinowski's assumption and valorisation of authorship. To write, he contends, is to grant substantiality, to make real. It is an aesthetically-implicated process which confers authority upon the writer: 'This island, although not "discovered" by me, is for the first time experienced artistically and mastered intellectually' (p. 236). The proprietary implications of this statement are made explicit in Malinowski's remarks after first encountering the native islanders, the objects of ethnographic scrutiny: 'Feeling of ownership: It is I who will describe them or create them' (p. 140). Authorship, Malinowski suggests, confers dominion. This claim gains additional resonance in context, given the power relations implicit in the colonial encounter, but also exemplifies the diary's continuous interrogation of the act of writing, and, correspondingly, the perceived viability of different narrative modes. In particular, literature (divided into the sub-categories 'good' and 'bad', or their equivalents, 'classic' and 'popular') is distinguished from anthropological writing and its own sub-divisions. Broadly, anthropological texts are understood to fall into two categories: those relying upon methodologies designated as defunct for their reliance upon anecdotal (and therefore unreliable) depositions, and the innovative ethnography championed by *Argonauts*. According to the latter, the fieldworker's ideal attributes comprise austerity, signalled by sexual restraint and a rejection of popular literature, unstinting devotion to duty and the rejection of financial and

material inducements – which together serve as a desired but unattainable exemplar throughout *A Diary* (p. 282).

The representation of odour in *A Diary* tracks this opposition between authorised and dissident narrative modes, and their alternate emergence and suppression throughout the text, a correlation which parallels the broader interrelationship of language and olfaction, and the perceived propriety of the olfactory across a range of discursive fields. Malinowski's speculative analysis of his dream narrative and the threat represented by its uninvited encoding of repressed desires ascribes to the dreaming experience a holism, an immersive and powerful totality of sense modalities absent from the emphasis upon visuality typical of the monograph: 'In dreams [...] we have a feeling of sensory experiences: we see, we hear [...] we touch [...] we smell' (p. 70). The *Diary* admits the presence of the oneiric and its unsettling ambiguities, particularised through olfaction and the presence of odours; the monograph does not.⁶¹ The sense modality of *Argonauts* is overwhelmingly visual: one of the few mentions of olfaction occurs in Malinowski's introduction to the text, where it coincides with the injunction to 'imagine'. Significantly, it is only in the context of this mode of imaginative discourse that an insistence upon the empirical is temporarily in abeyance. Here, odour – unquantifiable, unrepresentable – becomes an admissible source of sense data, although only at a remove from the narrative focus, with the observation that 'some natives flock around you, especially if they smell tobacco' (p. 4). There is a tacit assumption that anthropologists *can* smell, but neither their odorous nor their

⁶¹ 'In the modern West', suggests Classen, 'odours are commonly thought to play very little, if any, role in dream-life'. By contrast, she asserts, other cultures – 'The Umeda, Ongee, Amahuaca, Desana' – view dreams and odours as analogous entities: 'Both are tangible and transitory. Both also can provide knowledge beyond that of the visible world, conveying essences hidden to the eye' (*Aroma*, p. 158).

olfactory characteristics enjoy legitimacy within the formal constraints of the monograph. *A Diary*, in contrast, is liberated from the anthropological insistence upon the ocular, and is thus filled with observational data derived from the apprehension of odour. This creates an olfactory subtext of disgust, derived primarily from Malinowski's reaction to his surroundings. It is as if the physical and psychic act of relocation to an alien milieu generate in Malinowski a neurotic revulsion, most characteristically manifested in terms of odour. On visiting a village in New Guinea – named, tellingly, 'Aroma' – Malinowski recalls a 'strong stench of rotting seaweed' accompanied by 'The stench, smoke, noise of people, dogs and pigs' (p. 54). He also pinpoints the odour of 'Rotting trees, occasionally smelling like dirty socks or menstruation' (p. 85). The association of menses with decomposition is revealing in light of the Freudian aetiology of olfaction and the combination of sexual longing and self-reproach which characterises the *Diary*.⁶² However, in this instance I want to emphasise the ambivalent legitimacy of olfaction as an object of representation within different textual forms. Malinowski's comparisons with the landscape of Europe – 'This part of the trip reminds me most strongly of cruising on the Lake of Geneva' (pp. 223-224) – serve to highlight the islands' reality as alien, unfathomable and relying upon olfaction for their evocation. In a moment that recalls Lawrence's manipulation of narrative positions, Malinowski remarks that 'The incomparably beautiful mangrove jungle is at close quarters an infernal, stinking, slippery swamp' (p. 24). This sentence describes a shift in focus from the visual to other, traditionally subordinate sense modalities. The jungle is at first experienced visually, and evaluated according to an aesthetic standard. On closer inspection, the

⁶² Freud's designation of genital odour as a source of disgust, and consequently the object of organic repression, is given pungent expression by Iwan Bloch in *Odoratus Sexualis*: 'It is known to all that during her menses woman gives off an idiosyncratic repulsive odour' (pp. 69–70).

jungle comes within smelling distance, and implicitly, therefore, elides the distinction between subject and object. The experience of the jungle is now haptic and olfactory, as the vista metamorphoses into a ‘stinking’ and ‘slippery’ immediacy, a vivid evocation confined to the private space of Malinowski’s diary.

It is at this point that I want to return to Lawrence, who both acknowledges the power of odour to signify the immediacy of (culturally unfamiliar) experience, and questions its placement within specific narrative modes. When *The Plumed Serpent* recounts Kate’s disgust at witnessing a bullfight, her reaction to that which is ostensibly spectacle (by virtue of its status as the focus of mass observation) demonstrates the capacity of olfaction to destabilise a purely visual interpretation of the object of scrutiny. This subversion is effected by Lawrence’s juxtaposition of the visual with the literally visceral nature of odour:

The shock almost overpowered her. She had come for a gallant show. This she had paid to see. Human cowardice and beastliness, a smell of blood, a nauseous whiff of bursten bowels! She turned her face away.⁶³

Even as Kate smells the bullfight, her reaction is framed, tellingly, as a shrinking from the ocular; she turns her face away from a sensual threat that is not reliant upon vision for its transmission. This is not, of course, to claim that the immediacy of olfaction is uniformly framed by Lawrence as a troublesome or disquieting attribute; in my next chapter, I will demonstrate his co-option of odour to highlight the superiority of the circus to the perceived inadequacy of the visual experience of cinema. In the case of *The Plumed Serpent*, Kate’s inability to decode the odours to which she is subjected is contrasted with the reaction of her neighbour, a ‘Pole’, who

⁶³ D. H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent (Quetzalcoatl)*, ed. by L. D. Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 16.

validates the sensory experience as ontogenetic: ‘Now Miss Leslie, you are seeing *Life!* Now you will have something to write about, in your letters to England!’ (p. 16). Olfaction, implies the Pole, is allied to a totality of experience: it is an inevitable constituent of that which is designated as ‘seeing Life’, but more pertinently, emphasises the confrontation with culturally unfamiliar experience central to the travel narrative.

Similarly, the narrator of ‘Indians and an Englishman’ posits odour as a site of cultural difference between the Indians and their observer, ‘a lone, lorn Englishman’ (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 113). A purely visual apprehension of the Apaches gives way to the immediacy of their presence as evoked through olfaction. Initially, they are described as ‘The first Indians I really saw’ (p. 114). Subsequent contact with the Indians, which destroys preconceptions culled from second-hand sources, leads to the narrator’s psychic disintegration: ‘it was not what I thought it would be. It was something of a shock. Again something in my soul broke down’ (p. 116). Specifically, the impact of contact with the Indians is presented in terms of olfactory alienation:

The Apaches have a cult of water-hatred; they never wash flesh or rag. So never in my life have I smelt such an unbearable sulphur-human smell as comes from them when they cluster: a smell that takes the breath away from the nostrils. (p. 116)

The conflation of chemical and anthropic elements in the Apaches’ ‘sulphur-human’ odour echoes the description in *The Plumed Serpent* of Mexico’s national odour, which is suggestive of ‘violence and things in chemical conflict’ (p. 214). The odour of the Apaches described by Lawrence performs an act of appropriation: it ‘takes the

breath from the nostrils'. In forcibly merging subject and object, it violates the privileged position of the narrator as the locus of interpretation and meaning within the text.

This questioning of authorial control is paralleled by the emergence of odour, and the narrative codes it signifies, in Malinowski's *Diary* and *Argonauts*. Melanesian villages, bullfights and Apaches all resist segregation within a purely ocular mode of apprehension. The evocation of their presence as olfactory phenomena is problematised by the ineluctably visual character of text itself; equally, however, the affective force of odour lends it authority as a rhetorical and literary device. To encounter odour within a narrative, these instances suggest, is to affirm the credence of the enclosing text as indicative of reality or lived experience, but also to present a reaction unamenable to intellectual resistance, a point to which I will return in my following chapter. In turn, odour's role in transcending textual boundaries mirrors its physically dispersive and evanescent properties. The paradox that results from this association – even when deeply proximal, internalised through the physical act of olfaction, odour continues to pose a challenge to descriptive capabilities – is encapsulated in Malinowski's synaesthesiac description of the tropical rainforests of New Guinea: 'The atmosphere in the jungle is sultry, and saturated with a specific smell which penetrates and drenches you like music' (*Diary*, p. 85).

I will return to the alleged synaesthesiac congruities between music and odour in Chapters Two and Three of this study; more pertinent here is the text's encounter with the difficulty of encoding odour, as well as the conditions of possibility that enable such attempts, even allowing for the rhetorical permissiveness of the diary, in contrast to the insistence on univocality enforced by the monograph.

Malinowski's account lends a tangibility to odour that contrasts with its literal and metaphorical associations with vaporousness. Odour, in this instance, saturates; it 'penetrates' and 'drenches' the smelling subject, an ascription of materiality which we will re-encounter in relation to odour's representation by Joyce and Proust. Yet despite this immediacy, olfactory experience simultaneously evades narrative enclosure, as the particular odour of the jungle goes unspecified. It is suggestive of an idiosyncrasy that can be acknowledged, but challenges, resists, a linguistic analogue. The text's incapacity to fully render 'a specific smell' – which is grounded in the wider problem of odour's lack of descriptive terminology, at least in the English language – enforces a shift in rhetorical emphasis from the particular to the similetic. Here, the relationship between odour and environment is suggested through the correlative of music, which fills the narrative vacuum left by the text's failure to articulate the 'specific smell'.

Odour's restricted semantic domain, and the consequent recruitment of particular rhetorical strategies to address this inadequacy – of which the use of metaphor and simile are conspicuous examples – in turn modifies the categorisation of the texts in which it appears.⁶⁴ Thus, as I have argued, the desired objectivity of psychoanalytic discourse is compromised by the contentious anthropological speculations which comprise arguably *the* foundational theoretical construct informing the modernist conception of odour. Congruently, as we have seen, the legitimacy of modernist anthropology is dependent upon the exclusion of olfactory impressions from ethnographic texts. To do so risks engaging with the inherently

⁶⁴ It is, however, necessary to distinguish between the affective significance of odour and the attempts of medical science to explain the operation and influence of olfaction in strictly physiological terms. The extensive corpus of literature that addresses olfaction as a biochemical entity does not identify language as offering insufficient resources to discuss the biochemical characteristics of odour detection.

subjective, non-empirical nature of olfaction, a fallibility which, in the context of the ethnographic encounter, alternatively grants free play to odour's representation within those texts tolerant of ambiguity and polysemy. Such writing is epitomised by Malinowski's diary and Lawrence's Mesoamerican writing, and their shared declaration of emotive, rather than cerebral responses to odour; and also by early, pre-*Argonauts* ethnographic texts, and their reiteration of the alleged heightened olfactory capabilities of indigenous peoples. Tellingly, these texts are characterised by their reliance upon anecdotal narratives, rather than the empirically-based fieldwork cherished by Malinowski, an attribute which enforces my proposed affiliation between odour and those rhetorical features associated with fictionality. I have begun my survey of modernist representations of odour by first considering that which lies *outside* the centres of Western culture(s), encountered (or conjectured) in the moment of cross-cultural contact. I will stay with Lawrence, and his recognition of olfaction's appeal to the inarticulable and non-rational, but now propose to shift emphasis away from the exotic milieux of Melanesia, Mexico and prehistory to more local ground, to more fully examine the significance of olfaction as a source of disquiet for the modern, 'civilised' European subject at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Chapter Two

‘The human stink!’: the malodours of modernism and olfactory utopias

In this chapter I propose to examine the cultural encoding of odour as a pollutant and source of anxiety for the modern subject. In particular, I will emphasise the significance of the body’s representation as a locus of malodour, in conjunction with the foetor identified as a by-product of industrialisation. These concerns are, I argue, deeply implicated by their placement within the historical continuum; they are local to the moment of modernism, exemplified a particular expression of olfactory awareness present throughout the 1930s, which I will consider in due course. Such a particularity of association in turn invites the prospect of identifying a smell of the modern; that is, an odorous signature characteristic and evocative of a particular set of social and cultural developments. The viability of such an assertion is a point to which I will return throughout this chapter. Of more immediate relevance are the historical circumstances informing the rhetoric of malodour characteristic of the early twentieth century, and its subsequent appropriation and reinterpretation by established literary modernists such as Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis and Aldous Huxley. These writers invite critical scrutiny through their shared engagement with the body as a technologically-implicated entity, but this confluence of the biological and mechanical offers a means of recuperating hitherto overlooked figures such as John Gloag, whose speculative dystopian science fiction I will read against the more familiar modernist example of *Brave New World* later in this chapter.

I have noted the agency of odour in underscoring, with visceral immediacy, the alienation inspired by cross-cultural contact. Within the ambit of Western modernism, this model of odour-informed repulsion is extended to encompass not only the culturally unfamiliar, but the apparently quotidian and unremarkable. Accordingly, repugnance is normalised as an appropriate reaction to the emanations of the human body, or more accurately, those secretions typically apprehended through olfaction. Of particular importance, in this instance, is the emergence of a pseudo-medical discourse calculated to inspire social discomfort as a response to non-pathological yet malodorous conditions such as halitosis and body odour. As Tim Armstrong notes, the identification of these complaints emerged during the 1920s, and marked a transition from ‘generalized fears of body pollution’ to the specificity of ‘a variety of bodily parts and the technologies appropriate to them’.¹

The aggressive marketing of Listerine by Lambert Pharmacal exemplifies this shift from the general to the particular. Although conspicuously identified with the eradication of bad breath, the product was originally advertised as ‘a floor cleanser, an aftershave, a nasal douche, a treatment for gonorrhoea [and] a scalp treatment for dandruff and baldness’.² However, in 1921, the company hired advertising copywriters to improve sales of the product.³ They did so by pathologising bad breath as ‘halitosis’, a manoeuvre which not only isolated Listerine as a cure for a specific ailment, but transformed the public conception of bad breath from a personal imperfection to a medical complaint and source of

¹ Tim Armstrong, *Modernism, Technology and the Body: A Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 99.

² *The Advertising Age Encyclopedia of Advertising*, ed. by John McDonough and Karen Egolf (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2003), p. 917.

³ Larry Schweikart and Lynne Pierson Doti, *American Entrepreneur: The Fascinating Stories of the People Who Defined Business in the United States* (New York: American Management Association, 2010), p. 263.

ruination. Key to the campaign's strategy was the use of sociodrama, in which the potential consumers of Listerine were presented with an array of narrative scenarios calculated to play upon middle-class apprehensions.⁴ Thus, the career aspirations of the (male) executive are blighted by halitosis, while the affliction of bad breath renders women sexually unattractive and ineligible for marriage.⁵

As a product of the American advertising industry, Listerine's utility in countering personal malodour was not immediately intelligible to British consumers.⁶ Yet by the end of the 1930s, the narrative of bodily shame with which the product was associated had been successfully assimilated within British popular culture, an adoption noted with disfavour by the professional medical community. The Royal physician Lord Horder castigated the 'quack medicine trade' promoted by the 'modern witch doctor', and accurately described the promotional tactics deployed by advertisers: 'the quack first frightens us into thinking we have a complaint and then sells us the cure'.⁷ Horder's implicit reification of the trained clinician, in contrast to the marketing of pseudo-medical conditions recalls the comparable hostility directed at psychoanalysis described in my previous chapter. Both are discredited as malign influences upon popular consciousness, unsanctified

⁴ Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 20.

⁵ Anon, 'Promotion Landed Him in Bad Odour with His Boss', *Gloucestershire Echo*, 5 November 1937, p. 6 (p. 6) <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000320/19371105/124/0006>> [accessed 21 December 2015]; Anon, 'How Was She to Know?', *Scribner's Magazine*, 6 June 1922, 78 (p. 78) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 21 December 2015].

⁶ Anon, 'Tivoli Cinema', *The Times*, 25 March 1930, p. 14 (p. 14) <<http://0-find.galegroup.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/ttda/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=leedsuni&tabID=T003&docPage=article&searchType=BasicSearchForm&docId=CS236397177&type=multipage&contentSet=LTO&version=1.0>> [accessed 21 December 2015].

⁷ Anon, 'Freedom for Folly', *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 27 July 1938, p. 6 (p. 6) <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000273/19380727/171/0006>> [accessed 21 December 2015].

by scientific credibility, and reliant upon critical self-examination for their widespread adoption. Lawrence decries the relentless introspection imposed upon the civilised subject when addressing ‘lurking complexes’ accessible only to the skills of the trained analyst (*Psychoanalysis*, p. 7). Similarly, the marketing of personal malodour as modern concern is predicated on the assertion of helplessness. Just as those afflicted with neuroses cannot cure themselves, so those suffering from halitosis and body odour are pitifully unaware of their own stench until alerted to its offensive presence by a reluctant yet sympathetic third party; ‘even your closest friends won’t tell you’ is a persistent refrain from Listerine’s campaign.⁸

This congruence between the popular assimilation of psychoanalytic discourse and the anxious policing of the body as an odorous entity encouraged by the advertising industry can be offered further context with reference to the writing of A. A. Brill. In particular, his 1932 paper ‘The Sense of Smell in the Neuroses and Psychoses’ offers a suggestive inversion of the precondition of ignorance pivotal to the success of products such as Listerine. Like Freud, Brill offers a foundational casting of odour and civilisation as mutually opposed categories, an antagonism to which I will return later in this chapter. Consequently, Brill suggests, a waning engagement with olfaction operates as an index of cultural progress: ‘civilized mankind is gradually losing this sense’.⁹

It is telling that Listerine’s claims as an antidote to halitosis were based upon its credibility as deodorising agent. The product, it was claimed, operated not ‘by substituting some other odour but by really removing the old one’ (‘What’s That

⁸ Anon, ‘What’s That They Said?’, *The New York Times*, 11 October 1925, p. 21 (p. 21) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/103500949?accountid=14664>> [accessed 21 December 2015].

⁹ A. A. Brill, ‘The Sense of Smell in the Neuroses and Psychoses’, *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 1 (1932), 7–42 (p. 11).

They Said', p. 21). This emphasis upon the eradication, rather than the nullification of odour as a civilised concern, alludes to the wider banishment of olfaction as marker of cultural development identified by Brill, a recommendation which in turn rehearses Freud's odour paradigm. Accordingly, to embrace odour as a source of fascination, Freud proposes, is denotative of the imperfect internalisation of protocols governing the socially appropriate governance of sexual and excremental impulses. The regression implicit in a heightened appreciation of olfaction is, for Freud, conditional upon a fascination with foetid odours, typically those associated with bodily emanations. Commenting on the appeal of 'dirty and evil-smelling feet' as fetish objects, Freud further notes: 'Psycho-analysis has cleared up one of the remaining gaps in our understanding of fetishism. It has shown the importance, as regards the choice of a fetish, of a coprophilic pleasure in smelling which has disappeared owing to repression'.¹⁰ More pertinent, in this instance, is an implied erosion of difference between a deviant and impermissible engagement with odour, and a prevalent and heightened awareness of bodily malodour normalised as a consequence of advertising practices. Central to maintaining a distinction between 'normal' and 'abnormal' appreciations of olfaction, Brill intimates, is a patient's awareness of their condition, and the role of the trained analyst in verifying it as an abnormal manifestation. His paper recounts the case of 'C', who believed that 'a very disagreeable odour emanated from his rectum, and could be detected by everyone near him' ('The Sense of Smell' p. 21). The designation of this odour as delusion, rather than fact, hinges upon its discounting by a normative majority. By contrast, the promotion of remedies targeted at socially offensive odours relies upon

¹⁰ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Vintage; The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), VII, p. 155.

the status of its recipients as unwittingly malodorous, yet communally and secretly acknowledged as repellent. Furthermore, the self-doubt fostered by Listerine's advertising campaign acquires additional force through its imputation of universality; *anyone*, the logic of the copy implies, can be afflicted with halitosis, rather than a deviant minority.

Yet the viability of Brill's segregation between a 'normal', civilised indifference to olfaction, and a deviant preoccupation with odour falters when read against those case histories which recount instances of olfactory neuroses characterised by an illusory halitosis. 'A', for example, he reports, 'was constantly afraid of affecting his environment through his malodorous breath, halitosis' (p. 17). Comparably, 'B' – 'a passive homosexual' – alternately recognised his halitosis as an imagined and as a genuine phenomenon: 'now and then he could smell his own "foul breath" and then had to take measures against it' (pp. 17-18). These remedies, Brill further observes, included 'various mouth washes and aromatics' (p. 18). I argue that the difficulty demonstrated here, of distinguishing between 'real' and 'imagined' olfactory anxieties, underscores the ubiquity of a particular expression of bodily-derived disgust across a range of cultural axes, an aspect of twentieth-century culture recognised and deplored by literary modernists.

Lawrence, for example, writing in his 1929 introduction to Edward Dahlberg's novel *Bottom Dogs*, reiterates the popular identification of the marketing of odour awareness as an originally American, rather than European innovation. The text notes, with distaste, the growth of 'awful advertisements such as those about "halitosis", or bad breath' as an undesirable product of American culture.¹¹

¹¹ D. H. Lawrence, 'Introd. to Edward Dahlberg's Novel, for Putnam's *Bottom Dogs*', in *Introductions and Reviews*, ed. by N. H. Reeve and John Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge

However, Lawrence's caustic commentary, which additionally notes the 'perfection of American "plumbing", American sanitation, and American kitchens, utterly white-enamelled and anti-septic', is rooted within his broader critique of a prevalent bodily disgust which finds its origin in the alienation of the individual within modern culture ('Introduction to *Bottom Dogs*', p. 121). This abhorrence, framed as a disintegrative influence by Lawrence, is expressed through the language of bodily economy. Healthy human culture, Lawrence suggests, operates 'like cells in a complex tissue, alive and functioning diversely like a vast organism composed of family, clan, village, nation' (p. 121).

By contrast, the dysfunctional American social body is framed in distinctly non-biological terminology, in which individuals are assembled 'like grains of sand, friable, heaped together in a vast inorganic democracy' ('Introduction to *Bottom Dogs*', p. 121). This process of disintegration is presented as characteristic and axiomatic of modern culture, of what it is to *be* a modern individual: 'This deep psychic change', Lawrence notes, 'happens of course now all over the world' (p. 121). Central to this universal decline, described by Lawrence as 'the collapse of the flow of spontaneous warmth between a man and his fellow' is an awareness of, and reaction to, the existence of bodily wastes as an undesirable attribute of humanity (p. 121). This process is cast initially by Lawrence as an occult aspect of the interior life of the individual, a model which recalls the Freudian suppression of instinctual, non-civilised urges: 'Once the heart is broken, people become repulsive to one another, secretly [...] They smell in each other's nostrils' (p. 121). The action of 'repulsive effluvia' upon the modern subject's sensorium results in an aversion which is driven

University Press, 2005), pp. 119–24 (p. 121). Conversely, however, Lawrence also directs grudging praise at the 'skilfully poetic' strategies of the American advertising industry. 'These advertisements', Lawrence suggests, 'are *almost* prose-poems' ('Pornography', pp. 233–53 (p. 238)).

primarily by olfaction (p. 121). Lawrence's treatment of odour – as discussed in my previous chapter – is characterised by a recognition of its transgressive properties and ability to transcend strict demarcations between subject and object. This property is noted by sensory theoreticians such as Merleau-Ponty, who writes that when we encounter an odour, 'it closes round us, and *acts* upon us [my emphasis]'.¹² These unsettling attributes of olfaction are symptomatic of a disordering of the human psyche through the agency of odour. Pivotal to this relationship identified by Lawrence is the concept of passivity on the part of an odour's recipient. To smell – or not smell – Lawrence contends in his 'Introduction', is to be hostage to sensation, rather than to act as the locus of intelligibility for sense impressions: 'If his [man's] nose doesn't notice stinks, it just doesn't, and there's the end of it. If his nose is so sensitive that a stink overpowers him, then again he's helpless. He can't prevent his senses from transmitting and his mind from registering what it does register' (p. 122). Olfaction, in this instance, bypasses interpretative faculties, an aspect of odour again identified in my preceding chapter and noted by Ernest Schachtel in *Metamorphosis*. The olfactory (and touch), Schachtel asserts, are differentiated from the visual in that they do not permit a construction of reality in which to see the world is to order it. The visual, Schachtel contends, is primarily informative – we do not register the *sensation* of seeing in our eyes – unlike olfaction, in which the reaction of pleasure or revulsion is felt in the nose. The exactly irrational nature of olfaction lends an immediacy which threatens civilised proscriptions surrounding sexual and gustatory behaviour: 'It is much easier, both in sexual and in eating

¹² Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1978), p. 223.

behaviour, to resist or turn away from an attractive visual cue than it is to do so once the tactile, proprioceptive, or gustatory sense modalities have taken over'.¹³

The disjunction between visual and olfactory disgust is stressed throughout Lawrence's 'Introduction', an action which reaffirms odour's status as the source of primal repulsion: 'The American townships don't mind hideous litter of tin cans and paper and broken rubbish. But they go crazy at the sight of human excrement' (p. 121). To encounter faeces, specifically human faeces, the text implies, is generative of madness. Although the narrative suggests that the *sight* of human excrement is repellent, this ascription of a visual source belies a stronger sense of a disgust motivated by odour. To *see* excrement, the narrative implies, is also to smell it, or more precisely, to be perilously close enough to do so. That this reaction is culturally contingent rather than natural and necessary supports the identification of a repertory of characteristically Western olfactory sensitivities, epitomised, for example, by the emergence of halitosis as a modern creation. The variability of the encoding of faecality as an object of disgust – and consequently, as a marker of cross-cultural dissonance – is affirmed by Lawrence in *Mornings in Mexico*. The text recounts Lawrence's refusal to purchase sandals tanned with human excrement from a market vendor. Lawrence confesses his unavoidable discomfiture at the malodour of the huaraches – 'they stank' – but equally, notes this reaction as culturally, rather than physiologically derived: 'my leather man and his wife think it screamingly funny that I smell the huaraches before buying them' (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 54).

The narrative provides historical context for this normalisation of the odour of excrement as uncontentious, noting 'little pots of human excrement in rows for

¹³ Ernest G. Schachtel, *Metamorphosis: On the Development of Affect, Perception, Attention, and Memory* (New York: Basic Books, 1959), pp. 90–91.

sale' as a sight which appalled the conquistadores, while the indigenous leather-makers smelled the faeces 'to see which was the best, before they paid for it' (*Mornings in Mexico*, p. 54). While intellectually acquiescing to the proposition that the odour of faecality is neither offensive or inoffensive *per se*, the text abuts this declaration of equanimity – 'Everything has its own smell, and the natural smell of huaraches is what it is' – with the instinctive immediacy of disgust, a reaction normalised by Lawrence as a predictable and unremarkable response (p. 54). To casually admit the undesirability of malodour is, Lawrence suggests, a reaction which becomes impermissible when it modulates into an over-emphatic anxiety, a condition exemplified by the 'perfection' of American plumbing, and the rhetoric of bodily unease disseminated by the American advertising industry.

Interrelatedly, to dwell upon sordor, rather than merely to acknowledge its existence, is decried by Lawrence as an improper preoccupation of modernist fiction. Lawrence aggregates Joyce, Huxley and Gide as producers of 'very modern novels' in which 'the dominant note is the repulsiveness, intimate physical repulsiveness of human flesh' ('Introduction', p. 122).¹⁴ Huxley, in particular, is singled out by Lawrence as an exemplar of a typically modern expression of the intolerability of personal contact, an antipathy communicated through the rhetoric of malodour exemplified by *Point Counter Point*: 'Man just smells, offensively and unbearably, not to be borne. The human stink!' ('Introduction', p. 122). Lawrence's presentation of a literary modernism fixated on the 'cess-pools of the human body' ('Introduction', p. 122), finds cognate critical expression in his essay 'The Future of

¹⁴ Lawrence's antipathy towards James Joyce also found odorous expression through his dismissal of Joyce's writing as implicitly formless and unstructured: 'My God, what a clumsy *olla putrida* James Joyce is! Nothing but old fags and cabbage stumps of quotations from the Bible and the rest, stewed in the juice of deliberate, journalistic dirty-mindedness' (D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by James T. Boulton and Margaret H. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), VI, p. 508).

the Novel'. A perceived preoccupation with the apparently trivial odorous details of daily existence is presented as juvenile narcissism, distractions from the designated areas of attention for the 'serious' literary artist: 'Is the odour of my perspiration a blend of frankincense and orange pekoe and boot-blackening, or is it myrrh and bacon-fat and Shetland tweed?'¹⁵ Lawrence's dismissal of the 'cess-pools of the human body' seeks to regulate that which can be considered as a legitimate object of literary interest, but also sidesteps the evident significance with which foetor is freighted within modern culture, as dually fascinating and repellent. Woolf, for example, references the lavatorial as a growing, but contested presence in the years following the First World War in *Mrs Dalloway*: 'Newspapers seemed different. Now for instance there was a man writing quite openly in one of the respectable weeklies about water-closets. That you couldn't have done ten years ago – written quite openly about water-closets in a respectable weekly'.¹⁶ Lawrence's identification of the scatological and malodorous as (improper) concerns of literary modernism is extended by Woolf to suggest their successful assimilation within popular consciousness, epitomised by the rehabilitation of hitherto 'taboo words'.¹⁷

While *Lady Chatterley's Lover and A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'* directly contends with the expression and restriction of language relating to bodily functions, it is not my intention here to closely examine Lawrence's deliberate recruitment of 'obscene words' to address a perceived crisis of representation in relation to a 'phallic reality' marginalised by Western civilisation (*Lady Chatterley*, p. 334). Of greater relevance here, I argue, is the applicability of Lawrence's writing

¹⁵ D. H. Lawrence, *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. Bruce Steele, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁶ Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*, ed. by Anne E. Fernald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 64.

¹⁷ D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover and A Propos of 'Lady Chatterley's Lover'*, ed. by Michael Squires (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 309.

on obscenity – fictional and discursive – to his identification of a ubiquitous odour-informed repulsion inspired by modernity. Although Lawrence devotes extensive narrative space to the reclamation of ‘shit’ and ‘piss’ as objects of literary concern in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, I have noted his simultaneous censure of the cloacal within the writing of other, contemporaneous literary modernists (*Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, p. 223). To dwell excessively upon the mephitic, Lawrence contends, is an inappropriate aesthetic response. However, Lawrence is equally insistent upon the undesirability of squeamishness when addressing the inescapable nature of bodily functions, a position demonstrated by his famous castigation of Swift (*Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, p. 309). To exalt the mind and recoil from the body is, Lawrence proposes, generative of disintegration: ‘The mind’s terror of the body has probably driven more men mad than ever could be counted’ (p. 309).

In turn, Lawrence’s sceptical appraisal of Swift as incapacitated by prudery can be fruitfully read against more immediate literary figures, notably Wyndham Lewis. In relation to the latter, Lawrence offers a critique of cerebration as an intermediary agent in the expression of visceral disgust, an attack routed through the perceived misanthropy of Lewis: ‘He [Lewis] gives a display of the utterly repulsive effect people have on him, but he retreats into the intellect to make his display’ (‘Introduction’, p. 123). Lawrence’s identification of Lewis as the personification of an imminent and undesirable aspect of modernity – ‘It is a condition we are rapidly coming to’ – invites closer examination (p. 123). Lewis’s imputed evasion or neutralising of disgust is cast by Lawrence as an implicit failure of narrative. Lewis’s representational strategy is, Lawrence suggests, a ‘retreat’ which carries connotations of meretricious superficiality; it is a ‘display’, a further example of the strategies employed by the modern subject to transcend the inevitability of ‘baser

functions' (p. 121). Consequently, this shrinking from bodily processes is productive of neuroses, a process which describes a transition 'beyond tragedy into exacerbation, and continuous nervous repulsion' (p. 122).

Lawrence's statement of Lewis's personal and artistic fallibilities offers apparent support for the binary pairing of both writers as critically antithetical to each other. Lawrence, writing in 1914, describes an initial encounter with Lewis which suggests an original mutual incompatibility: 'Wyndham Lewis came in, and there was a heated and vivid discussion'.¹⁸ This undefined dissent is granted specificity through Lewis's dismissal of Lawrence's paintings. *Men Without Art* (1934) designates them as an amateurish and predictable reiteration of Lawrence's literary technique, rather than a legitimate aesthetic development in their own right: 'We know what sort of picture D. H. Lawrence would paint if he took to the brush instead of the pen. For he did so, luckily, and even held exhibitions. As one might have expected, it turned out to be incompetent Gauguin'.¹⁹

However, the apogee of Lewis's hostility to Lawrence is demonstrated by *Paleface*, a sustained attack on the perceived naïve primitivism of *Mornings in Mexico*. Although Lawrence is not the exclusive target of Lewis's animus – Sherwood Anderson and Freud are subjected to similarly hostile scrutiny throughout the text – *Paleface* attracts attention through its subsequent critical appropriation. T. S. Eliot, writing in 1934, famously suggested that Lewis provided a 'brilliant exposure' of Lawrence's artistic deficiencies.²⁰ Lawrence's posthumous relegation by Eliot – expressed through the latter's championing of Lewis – illustrates not only

¹⁸ D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), II, p. 193.

¹⁹ Wyndham Lewis, *Men Without Art* (Cassell & Company, Limited, 1934), p. 128.

²⁰ T. S. Eliot, *After Strange Gods* (London: Faber and Faber, 1934), p. 58.

literary modernism's institutionalisation of its own reading practices, but also segregates Lawrence as embodying a set of undesirable or illegitimate literary protocols.

Tellingly, Eliot's criticism of Lawrence famously stresses a disabling lack of cerebration: 'an incapacity for what we ordinarily call thinking' (*After Strange Gods*, p. 58). This emphasis upon the intuitive, rather than the intellectual, offers ostensible support to a Lewis/Lawrence opposition in which the intellect is contrasted with an 'acute sensibility [...] and lack of intellectual and social training' (p. 58). Eliot does not unequivocally identify a Lawrentian insistence upon the somatic as a governing principle in the latter's writing. Nevertheless, a notional contrast can be asserted between a 'rational', non-sensory aesthetic exemplified by Lewis, and an 'irrational' mode of understanding derived (in part) through the embrace of percepts by Lawrence. The recoiling from the sensory described by Lawrence, of which Lewis is hailed as a signature example, is in contrast to the deliberate assertion of the body as a conduit to knowledge endorsed throughout Lawrence's writing. In particular, a letter of 1913 to the artist Ernest Collings offers an early and explicit (and often quoted) discrimination by Lawrence between the mind and body as rival modes of consciousness: 'My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect [...] what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true. The intellect is only a bit and a bridle'.²¹ This familiar Lawrentian contrast between the intuitive potentialities of the body and the constraining influence of the mind is offered extensive discursive space in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. Lawrence's reconfiguration of the body and rejection of established, medically-derived structurings of human physiology is accompanied by a prizing of the solar plexus,

²¹ D. H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. by James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), I, p. 503.

rather than the brain, as a seat of consciousness: ‘This root of all knowledge and being is established in the solar plexus; it is dynamic, pre-mental knowledge, such as cannot be transferred into thought’ (*Psychoanalysis*, p. 79).

Yet the imposition of a critical division between Lawrence and Lewis, localised by the perceived contrast between Lawrence as a proponent of the somatic, and Lewis as an intellectual shrinking from the offensive odour of humanity, fails to address Lewis’s evident engagement with the body, whether through an unambiguous endorsement of corporeality, or as I shall demonstrate, through the metaphorical properties of olfaction. Lawrence’s identification of Lewis as representative of the vitiating effects of modernity, exemplified by a disabling reliance upon the intellect, is countermanded by Lewis’s essay ‘Our Wild Body’ (1910). In contrast to the squeamishness attributed by Lawrence, the text opens by lamenting the exclusion of the body as an object for discussion: ‘The body is sung about, ranted about, abused, cut about by doctors, but never talked about’.²² Central to ‘Our Wild Body’ is a questioning of the prohibitions placed upon the body through a modern insistence upon cleanliness and physical culture, and a correspondent recognition of the imaginative possibilities represented by the somatic.

The text’s contention – that modernity is productive of an anxious over-regulation of the body – is offered cognate expression in Lewis’s essay, ‘One Picture Is More Than Enough’ (1934). The text critically appraises minimalism, an aesthetic development attributed by Lewis to the combined influence of ‘communist principles, and “slump” conditions’, which are nevertheless intended to ape

²² Wyndham Lewis, ‘Our Wild Body’, *The New Age*, 5 May 1910, 8–10 (p. 8) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 2 June 2015].

‘Japanese simplicity’ through the shedding of material possessions.²³ Key participants in this adoption of austerity are identified by Lewis as ‘Mr Modern’ or ‘Miss Modern’, defined by their uncritical worship of the machine; they ‘dream of pylons and magnetos’ (p. 231). To be modern, contends Lewis – or more accurately, to be a technologically-enslaved modern subject – entails a denial of the body, characterised by the enforcement of sanitation and the elimination of bodily wastes. An excessive regard for cleanliness, Lewis asserts, is reflective of a disabling asepsis of the mind, which is framed by the agency of odour: ‘is it not possible’ he asks, ‘for the very intellect to smell too much of disinfectant, and for hygiene to become, there, too, a curse?’ (p. 231)

Lawrence’s comparable identification of bodily processes as a source of shame and anxiety within contemporaneous North American culture is echoed by Lewis’s description of the hygienic preoccupations of ‘the Englishman’ in ‘Our Wild Body’. Noting that ‘It [the Englishman] has a room all to itself merely to be cleaned in’, Lewis further observes ‘indiarubber implements dangling on the wall, Indian clubs and a large coloured chart to direct his morning’s exercises’ as evidence of a desire to cleanse and neutralise the body’s capacity to act as a vehicle for the expression of national characteristics (‘Our Wild Body’, p. 8).²⁴ Lewis’s critique of the ‘vast Anglo-Saxon conspiracy against the body’ resonates with Lawrence’s

²³ Wyndham Lewis, ‘One Picture Is More Than Enough’, in *Creatures of Habit and Creatures of Change: Essays on Art, Literature and Society, 1914-1956*, ed. by Paul Edwards (Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1989), pp. 231–35 (pp. 231, 232).

²⁴ It is necessary to note that Lewis’s distrust of the deliberate, regimented cultivation of the body does not extend to a dismissal of a robust body *per se*. Writing in *Futurism and the Flesh*, Lewis suggests that a vigorous corporeality and modernist aesthetic production are not mutually exclusive: ‘Every good painter today knows that the fitter his body the better his painting will be’ (Wyndham Lewis, ‘Futurism and the Flesh, A Futurist’s Reply to Mr G. K. Chesterton’, in *Creatures of Habit and Creatures of Change: Essays on Art, Literature and Society, 1914-1956*, ed. by Paul Edwards (Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1989), pp. 35–36 (p. 36)).

account of the delimiting of the body's capacity for expression as a creative and erotic entity (*Our Wild Body*, p. 8). In decrying 'money, machines and wage-slaves' as negative aspects of modernity, Lawrence locates a comparable animus operating at the heart of civilisation, a 'fear and hate of one's own instinctive, intuitive body, and fear and hate of every other man's and every other woman's warm, procreative body and imagination'.²⁵

The 'display' of Lewis, identified by Lawrence as a sterile intellectual response to a visceral and threatening disgust, is in contrast to Lewis's framing of the satirist – and by implication, his own self-representation as a creator of satire – as heavily implicated by the agency of the unregulated body. Writing in 'The Satirist and the Physical World' (1934), Lewis implicitly locates himself in a literary genre which is inescapably allied to the physical contingencies of the body, rather than the abstraction of the intellect: 'The great satirists have usually been steeped in physical manners of feeling'.²⁶ However, Lewis's assertion of satire's origins in corporeality offer a point of divergence from the role accorded to the body in Lawrence's oeuvre, particularly in relation to its disposition towards a satirical end. It is important to qualify congruencies between Lewis and Lawrence's treatment of the body by noting the former's reiteration of the Cartesian divide between mind and body decried by Lawrence. As Lewis states: 'If we posit the body as what best may stand for what is "savage," and the spirit as what best may stand for what is "polite," the satirist is then certainly apt to wear a savage aspect' ('The Satirist and the Physical World', p. 208). Despite the disjunction between the body and spirit promoted here by Lewis,

²⁵ D. H. Lawrence, 'Introduction to These Paintings', in *Late Essays and Articles*, ed. by James T. Boulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 182–217 (p. 193).

²⁶ Wyndham Lewis, 'The Satirist and the Physical World', in *Creatures of Habit and Creatures of Change: Essays on Art, Literature and Society, 1914-1956*, ed. by Paul Edwards (Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1989), pp. 207–10 (p. 208).

‘The Satirist and the Physical World’ shadows Lawrence’s conception of understanding as an embodied, rather than a purely cerebral process. The text cites the example of Paracelsus, who when asked to ‘indicate the relation in which he stood to the learned world’, is quoted by Lewis as offering a satirical check to scholasticism by remarking that ‘all the universities have less experience than my beard’ (p. 208).

Suggestive, in the context of the odour-inspired disgust attributed to Lewis by Lawrence, is the former’s recruitment of the olfactory as representative of embodied knowledge, suggested through Lewis’s observation that Paracelsus ‘might have said that his *nose* knew more than all the followers of Galen put together’ (p. 208). The text’s tacit suggestion that olfaction, rather than merely registering the presence of odours, is in fact a source of enlightenment and ontological awareness, is paralleled by the reimagining of nasal anatomy described by Lawrence in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. The nose is accorded primary significance by Lawrence as an organ of apprehension; it ‘almost inevitably indicates the mode of predominant dynamic consciousness in the individual, the predominant primary centre from which he lives’ (*Psychoanalysis*, p. 100). The text indirectly reinterprets Kant’s diminishment of the olfactory as an undesirably intimate sense modality by eliding the physical incorporation of an odour through olfaction with direct, sensory understanding. Lawrence approvingly notes the olfactory capacities of animals: ‘Most animals, however, smell what they see [...] They know better by the more direct contact of scent’ (p. 102).

Lawrence’s explicit promotion of olfaction from its traditionally subordinate placement within the sensorium lends further credence to his consideration as an olfactorily-implicated modernist, and is refined and extended through the rhetoric of

physiognomy.²⁷ *Fantasia* offers a taxonomy of nasal variations, each of which, the text asserts, corresponds to a particular temperament; the nose, Lawrence states, ‘is one of the greatest indicators of character’ (p. 100). Thus, he argues:

a short snub nose goes with an over-sympathetic nature [...] a long nose derives from the centre of the upper will [...] A thick, squat nose is the sensual-sympathetic nose [...] the high, arched nose the sensual voluntary nose, having the curve of repudiation, as when we turn up our nose from a bad smell. (p. 100)

The significance with which Lawrence invests nasal anatomy invites reference to other, cognate examples of modernism’s engagement with rhinology. In particular, Fliess’s postulation of nasal reflex neurosis is worthy of mention. He ‘believed that the nose was the dominant sexual organ and that a certain type of neurosis was determined by the mucous membranes of the nose and treatable by operations on it’.²⁸ However, in this instance I want to emphasise Lawrence’s identification of the nose as an organ of intuitive, rather than rational understanding, and as an index of personality, a designation which invites consideration of his treatment of the visual within *Fantasia*, given the foundational pairing of vision and olfaction as opposed sense modalities. While praising the eye as ‘the third great gateway of the psyche’, Lawrence directs criticism not at vision *per se*, but to its susceptibility to habituation, to a specifically ‘modern Northern’ mode of seeing (p. 101). Consequently, Lawrence states, ‘Sight is the least sensual of all the senses’, an assertion which

²⁷ Lawrence’s identification of the nose as a marker of personality alludes to an established convention within the tradition of physiognomy. See, for example, Lavater: ‘we can prove [...] that the nose is a physiognomical sign of character’ (Johann Caspar Lavater, *Physiognomy* (London: Cowie, Low, and Co., 1826), p. 204).

²⁸ Mark Holowchak, *Freud: From Individual Psychology to Group Psychology* (Lanham, Md.: Jason Aronson, 2012), p. 15. Holowchak additionally comments on Fliess’s nasal theories: ‘Fliess’s views on human beings were outré – perhaps even absurdly so’ (p.15).

provides a further point of congruency with Lewis (p. 102). Writing in *The Tyro*, Lewis draws attention to the undesirable tendency of the visual regime toward familiarisation, and the consequent reduction of the capacity of the eye – ‘a stupid organ, or shall we say a stolid one’ – to view the world with the appropriate lack of preconditioning necessary for aesthetic production.²⁹ The transcendence of an acquired and habitual mode of seeing is, Lewis, contends, both the ambition and preserve of the artist – ‘are such dreams only a painter’s?’ – accessible through an oneiric state: ‘There the mind [...] can get the full emotional shock, the purely visionary quality that early in life becomes dissociated from our exercise of the visual sense’ (‘Essay on the Objective of Plastic Art in Our Time’, pp. 36-37). Unlike Lawrence, however, Lewis does not in this instance grant comparable discursive space to a comparison between vision and olfaction. What is noteworthy, in this instance, is Lewis’s amenability to an aesthetic based upon sensory disruption, a deregulating of vision productive of extreme reactions – ‘delight or horror’ – which in turn offsets his critical casting as the ratiocinative counterpart to the volatility attributed to Lawrence by Eliot (p. 37).

Lawrence’s ascription of olfactory fastidiousness to Lewis is further undermined by the latter’s evident willingness to tolerate the disturbing presence of malodour. In particular, Lewis’s reaction to the alignment of odour along social stratifications described by George Orwell reveals a brisk attitude toward the prevalent ‘human stink’ characteristic of modernity and decried by Lawrence. Lewis recounts Orwell’s admission of instinctive, bourgeois disgust when confronted with the purported odour of the working classes, described in *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937). Commenting on the ‘perfectly terrific difficulty’ represented by odour as an

²⁹ Wyndham Lewis, ‘Essay on the Objective of Plastic Art in Our Time’, *The Tyro: A Review of the Arts and Painting, Sculpture and Design*, 1922, 21–37 (p. 36).

obstacle to the socialist amity desired by Orwell, Lewis offers a comparison with his own, olfactorily-inflected experience of his putative social inferiors. Writing in ‘Orwell, or Two and Two Make Four’, Lewis caustically notes:

I started life in a house with a bathroom, with a nurse, two servants, and a cook; therefore I had four stinkers under the roof with me in place of Mr. Orwell’s one. This may have inured me to the terrible stench of females of the labouring class.³⁰

Lewis does not offer a renegotiation of social hierarchies. His declaration of olfactory inclusivity and normalisation of the odour of other human beings as an inescapable cultural constant is linked to his wider textual strategy of diminishing – ridiculing – Orwell’s yearning to transcend class boundaries. This ambition is subsequently described by Lewis as ‘an idiotic’ quest in pursuit of a non-existent, homogenous working-class (‘Orwell, or Two and Two Make Four’, p. 167).

Accordingly, Lewis describes Orwell’s olfactory sensibilities as evident of a deviant and debilitating psychopathology, a diagnosis framed – satirically – within the rhetoric of Freudian psychoanalysis: ‘This *stink* business was obviously a first-class complex. Nothing, one feels, could quite root it out’ (p. 164).

Lewis’s use of ‘complex’, in this instance, contains an always already encoded depreciation of the term as a spurious construct. It is co-opted to deride Orwell, but also suggests Lewis’s resistance to the wider, successful assimilation of psychoanalytic terminology. Here, I want to address the confluence of olfaction and Lewis’s suspicion of the ‘complex’ as an untenable aspect of modernity by returning

³⁰ Wyndham Lewis, ‘Orwell, or Two and Two Make Four’, in *The Writer and the Absolute* (London: Methuen & Co, Ltd., 1952), p. 164. A comparable social dimension is ascribed to odour by Lawrence, through his observation that the ‘upper classes smell often enough of stale violet-powder’ (*Study of Thomas Hardy*, p. 289).

to the polemic of *Paleface*, in which Lewis ridicules Lawrence's fiction as emblematic of 'rough-stuff primitivism, and freudian hot-sex-stuff'.³¹ This manoeuvre diminishes the validity of Lawrence's aesthetic by identifying it as reliant upon the influence of Freud, but is also extended throughout the text, echoing Lewis's derision of Orwell as afflicted with a spurious olfactory complex. Lawrence, Lewis writes, 'is in full and exultant enjoyment of a full battery of 'complexes' of every possible shade and shape of sexiness' (*Paleface*, p. 203). Suggestively, a central aspect of Lewis's mockery is channelled through the language of olfaction. This characteristic, I argue, exemplifies the metaphorical deployment of odour as a response to that which is resistant to textual exegesis, but also reveals Lewis's reliance upon the terminology of sensory – irrational – reaction to communicate his satirical attack.

Throughout *Paleface*, Lewis identifies and historicises the perceived romantic atavism of Lawrence and his yearning for cross-cultural contact as indicative of a wider Western tradition. The European, Lewis contends, 'has always had a fancy for the 'mysterious' lands outside his own, inhabited by strange and marvellous peoples' (p. 150). The consequence of this fascination, Lewis suggests, is an inadmissible desire for miscegenation, which *Paleface* contextualises through the agency of olfaction: 'He [the European] has always 'smelt strangeness' and mistaken that for love' (p. 150). That which is culturally alien, or unacceptable, Lewis contends, can be ascertained through olfaction, through its designation as emblematic of a particular set of racial, social or colonial relations. The act of olfaction by the subject, and the nature of the odour attending an object – encapsulated within the moment of 'smelling strangeness' – represents for Lewis

³¹ Wyndham Lewis, *Paleface: The Philosophy of the Melting-Pot* (New York: Gordon Press, 1972), p. 180.

that which is untenable in Lawrence's writing, and which cannot, therefore, be assimilated into Lewis's own schema of the ideologically and aesthetically permissible: 'Why does Mr. Lawrence, it is impossible not to ask, go on smelling round the Indian Heaven and coquetting with the Indian gods?' (*Paleface*, p. 153).

As with Lewis's critique of Orwell, a purported Lawrentian preoccupation with odour is ascribed psychological morbidity, but also serves to underscore that which for Lewis is politically suspect. By recruiting olfaction, Lewis invokes a sense modality that is inherently resistant to representation or notation – and which, therefore, tells against his identification of *Paleface* as an objective critical exercise. In this instance, an ambiguity attends the presence of odour, which mirrors its wider tendency towards evanescence and diffusion; it is unclear whether Lawrence is the smelling subject, or the source of an inadmissible odour. In the context of *Paleface*, the olfactory is powerfully suggestive of a critical antipathy which struggles to obtain full articulation within the text, and more widely, emerges within Lewis's writing as a master-signifier for the politically or culturally contentious.

The apparent contradiction embodied in this stance – *Paleface* decries the act of olfaction, yet utilises the language of odour to 'smell' critical dissent – exemplifies the self-proclaimed contradictions which Lewis believed were necessary to be critically and artistically enabled, as demonstrated in the valuation of paradoxes asserted in *Time and Western Man*: 'I have allowed these contradictory things to struggle together, and the group that has proved the most powerful I have fixed upon as my most essential ME'.³² Lewis's recruitment of the olfactory across the wider spectrum of his writing supports his identification of odour as an integral constituent of modernity. As I have argued, an excessive preoccupation with odour is

³² Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1957), p. 136.

presented by Lewis as evidence of the successful assimilation of Freudian psychoanalytic discourse – to be afflicted with ‘complexes’ – and therefore to be personally and artistically suspect. Yet Lewis is equally implicated by his use of olfaction to signal the presence of that which is modern. On one hand, Lewis rehearses Lawrence’s contention that a key aspect of modernity is the relaxation of prohibitions surrounding faecality as an appropriate textual concern. To be modern, *Self Condemned* (1954) asserts, entails an obligation to confront stench: ‘the new historian is obliged to describe what is brutish and only fit for the garbage pail’.³³ Yet a conspicuous feature of Lewis’s elision of modernism and olfaction is a lack of specificity; the aroma of an impermissible aspect of modern culture can be signalled through the agency of odour, but the exact nature of the odour at the heart of this conceit remains undescribed.

Lewis’s scepticism about progress – or more accurately, of the unthinking cult of progress – is expanded in ‘One Way Song’ (1933). The text is alert to the mechanisation of the body decried in other, associated examples of Lewis’s writing: ‘Creatures of Fronts we are – designed to bustle | Down paths lit by our eyes, on stilts of clockwork’.³⁴ However, the neutralisation of the body’s biological contingencies lamented by Lewis does not offer a comparable deodorising of corporeality; the critique of modernity advanced by the text is shaped by the language of sensual disgust. The narrator declares, triumphantly:

How we One-ways stink

Of progress! I could tell you by your smell!

The effluvium of progress suits you well (p. 88)

³³ Wyndham Lewis, *Self Condemned* (Santa Barbara: Black Sparrow Press, 1983), p. 89.

³⁴ Wyndham Lewis, ‘One Way Song’, in *One Way Song* (London: Methuen, 1960), pp. 83–131 (p. 86).

In this instance, the text enacts the olfactory sensitivities attributed as a source of ridicule to Orwell and Lawrence, a characteristic which is explicitly articulated as a deliberate strategy in *Blasting and Bombardiering* (1937). Here, Lewis isolates odour as a focal point of interest, and an enabler of critical interrogation, but also as an influential means of apprehension. As the text admits: ‘The look, the gait, the smell, the vocabulary of people excites me to the greatest interest’.³⁵ Lewis’s association of language with olfaction is suggestive, given the dialectic between perception and its textual encoding at the heart of this thesis, but in this instance, is presented as circumscribed as an object of readerly concern: ‘it need not worry you from whence I derive this interest’ (p. 9).

If Lewis is reluctant to fully explore the significance of his engagement with olfaction as a source of fascination, the text readily utilises odour as a perceptible marker of modernity in announcing the detectable, yet inarticulable presence of a ‘new Zeitgeist’: ‘It’s almost as if a new guy had got into the landscape. I can hear him and smell him — there are new crepitations in the air, as yet unexplained’ (p. 340). Lewis’s description suggests an as yet unrealised imminence, a persistent attribute of encodings of the olfactory as a signifier of futurity, but is also conspicuous in its temporary abeyance of intellectual authority. The ‘new guy’ signalled at the conclusion of *Blasting and Bombardiering* is resistant to textual exposition, approachable instead as a set of odorous and auditory sensory percepts, a status that subverts the Lawrentian categorisation of Lewis as a cerebral, rather than sensorially-informed writer. The text’s earlier linkage of lexis and odour, of ‘vocabulary’ and ‘smell’, is later refined and extended, as Lewis exhorts the reader to embrace the olfactory as a critical mode. The key to deciphering modernity – or

³⁵ Wyndham Lewis, *Blasting & Bombardiering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 8.

more precisely, the illegitimacy of an array of modernists selected by Lewis – is, the text counsels, to read its contentious textual products against the rhetoric of olfaction. Odour, Lewis opines, provides the means to critically address that which is politically and aesthetically controversial: ‘Look closely at the written word. It is rather the new smells and colours of the words men use you have to look out for — the gait of the sentences, the tone of the voice’ (p. 342). This advice recalls the critical methodology endorsed by Lewis in *Paleface*, in which the reader ‘must be induced somehow to contract the habit of reading between the lines’ (p. 229). In the context of *Paleface*, this programme of meticulous analysis enables the excavation of an occult primitivist political agenda, which is only ever communicable through the terminology of olfaction. The logic of the literary device suggested here – that words have an attendant and indescribable odour – is nevertheless debunked by Lewis as a spurious modern contrivance. After urging the reader to be attentive to the ‘new smells’ of the zeitgeist, Lewis notes mockingly: ‘Didn’t you know that words could smell? Read Mr. Joad!’ (*Blasting and Bombardiering*, p. 342)

The dual function ascribed to odour by Lewis and Lawrence – a marker of a pervasive anxiety reflecting the policing of the body as a hygienic entity, but also recruited as a means of detecting and conceptualising those aspects of modernity held to be discreditable – is granted further, extended expression by other, hitherto unremarked writers. As I have suggested, the writing of John Gloag exemplifies a preoccupation with the olfactory which cannot be ignored; his novel *The New Pleasure* (1933) is one of the few early twentieth-century texts to offer extensive narrative space to odour as a literary concern. Furthermore, as I shall demonstrate, *The New Pleasure* obtains additional significance through the novel’s striking congruity with other, contemporaneous extra-literary castings of odour as an object

of cultural interest. To date, Gloag's life and career have received only cursory scholarly attention.³⁶ The plurality of his oeuvre – and his status as a popular, rather than formally experimental writer – is noted by Brian Stableford: 'His literary output during the thirties was very diverse, including numerous non-fiction works and contemporary novels [...] his other work includes numerous books on architecture, design and furniture, and also works on social history'.³⁷

Of primary relevance here is Gloag's interwar output, as a writer of popular speculative science fiction, a self-declared identity described in his introduction to *First One and Twenty* (1946), his collection of short stories. In defining his authorial persona, Gloag cautions against the covert politicisation of fiction, a caveat which recalls the demands for critical vigilance recommended by Lewis in *Paleface*. Gloag deplores 'pallid substitutes for story telling, often written in honour of some "ideology"', but also seeks to validate the utility of fiction as pure entertainment.³⁸ To designate literature as ideologically motivated is dismissed by Gloag as an attribute typical of the 'highbrows of the nineteen 'twenties' (p. v). Consequently, Gloag offers the following categorisation of fiction: 'Stories may thus be classified very broadly in two groups: those written from a political point of view, and those written primarily to entertain' (p. vi). To encounter 'political' fiction – typically in the environs of the 'lecture room' – is, Gloag contends, to be 'bored or infuriated' (p. vi). Conversely, the text approvingly notes the 'potent magic' of those texts notionally liberated from ideological considerations (p. vi).

³⁶ Gloag's contribution to the literary representation of odour is mentioned briefly by Classen in *Aroma*, p. 176.

³⁷ Brian M. Stableford, *Algebraic Fantasies and Realistic Romances: More Masters of Science Fiction* (San Bernardino, Calif.: Borgo Press, 1995), pp. 7–8.

³⁸ John Gloag, *First One and Twenty* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1946), p. v.

A further congruency with Lewis and Lawrence is demonstrated through Gloag's suspicion of the negative influence of psychoanalytic discourse upon mass culture. To reject the legitimacy of fiction as solely entertainment, rather than ideologically interested, is, Gloag suggests, a consequence of 'the extent to which our minds have been fuddled with so-called psychological science' (p. vi). The text's mistrust of the embedding of Freudian rhetoric within popular consciousness prompts comparison with Lewis's postulation of the 'puzzled and befuddled [...] beFreuded, bewildered White' as an aspect of Western culture (*Paleface*, p. 203), a shared identification which further subverts Gloag's conspicuous approval of literature as a merely pleasurable diversion, rather than suggestive of conscious commentary or cultural critique. However, I argue that Gloag's fiction enacts a questioning of modernity which directly contends with the concerns articulated by Lewis and Lawrence, notable of which, as noted, is the emergence of hygiene – and hence malodour – as a source of disquiet for the modern subject.

In 'To-morrow's Yesterday' (1932), Gloag suggests a dichotomous social encoding of bodily wastes in relation to contemporaneous culture. To be modern, the text contends, echoing Lawrence, is to be provided with unprecedentedly efficient means of controlling and eliminating effluent. The text offers a satirical sketch of the progressive ambitions of the radically-minded Mrs Lembart: 'She was prepared to accept a few of the gifts of her own century, and hygiene was one of them'.³⁹ However, the text caustically notes a new frankness in the discussion of faecal and sexual mores: 'Her three children were shaggy little savages who discussed excrement, sex and obstetrics with gusto whenever they noticed that it embarrassed people who were not completely modernized' (p. 25). To be successfully assimilated

³⁹ John Gloag, 'First One and Twenty', in *First One and Twenty* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1946), pp. 13–120 (p. 25).

within a particular model of interwar culture is, the text asserts, to be purged of inhibitions associated with the human body, whether encoded as Lawrence's 'human stink', or through Lewis's attack on the sterile cleanliness affiliated with the worship of technology.

More relevant, when considered in the context of the broader literary representation of odour as a concern of modernism, is the ambivalent framing of olfaction suggested by Gloag's writing, in which odour is symptomatic of ultra-modernity, but is also significant of atavism, of that which is deemed culturally retrograde, the preserve of 'savages'. I have described the designation of the olfactory as a putatively primitive attribute in Chapter One of this thesis, whether evocative of prehistoric origins, or, interrelatedly, as a means of relegating the subjects of ethnographic study as 'primitive' through their ascription of enhanced olfactory capabilities or of an attendant characteristic odour. *The New Pleasure* echoes Freud's influential casting of odour as symptomatic of an unrecoverable moment in human evolution, but inverts the prehistoric model proposed by 'Civilisation and its Discontents'. The novel appropriates odour as a satirical conceit, a means of substantiating a speculative and unrealisable futurity, in which heightened olfactory powers are vaunted as a triumph of civilisation. The text opens with the creation of Gamma-8, an olfactory stimulant formulated by Professor Adrian Frankby and subsequently marketed under the brand name 'Voe'. The popularity of the drug provokes the ire of tobacco manufacturers and newspaper magnates by announcing a new era of enhanced olfactory sensitivities. As the narrative progresses, Voe is credited as an agent of social, economic and cultural change. The liberation of olfaction from its dormant state renders the odour of petrol unbearable, while the new-found ability of humans to discern sexual attractiveness

through odour generates a re-engineering of reproductive selection, and a return to a prelapsarian, agrarian idyll. Accordingly, a modernity characterised by the contaminating miasma of pollution is supplanted by a new, socially-conscious spirit of scientific discovery divorced from capitalistic self-interest. The conclusion of the novel, which offers a reassessment of the influence of industrialisation is unmistakably Lawrentian in its dismissal of the Western model of scientific theory and practice: ‘Science had no design in those days [...] It was driven into stupid and nameless cruelties by a monkeyish curiosity’.⁴⁰

The early critical reception of *The New Pleasure* does not suggest an inaugural moment of literary discontinuity in the representation of olfaction. A 1933 review of the novel by Norah Hault in *The Bookman* offers praise, but does not attach any special cultural significance to the text, described merely as a ‘delicious book whose satire is finely sustained’.⁴¹ Yet, I argue, the timing of the publication of *The New Pleasure* is noteworthy, and offers support for the identification of odour as a focus of debate throughout the 1930s. *Brave New World*, a more familiar exemplar of odour’s representation within a futuristic milieu, was published in 1932, and *The New Pleasure* displays an anxious awareness of its influential predecessor. At the conclusion of the text, Gloag mischievously disparages ‘the pessimistic forebodings of such writers as Aldous Huxley’, with *Brave New World* now an irrelevant text in the odorous Utopia described in *The New Pleasure*: ‘How that black curtain of fear had been lifted from the future!’ (*The New Pleasure*, p. 294) However, it is necessary to qualify a comparison between the two novels by noting an important point of difference. *Brave New World* evokes the imaginary London of AD 2540; by contrast,

⁴⁰ John Gloag, *The New Pleasure* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1933), p. 284.

⁴¹ Norah Hault, ‘The Novel and Contemporary Civilisation’, *The Bookman*, November 1933, 128 (p. 128) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/BookmanUK-1933nov-00128>> [accessed 16 June 2015].

The New Pleasure is rooted in the history of the early 1930s. Consequently, the novel describes the illiberal regime enforced by the ‘Italian Dictator’, and notes the ‘great scheme’ underway in Germany to reinvigorate the country’s economy (p. 119, p. 177). More pertinently, *The New Pleasure* obtains additional relevance when read against a rising contemporaneous olfactory activism. In particular, the manifesto of the Smell Society, created by Ambrose Appelbe, a London lawyer, in 1935, reiterates many of the concerns articulated within *The New Pleasure*, notably a disquiet surrounding the malodour of industrialisation. The society – which at the height of its popularity claimed H. G. Wells and G. B. Shaw among its members – drew attention to the ubiquity of the stench of vehicle exhaust fumes in urban areas, and demanded its eradication.⁴² The *Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror* in 1936 noted the society’s efforts to ‘approach all manufacturers of oil-burning street vehicles with regard to “the lessening of unpleasant smells from the introduction of Diesel engines on to the road”’ (‘Smell Society’s Objects’, p. 8). The society, the newspaper notes, additionally directed criticism at ‘the unpleasantness of ashbins left on the pavements in the early morning’, and recommended a programme of olfactory re-education, in which ‘sweet-smelling herbs and flowers and aromatic bushes’ would be planted in parks and other communal spaces to reinvigorate a collective sense of smell dulled by the products of industrialisation (p. 8).

Comparably, *The New Pleasure* laments a London ‘choked with gas’, in which ‘one can hardly breathe’ (p. 33). Consequently, the revitalisation of human olfactory capabilities stimulated by the ingestion of Voe sensitises the modern, civilised subject to the odours characteristic of an industrialised nation. The text

⁴² Anon, ‘Smell Society’s Objects’, *Western Daily Press and Bristol Mirror*, 31 January 1936, p. 8 (p. 8)
<<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000513/19360131/106/0008>>
[accessed 16 June 2015].

describes the reaction of Claughton, an early adopter and proponent of Voe, as the drug defamiliarises an established odourscape: ‘He enjoyed the new, strange and quite unrecordable sensation which spread such contentment through the whole body [...] he became aware of hitherto unremarked discomforts in his office’ (p. 33). As a result of this elevated awareness (which, rehearsing the resistance of olfactory experience to transcription, evades an authoritative exegesis), the narrative suggests, ‘The smell of petrol and the hot, choking exhaust gases that flooded all the main traffic streets of London had become intolerable to him’ (p. 68).

The text’s conspicuous isolation of petrol and diesel fumes as source of modern malodour anticipates the efforts of the Smell Society to raise public consciousness of the presence of these pollutants, but also indicates the pervasive presence of the odour of petrol as a marker of modernity *per se*. This trait invites comparison with the mobilisation of odour within Lewis’s writing to signal the presence of an untenable modernity. Lewis’s identification of the evanescent yet clearly identifiable attributes of modernism – typified by its ‘new smells’ – is echoed by the consonant juxtaposition of odour and modernity within *The New Pleasure*.

Suggestively, the text’s animating critique of industrially-derived odours is paralleled by an equally vehement suspicion of the cultural and aesthetic modernism with which it is coincident. The novel identifies and satirises an endless and unattainable post-war striving for modernity: “‘Come and be modern with me!’ had been the refrain of up-to-date youth ever since the Great War’ (p. 236). This desire to be modern, to be differentiated from the retrograde, is, the text contends, compromised by a disabling insistence upon conformity. Thus, to break with established social and cultural conventions is merely to adhere to a new model of social homogeneity. As the novel observes of those in search of modernity, ‘They all

spoke the same standardised slang, strung on the same thread of “advanced” ideas’ (p. 236).

The text’s hostility toward a particular strain of popular modernism – defined in this instance by an unthinking vacuity, rather than intellectual rigour – also echoes the critical animus of Lewis, particularly in its recourse to the language of mechanisation to suggest the mindless embrace of technology. In ‘One Picture Is More Than Enough’, Lewis acerbically notes the ‘robots’ produced by the internalisation of mass cultural trends (p. 231). In becoming technological entities, human beings have been debased by the means of their transformation. The text laments the malign influence of ‘Industrial Technique [...] bestializing our people and cheapening and disfiguring everything it has touched’ (p. 234). *The New Pleasure* offers a comparable dismissal of the ‘metallic congeries’ of modern youth, and their unceasing pursuit of novelty (*The New Pleasure*, pp. 235-236). The future of mass modernism, suggest Lewis and Gloag, is shaped by its inorganicism, demonstrated in the widespread use of metal as a construction material, and consequently, as a metaphorical conceit to indicate the presence of modernity.⁴³ In ‘One Picture Is More Than Enough’, Lewis draws attention to the use of chromium plating as a means of signalling minimalist modernist pretensions (p. 234). Congruently, *The New Pleasure* describes ‘chromium-plated modernism’, suggesting the successful embedding of chromium within contemporaneous popular consciousness as coterminous with modernism. Accordingly, in its evocation of a sterile modernism prior to the resurgence of olfaction, the text notes the prevalence of ‘chromium-plated steel’ in the ‘ultra modernist’ studios of ‘Broadcasting House’

⁴³ An attribute shared by Lawrence in his critique of the ersatz and industrial in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*. By ‘worshipping the mechanical thing’, Lawrence contends, human beings forsake their biological potency to become ‘Tin people’ with ‘tin legs and tin faces’ (*Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, p. 217).

(p. 79). The presence of ‘chromium-plated effects’, the novel asserts, alludes to the true character of the modernism it seeks to satirise: ‘cold angularity of outline had more affinities with the true spirit of modernism than soft, gracious curves’ (p. 111).

The material properties of chromium plated metal – cold, lustrous and unyielding – are consequently recruited to illustrate the lack of affect informing the sexual mores of interwar youth exemplified by a conspicuous absence of erotic discrimination: ‘a world that used to be as casually promiscuous as a monkey house’ (pp. 212-213). Such a world is, the novel observes, ‘as hard and glittering as chromium-plated steel’ (p. 213). The text compounds its attack on this modernist milieu by additionally stressing a fundamental lack of originality. The ‘attic salons of Bloomsbury’ are, the text contends, aesthetically parasitic, ‘reliant upon imported Continental modernist fashions’ (p. 213). However, the novel extends its elision of sexual and intellectual promiscuity by echoing Gloag’s mistrust of the dissemination of psychoanalytic rhetoric throughout popular culture. The protagonists of *The New Pleasure*, the narrative states, inhabit ‘a kind of Freudian frolic’, in which bad art flourishes in the absence of enforced intellectual and aesthetic protocols; the novel satirises satire as a form of impotent social commentary (p. 213). This aesthetically illegitimate, reactive modernist satire is personified by the figure of Norton Crew, ‘the almost unpublished (and practically unpublishable) poet’ (p. 213). The lofty intellectual ambitions of Crew’s poems are embodied, the text observes, in an attempted ‘righteous gentility’, which nonetheless falters in the presence of rival, scatological imperatives: ‘they soon sank into the English that can only be printed in Paris’ (p. 213). Despite the text’s depiction of Crew’s artistic fallibilities, he is accorded a measure of influence, a ‘peculiar distinction’, as a consequence of his ‘brutally earnest contempt’ for the society he satirically indicts (p. 213).

The nullifying of the body, expressed through the suppression of olfaction and the promotion of a mechanically-inspired aesthetic programme, is encapsulated in *The New Pleasure*'s recitation of Crew's modish doggerel. 'The Chromium Blonde' rehearses the narrative's wider antagonism toward 'modernistic bunk':

'With a cellulosed complexion and a soul as hard as steel | And a rich contempt for all the things the moral classes feel' (p. 214). The text tersely describes the conclusion of Crew's verse as it descends into a 'description of the minutiae of copulation' (p. 214), but of greater relevance here is the poem's reiteration of the metallisation of the psyche, held to be symptomatic of a popular modernist aesthetic. The recurrent presence of metal as a conceit throughout the novel – particularised by the modernist credentials of chromium-plated steel – resonates with the text's correspondent criticism of the rise of vehicle ownership, and its accompanying polluting (and malodorous) influence. It is significant that the industrial application of chromium-plating was pioneered by automobile manufacturers; the early unreliability of electro-plating techniques initially restricted its widespread adoption: 'The problems were not fully overcome until the 1920s, and chromium plating was then rapidly taken up in Europe and the USA, especially by the motor industry'.⁴⁴ As Edward Royle notes, the interwar years provided a catalyst for the democratisation of car ownership throughout Britain, a process fuelled by the availability of cheap, mass-produced vehicles: 'The number of cars had fallen during the war, but rose rapidly in the 1920s until, in 1930, there were over a million, and by 1939 more than two million'.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *The Grove Encyclopedia of Materials and Techniques in Art*, ed. by Gerald W. R. Ward (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 182.

⁴⁵ Edward Royle, *Modern Britain: A Social History, 1750-2011* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), p. 24.

Commentary on the ubiquity of petrol fumes as a consequence of the rising number of privately owned cars suggests a particular source of olfactory anxiety prevalent in Britain throughout the 1930s, a technologically-derived counterpart to the ‘human stink’ described by Lawrence. By 1939, *The Manchester Guardian* denounced ‘the abominable smells which modern civilisation discharges’.⁴⁶ The newspaper further notes that ‘[petrol] in its state of fuming exhaustion [...] is as foul as dangerous’ (p. 5). The text later asserts a Kantian asymmetry between a preponderance of noisome odours and a dwindling minority of appealing fragrances: ‘In our workaday life there are more bad smells than good ones’ (p. 5). The abrupt rise in exhaust emissions additionally prompted comparisons between a recently vanished olfactory landscape, and the new, modern uniformity of the odours of industrialisation. As an *Observer* article of 1923 suggests: ‘The smell of London has changed since the motor took charge of the traffic’.⁴⁷ Accordingly, the traditional odours of the city – ‘predominantly horse, with a strong flavour of fried fish in Southwark’ – have been displaced by the dominance of petrol fumes: ‘Nowadays the nitro-benzenes of the petrol gases and lubricating oils have submerged all fainter smells’ (p. 9).

Within the context of literary modernism, the recognition of the stench of petrol as an inescapable constituent of modernity is appropriated to suggest either the enabling effects of technology, or their deleterious consequences. Proust, as Sara Danius argues, offers an endorsement of petrol which harmoniously combines the

⁴⁶ Ivor Brown, ‘The Smell of a Holiday’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 5 August 1939, p. 5 (p. 5) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/484606756?accountid=14664>> [accessed 17 June 2015].

⁴⁷ Anon, ‘The Smells of London: Changes in the Motor-Car Era’, *The Observer*, 14 January 1923, p. 9 (p. 9) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/481054155?accountid=14664>> [accessed 17 June 2015].

influence of the organic with the technological: ‘The smell of petrol is as epiphanic as the taste of a madeleine dipped in tea’ (*The Senses of Modernism*, p. 94). The status of nitro-benzene fumes as a contentious product of Western culture is acknowledged in *La Prisonnière*. The narrator’s reaction to the approach of a motor-car – manifested in sound and odour – is one of joy, but notes ‘Elle peut sembler regrettable aux délicats [...] et à qui elle gâte la campagne’ [It may seem regrettable to the over-sensitive [...] for whom it spoils the country’].⁴⁸ Rather than operating as a source of lament, the odour of petrol described by the text is a signifier of the triumphant integration of engineering: ‘un symbole de bondissement et de puissance’ (p. 283) [‘a symbol of elastic motion and power’ (p. 667)].

A cognate assertion of the compatibility of the organic and the technological is offered by Italian Futurist texts. Carlo Carrà, writing in ‘La pittura dei suoni, rumori e odori’ [‘The Painting of Sounds, Noises and Odours’] (1913), describes the apparently unproblematic juxtaposition of petrol and flowers as a means of supporting the disposition of the olfactory toward an aesthetic end. To fully appreciate the experience of odour – an encounter productive of ‘arabeschi di forme e di colori’ [‘arabesque shapes and colours’] – the artist is obliged to undergo an experience of enforced sensory isolation.⁴⁹ Secluded in ‘una camera buia’ [‘a dark room’] – and deprived of the mediating agency of vision, the artist will, Carrà’s manifesto predicts, achieve a heightened appreciation of odours as a source of

⁴⁸ Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu, La Prisonnière, II* (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1923), VI, p. 282; Marcel Proust, ‘The Captive’, in *Remembrance Of Things Past*, trans. by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff and F. A. Blossom (New York: Random House, 1932), II, 383–669 (p. 666). All subsequent references to *A la recherche* will be to the Nouvelle Revue Française editions, unless otherwise indicated; all subsequent references to English translations of *A la recherche* will be sourced from Moncrieff’s translation, unless otherwise indicated.

⁴⁹ Carlo Carrà, ‘La pittura dei suoni, rumori e odori’, in *I manifesti del futurismo* (Firenze: Edizione di ‘Lacerba’, 1914), pp. 152–57 (p. 157). Translations of this text, and subsequent futurist manifestos will be my own, unless otherwise indicated.

aesthetic inspiration (p. 157). This transformation is engineered by the inhalation of ‘materie odorifere’ [‘odiferous substances’] (p. 157). What is of central importance here, the text stresses, is not the provenance of the odours, variously sourced from ‘dei fiori, della benzina’ [‘flowers, petrol’], but their intensity in reconfiguring the experience of olfaction (p. 157). Carrà’s pluralistic structuring of odour – which effaces the binary pairing of foul/fragrant characteristic of Western conceptions of olfaction – attaches utilitarian value to petrol as a means of sensory enlightenment.

Conversely, a dissenting criticism of petrol as innately objectionable and malodorous, and therefore available as a metaphoric resource to disparage the influence of industrialisation is provided by other literary modernists, typified by Lawrence. His poem ‘In The Cities’ reiterates the omnipresence of pollution as a feature of the modern urban environment, displacing the former variability of weather: ‘the weather in town is always benzine, or else petrol fumes, | lubricating oil, exhaust gas’ (*The Poems*, I, p. 617). In noting the credentials of petrol as an aspect of modern culture, Lawrence offers an elegiac comparison between major Western conurbations – ‘London, New York, Paris’ – and pre-industrial, classical civilisations, epitomised by ‘Rome’ and ‘Minos’ (p. 618). Human agency, represented in the past by ‘the footsteps, the footsteps | Of people’, is eliminated from cities and replaced by the depersonalised, collective influence of ‘the automobile’, which neutralises the idiosyncrasy of individual odours (p. 618). Industrial pollutants, in this instance, are accorded tangibility by Lawrence, as ‘fumes | thicken [...] densely thicken in the cities’ (p. 618). At the conclusion of the text, the accretion of contaminants acquires further gravity, an effect emphasised by the poem’s observation that within the modern civic space, ‘the dead tread heavily through the muddy air’ (p. 618). Lawrence’s evident hostility to the by-products of

the automobile industry is offered further, biographic confirmation in his correspondence. Two letters of 1929 bitterly attest to the prevalent ‘stench of petrol’ as a characteristic of Paris: ‘the air is dirty and simply stinks of petrol, and all the life has gone out of the people’ (*Letters*, VI, pp. 238, 234). In a later letter, Lawrence draws a direct link between the decline of Western cities and their tendentious modernisation: ‘these great cities have gone absolutely wrong, since electricity and petrol came into use’ (p. 241).

As noted, the somatic and the technological co-exist without apparent conflict in the writing of Proust; for Lawrence, the mechanical extension of the body’s capacities through innovations such as the automobile operates as a destructive influence. His poem ‘Lonely, Lonesome, Loney – O’ extends and refines the questioning of petrol as a trait of modernity advanced in ‘In The Cities’ by describing the conflation of human and chemical attributes. The text rehearses Lawrence’s conception of an intolerable erosion of personal boundaries as an inherent attribute of civilisation – a process generative of an odour-accented repulsion – and accordingly endorses isolation and detachment. To be solitary, contends Lawrence, is to be revitalised, to be ‘quite alone, and feel the living cosmos softly rocking’ (*The Poems*, I, p. 557). Conversely, the enforced and undesirable proximity typical of modernity – and the consequent subordination of individuality to mass-consciousness decried by Lawrence – renders human contact a polluting, rather than vivifying influence. The text asserts loneliness as an antidote to the contaminating odour of modernity, characterised by ‘the petrol fumes of human conversation | and the exhaust-smell of people’ (p. 557), a valorisation which rehearses Lawrence’s biographically attested withdrawal from industrialised Western

society, and his correspondent peripatetic quest throughout the 1920s for alternative, enabling cultural exemplars.

By contrast, the pessimism surrounding the odour of industrialisation which permeates *The New Pleasure* does not propose a solution retrieved from vanished or non-Western civilisations. Within the novel, technological innovation is presented as a cause of malodour but also as a means of recuperating depreciated olfactory capabilities. On one hand, the text notes a dramatic redrawing of the olfactory landscape as a consequence of industrialisation: ‘Modern hygiene has eliminated enormous numbers of objectionable odours’ (*The New Pleasure*, p. 82). In this instance, details of the plenitude of stenches eliminated by Western civilisation remain undescribed; the text notes the use of ‘scents and unguents’ as a means of screening those malodours typical of pre-industrialised societies, suggesting the body’s placement as a locus of olfactory anxieties (p. 82). Accordingly, *The New Pleasure* describes a shift in olfactory emphasis characterised by a diminution of the body as a source of troublesome pollutants, and the ascendancy of ‘large numbers of entirely new objectionable odours which have been introduced during the last thirty years’, epitomised by the prevalence of petrol fumes (p. 82).

The specificity of the novel’s assertion – that exhaust emissions have become an omnipresent feature of Western industrialised societies – parallels the emergence of the Smell Society to address an identical, historically-identified problem. However, the activities of the Smell Society as an agent of environmental change demonstrate more than a call for the prohibition of those ‘objectionable odours’ typical of industrialisation. Rather, the moment of emerging olfactory consciousness epitomised by the historical Smell Society (and the fictional milieu of *The New Pleasure*) advances the prospect of a wider rehabilitation of olfaction. An interview

with Ambrose Appelbe published in 1935 confidently asserts: ‘We are going to become a smell-conscious nation. Already we have quite a lot of members and I expect thousands’.⁵⁰

This anticipated revival of a sense modality dulled by the influence of industrial progress – a revival informed by its unrealised futurity – is presaged by the comparable predictions offered by *The New Pleasure* two years earlier. Recurrent references to the activities of the Smell Society throughout a range of newspapers during the 1930s suggest the identification of olfaction as an object of popular interest. Congruently, the seeding of olfaction within public consciousness described within *The New Pleasure* is achieved through a radio broadcast, in which Professor Frankby proposes not only the elimination of socially offensive odours, but a broader, mass sensorial reconfiguration: ‘if it would be possible to regain our keen sense of smell, and if it was possible to accentuate and to extend its powers, we should wake up to a new world of beautiful and exciting possibilities’ (p. 83). Within the novel, a key consequence of this radical shift in sensory perception is an erosion of the dominance of the visual regime, an alteration signalled by a reduction in the significance of photographs as a means of fixing and recalling individual identity. Accordingly, Cloughton’s erotic reminiscences of his niece are mediated through the agency of odour, rather than through a more conventional recourse to visual imagery. As the text observes: ‘He could see her face, of course; but it was a photographic vision, not to be compared with his lively memory of her sweet exciting fragrance’ (p. 246). Photography, in this instance, is connotative of stasis; odour, by contrast, vivifies through its recollection – it is apparently more intimately connected with the

⁵⁰ Anon, ‘Smell Society In “Good Odour”’, *Gloucestershire Echo*, 27 June 1935, p. 5 (p. 5) <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000320/19350627/057/0005>> [accessed 21 June 2015].

object it recalls, and therefore wields greater affective influence. I will expand upon the representation of the olfactory as a (contentious) marker of individual identity in the final chapter of this thesis; in the context of the present discussion, the moment of cultural discontinuity marked by the ascendancy of olfaction commands attention. It is noteworthy that the narrative deliberately emphasises the innovative influence of Voe by stressing the contrast between the drug's normalisation of 'the new pleasure' represented by the emergence of an enhanced olfactory awareness and previous, retrograde cultural castings of odour.

Of particular importance, in the light of the reframing of odour proposed by *The New Pleasure* and the manifesto of the Smell Society, is the distinction between a characteristic valuation of olfaction current throughout the 1930s and that embodied by earlier, established conceptions of olfaction. The novel is at pains to establish a breach between the futuristic re-encoding of odour with which it is charged to communicate, and the lingering presence of exemplars – literary and psychoanalytic – which present a fascination with olfaction as pathological in origin. Gloag's attested suspicion of the baleful influence of Freudian rhetoric is mirrored by the critique of Nordau's cultural commentary offered by *The New Pleasure*. Claughton, ruminating on the beneficial effects of Voe as an instrument of social change, re-examines *Degeneration* – a 'dull yellow volume' – left abandoned on a bookshelf (p. 244). The text additionally notes the 'ponderous foot-notes' which recur throughout Nordau's monograph, an authorising strategy complemented by the 'copious quotations that spread through every page' (p. 244). A sensitivity to 'personal smells', suggests the gloss of *Degeneration* provided by *The New Pleasure*, is always already eloquent of the 'stigmata of a degenerate' (p. 136). The novel notes the presence of other, now démodé olfactory texts, all of which,

Claughton predicts ‘will have to be rewritten’ following the reestablishment of odour as a legitimate object of interest (p. 255).

The narrative does not, in this instance, provide additional details of the corpus of olfactory literature to which it alludes. *Degeneration* is assumed to be indicative of a general disparagement of odour satirically unseated by the novel, a discounting characteristically framed as indicative of an abnormal psychopathology. Yet an apparent anomaly in the critique of contemporaneous olfactory theory advanced by *The New Pleasure* is an absence of direct references to Freud as an influential figure in the cultural categorisation of odour. The novel reiterates – indeed, is conceived of as a reaction *to* – the contention that civilisation is predicated on the abnegation of odour. Freud’s speculative account of this rejection as a prehistoric and unverified development is reiterated by Claughton at the close of *The New Pleasure*, in which the narrative celebrates a scientifically-inspired return to ‘Palaeolithic conditions of olfactory perception’ (p. 245). Comparably, sexologists such as Bloch identify a fascination with odour as connotative of a retreat from civilisation, suggesting, ‘we must regard any excessive attention to, or cultivation of, the olfactory sense today as a sort of atavism’ (*Odoratus*, p. 264).

To dwell excessively on any odour – foul or fragrant – Bloch contends, is to embody an identifiable and erotically-motivated psychopathology, a point which I will further address in my final chapter, in relation to Joyce. Bloch’s delimiting of olfaction as the proper concern of the ‘normal cultivated man’ is authorised by his postulation of a physiologically-governed link between olfaction and sexual activity (p. 264). *Odoratus Sexualis*, echoing Fliess, confidently identifies ‘a direct anatomical and physiological connection between the nose and genital organs’, a strategy which pre-establishes olfaction as inherently erotically-implicated, but

subsequently muted by the mediating influence of civilisation (p. 28). To be olfactorily-aware, the text asserts, is therefore to be dissident, in antithesis to the deodorised standard of normality to which Bloch frequently refers. To propose a standard of 'normality' is, of course, a precondition of psychoanalytic discourse, a procedural obligation to establish that which, by contrast, can be designated as pathological or abnormal.⁵¹ Yet Bloch's desire to establish a *cordon sanitaire* around a deviant, odour-preoccupied minority, in contrast to a majority unconcerned with olfaction, is nuanced by a deliberate, insistent assertion of an authorial lack of olfactory fixation. Bloch's observation that 'I doubt whether among normal people the olfactive sense plays [...] a great role' modulates into a statement of his own, determinedly limited sense of olfaction (*Odoratus*, p. 81). Tellingly, Bloch's experience of odour is framed as reactive, an unremarkable response to only those stenches, which, the text tacitly asserts, cannot reasonably be ignored: 'I am only affected by particularly unpleasant odors which have some local, corporeal foundation' (p. 81).

The presence of the olfactory within civilised life is, Bloch suggests, permissible when it operates at a level of minimal influence. Accordingly, odour engages, commands attention, only when, rehearsing Kant's odour paradigm, it serves to highlight the presence of the noisome.⁵² To actively cultivate olfaction to appreciate a wider spectrum of odours is, *Odoratus Sexualis* cautions, to risk a dangerous destabilisation of masculinity: 'Excessive cultivation of the olfactory

⁵¹ The difficulty of distinguishing between 'normal' and 'abnormal' sexual behaviour is, of course, a foundational problem of psychological science: 'Normality is not simply a psychological or physiological determination. It involves definitions which evolve from the history, religious orientation, and sophistication of a culture, both in aesthetic and scientific matters' (*Modern Psychoanalysis: New Directions & Perspectives*, ed. by Judd Marmor (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1995), p. 139).

⁵² Olfaction, concedes Kant, 'is not unimportant, in order not to breathe in bad air (oven fumes, the stench of swamps and animal carcasses)' (*Anthropology*, p. 51).

sense not only renders man effeminate, but actually brings him to the level of perception and knowledge characteristic of the lower mammals' (p. 265). This casting of olfaction as a source of sexual anxiety and marker of non-heterosexual intimacies is extended throughout the text to embrace not only those who actively seek out odours, but those who seek to study their effects. The contaminating influence of odour, suggests Bloch, corrupts even those who seek to maintain an ideal intellectual distance from it. The text notes the importance of sexual odours for 'tribades', but accordingly suggests that an interest in such phenomena is symptomatic of dissidence, the preserve and interest of an 'effeminate man who has studied this field' (p. 124).⁵³

Significantly, when considered in the context of the speculative, odorous future envisioned by Gloag, the critique of olfaction provided by *Odoratus Sexualis* proposes a scenario in which the olfactory is all but eliminated as a consequence of cultural progression. Following the logic of the historical continuum endorsed by Bloch, the cleansing influence of civilisation will gradually eradicate the lingering presence and appeal of erotic odours, and concomitantly, of the olfactory's wider value as a sense modality. Consequently, Bloch predicts, future olfactory experiences will conform to the parameters of normality defined by *Odoratus Sexualis*: 'in the future man will gradually not only lose the capacity to perceive erotic olfactive substances, but also that the latter may themselves disappear' (p. 263). The corollary of Bloch's argument is to suggest an accompanying intensification of odour's designation as a morbid concern in the wake of its increasing marginalisation. This shift – framed by Bloch as a necessary and inescapable progression – is accorded imminence by the text: 'Within a measureable

⁵³ Comparably, Havelock Ellis suggests that 'sexual inverts are peculiarly susceptible to odors' (*Studies*, IV, p. 111).

space of time, *odoratus sexualis* will play a role in human pathology only' (p. 265). The text does not elaborate upon the 'measureable space of time' in which this modification of the cultural placement of odour will occur, but its forthcoming neutralisation will be characterised, Bloch suggests, by an accompanying reduction of the body's significance as a source of odours, appealing and repellent alike. The odour landscape of the future described by *Odoratus Sexualis* is conspicuously non-variegated, and evocative of those odours culturally associated with hygiene: 'At that time the best odor that the normal man will know will be that of aromatic fir trees' (p. 265).

Conversely, *The New Pleasure* offers a counter-narrative in which olfaction is advanced as a radical solution to the discontents engendered by civilisation, particularised by those odours coterminous with the polluting effects of industrialisation. However, in unseating the subordination of odour articulated and enforced by theorists such as Freud and Bloch, this novel offers more than a mere mandate for decontamination. The text addresses the contention that to be unconscious of the influence of olfaction is indicative of psychological normality, and instead proposes a rival schema in which a heightened olfactory sensitivity is indicative of a new conformity. It is telling that the text's description of Claughton's odour-motivated attraction to Anne disavows any imputation of an abnormal psychopathology, an attribute which alludes to the wider redrawing of the interrelationship of olfaction and sexuality advanced by *The New Pleasure*. The established casting of olfactory awareness as symptomatic of degeneracy is briskly dismissed by the novel, which recommends an alternative, beneficial regression. As Claughton observes: 'sometimes when we return to a previous condition of life we are really progressing' (p. 245).

A key feature of the 'progress' described within the text is a dramatic reconfiguration of human sexual behaviour, embodied in a shift in emphasis from the visual to the odorous as a focus of erotic attraction. This amendment in the hierarchy of the sensorium is productive of a parallel aesthetic readjustment; the reinstatement of the olfactory provokes a questioning of established artistic practices, notably those exemplified by the modernist avant-garde. An aggregation of aesthetic innovations are dismissed within the text as representative of 'super-ultra-modernist stuff', generated in the 'the pursuit of newness merely for its own sake', a rejection which, as noted, is offered specificity through the narrative's criticism of Crew (p. 216). The scabrous poetry with which Crew is associated – at once a critique of the vacuity of popular culture, yet, inescapably a manifestation of the superficiality it purports to satirise – is gradually devalued following the successful marketing of Voe, of which Crew is a consumer. After becoming sensitised to a hitherto unremarked array of odours, Crew's physical alteration is paralleled by a comparable aesthetic modulation. As the novel observes: 'His earnest disgust with his own world had become less of a pose; he had convinced himself that the intellectual and artistic hothouse of Bloomsbury was worthless' (p. 215).

Deprived of a particular vein of social criticism necessary for his self-definition, Crew's odour-influenced disintegration is connotative of dually erotic and aesthetic dissatisfaction. The 'frustration of his creative expression', a consequence of his artistic irrelevance in a Voe-dependent society is, the novel asserts, productive of an impermissible sexual violence (p. 216). Later in the novel Cloughton dismisses the prospect of Voe as an agent of degeneration; the drug will not, he predicts, revert humanity to the status of 'hairy, bloodthirsty savages' (p. 245). The narrative's insistence upon the merits of the utopian era inaugurated by the adoption of Voe – a

world in which the drug's consumers are distinguished by their evident 'good health, good shape and good colour of their bodies' – is compromised by the narrative's earlier description of Crew's transformation into a sexual aggressor, following his regular ingestion of Gamma-8 (p. 126). Creatively impotent, Crew seeks redress in sexual dominance over Anne: 'There came into his love-making at last a negroid brutality that was so opposed to her code of physical liberties that it ended in a frightful row' (p. 216). However, on the specific details of Crew's 'negroid brutality', the text remains non-committal. This refusal of disclosure is, of course, reflective of the novel's categorisation as a work of popular fiction, which suggests the acceptance of politic limits with regard to that which can, and cannot, be represented. The consequences of challenging the cultural regulations imposed upon modernist literature are amply illustrated by the suppression of, for example, *Ulysses* (1922) and *The Rainbow* (1915). Yet the understandable reluctance of *The New Pleasure* to fully represent sexual transgression underscores the wider asymmetry between the novel's reconceptualisation of odour, demonstrated through the olfactory's increased influence in relation to sexual protocols, and a recourse to literary periphrasis which pervades the text. Put simply, the valorisation of odour described within the novel reaffirms the olfactory prohibitions it seeks to transcend, a signature example of which is the text's coyness in relation to the aroma of bodily emanations, notably those excrementally or genitally-derived. As noted, the novel refers, cryptically, to those 'objectionable' – non-industrially derived – odours suppressed by the imposition of modern hygiene controls.

The logic of this argument suggests that the 'new world of beautiful and exciting [odour] possibilities' signalled by the arrival of Voe will be nuanced, at least in part, by a heightened awareness of the body as a (mal)odorous entity, despite the

efforts of modern hygiene to efface such odours. When *The New Pleasure* does address the cultural encoding of bodily secretions in a post-Voe society, it reiterates the broader, early twentieth-century isolation of these emanations as a source of shame and anxiety. Lawrence's recognition of a burgeoning pseudo-medical discourse finds comparable expression within *The New Pleasure*. The text notes 'the huge increase in advertising for deodorants, and for substances that deal with [...] halitosis' (p. 156). On the subject of faecal stench – and the role accorded to such odours within Freudian psychoanalytic discourse – the text offers no comment, other than a passing reference to an enhanced colonic regime fostered by the adoption of Voe, exemplified by 'open bowels, [and] a new, scrupulous cleanliness' (p. 137).

The text's endorsement of hygiene does not suggest the acceptance of those odours culturally determined as repellent. Rather, *The New Pleasure* projects a scenario in which the unacceptability of bodily stench is heightened, rather than effaced. Similarly, the novel fails to contend with specifically sexual odours. No mention is made of musk, with its connotations of erotic excitation, or interrelatedly, of those odours directly originating from the genitals.⁵⁴ The production of such aromas, contends Bloch, is almost exclusively a feminine preserve. The odour of semen, for example, is noted sporadically throughout *Odoratus Sexualis*, but is typically cited with reference to the comparable olfactory signatures of 'chestnuts and sour weeds' (p. 37). The odour of semen is eroticised, Bloch asserts, because of its inescapable pairing with male genitalia. By contrast, the text ascribes significantly greater agency to 'vaginal exhalations' which are accorded an innately aphrodisiac effect; such vulvar emanations, Bloch argues, exert 'an inflammatory influence upon

⁵⁴ The contiguity of musk and genital odours is noted by Havelock Ellis, who, citing Charles Féré, suggests 'the musk odor is that among natural perfumes most nearly approaching the odor of the sexual secretions' (*Studies*, IV, p. 97).

men' (p. 53). By contrast, the recounting of odour-derived erotic attraction in *The New Pleasure* does not reiterate Bloch's framing of the dependency of sexual selection upon the allure of genital aromas. Even when reinstating odour as a driver of sexual selection, the text's description of Anne's 'sweet exciting fragrance' is frustratingly gnomic in its non-specificity.

I argue that this local failure to provide an authoritative evocation of odour exemplifies the wider fallibilities of the narrative project in which Gloag is engaged. On the one hand, *The New Pleasure* insists upon the retention and promotion of an odour – or rather an odour complex – associated with an individual as a determinant of sexual attraction in a newly odour-conscious society. Such a development, Frankby suggests, is axiomatic: 'To be sensitised by Voe must affect sexual selection' (p. 136). As a consequence of this heightened appreciation of odour, he predicts, 'men will become much more fastidious; so will women' (p. 137). Yet the text is tacitly informed by a suggestion that this broadening of olfactory possibilities – a source of new pleasure – will be accordingly circumscribed by a new fastidiousness, epitomised by a distaste for bodily odours, which in this instance, are eloquent of the sensory atavism which the novel notionally tolerates. While *The New Pleasure* lauds the agency of odour as a marker of individual identity, the narrative equally stipulates that such an olfactory signature is representative of – is emanated from – a thoroughly cleansed body. The protocols for a permissible personal odour are described by Frankby: 'the personal, characteristic smell that everybody possesses should never have to compete with any avoidable smell, and that it must never be tainted by any unhealthy secretions in or upon the body' (p. 137).

The maintenance of a 'personal, characteristic smell' which the text ostensibly supports is destabilised by the illusory segregation of such an olfactory

signature from the competing presence of other rival and inadmissible odours. As noted, I will return to the question of odour's contested validity as a marker of personal identity in Chapter Five of this thesis, in connection with the writing of Joyce; what is noteworthy, in this instance, is the process of cultural selectivity to which the text alludes. The novel's euphemistic representation of those odours associated with bodily effusions is characterised by a recourse to medical terminology. Undesirable sources of odour are glossed as 'unhealthy secretions', but as I have demonstrated, the emergence of a spurious array of complaints throughout the early twentieth century implicitly undermines Frankby's claims to clinical authority. The exclusion of that which is socially offensive is readily legitimised through its designation as pathologically-derived. Ominously, the novel's presentation of the re-engineering of human sexual selection enforced by Voe is characterised not only by an emphasis upon individual cleanliness, but by an accompanying assertion of the drug's eugenic effects. The implication of the text in the rhetoric of racial selectivity is made plain through the narrative's repeated references to the 'new race' generated and defined by a new-found insistence upon olfactory discrimination. As the novel observes, cleanliness and a preoccupation with physical culture are identifiable attributes of a society influenced by Voe: 'the new race that Voe was creating was re-making itself physically' (p. 165).

The timing of the publication of *The New Pleasure*, as a fictional counterpart to a burgeoning social awareness of the odour of industrialisation, is informed by an additional, unfortunate prescience; in 1933, Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. As John Urry argues, the modern desire to segregate and eliminate offensive odours 'was carried to extreme in the Nazi period, where the Jews were referred to as "stinking" and their supposed smell was associated with physical and moral

corruption'.⁵⁵ Other studies remain to be written on the role of olfaction within the discourse of anti-Semitism, but it is noteworthy that Jews are conspicuously marginalised within the odorous Utopia envisioned by *The New Pleasure*.⁵⁶ The text provides numerous examples of casual anti-Semitism – that is, a reiteration of commonly-held beliefs associated with the alleged mercantile prowess of Jews – rather than a sustained polemic. Nor does the novel explicitly locate a *foetor judaicus* as a characterological attribute of the Jews it portrays. Nevertheless, the text is explicit in its negative depiction of Jews as suppressors of Voe, a motivation based upon their desire to protect the confectionary and tobacco industries with which they are credited a controlling interest. The novel's uncomplimentary portrayal of Jews is epitomised by the character of Ikey Rickman, a magnate governed, the text states, solely by the accrual of capital: 'Everything [he] created, every enterprise that he stimulated and controlled, was directed to the making of the largest amount of profit by the most efficient method' (p. 73). Rickman's conspiratorial gathering with his fellow businessmen – corporately represented by a 'gently undulating band of dark shining eyes that glittered like boot buttons under bald, and prematurely bald, heads' – is contrasted with the legitimate enterprise exemplified by Voe (p. 73). Frankby, the drug's inventor, has, the text admits, amassed 'a stupendous fortune' (p. 256). His wealth, the novel tacitly asserts, is sanctioned by the salutary social effects of the business enterprise in which he is engaged. Jewish business concerns, by contrast, are represented as emblematic of the motivations of a pre-Voe society, and therefore, according to the logic of the narrative, antithetical to the cultivation of olfactory

⁵⁵ John Urry, 'City Life and the Senses', in *A Companion to the City*, ed. by Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 388–97 (p. 394).

⁵⁶ The novel does not, however, ascribe a characteristic *foetor judaicus* to Jews, a cultural motif recognised, for example, by Joyce: 'I'm told those jewies does have a sort of a queer odour coming off them' (*Ulysses*, ed. by Hans Walter Gabler (London: Bodley Head, 1986), p. 250).

sensibilities and accordingly dispensable; *The New Pleasure* notes that Rickman refuses to submit to the influence of Voe: 'I 'aven't taken any yet meself; I don't 'old wiv drugs' (p. 75).

Yet the categorisation of Jews within *The New Pleasure* as culturally retrograde – with all the damaging connotations that are implied by this position – serves to highlight the broader representational limitations embodied by the novel. An enhanced olfactory sensitivity is framed within the text as inimical to Jewish understanding, a proposition illustrated by Rickman's reaction to his secretary's response to Voe: 'Ruined 'er, it did! Got all dreamy and slack' (p. 75). The ingestion of Voe, the text suggests, erodes the relevance of the economic imperatives which *The New Pleasure* seeks to satirise, but this effect – among others indicative of a broader galvanisation of odour – can only be reported within the novel. An overarching narrative capable of adequately rendering the enhanced experience of olfaction to which it alludes remains unrealised, reflecting a foundational problem characteristic of the interrelationship of odour and language. Cognately, the difficulty of assigning an appropriate brand name to Gamma-8 is discussed in the novel, as Frankby observes that 'Coining names that will last and be taken into general use in a language is difficult' (p. 49). This local instance of the intractability of language as a means of ensuring universal intelligibility is complemented by the text's wider reluctance to offer an olfactorily-inspired linguistic reimagining. This characteristic is, as I have noted, attributable in part to the novel's status as an example of popular fiction calculated to entertain rather than convey a political manifesto, to reiterate Gloag's distinction, a designation which suggests a reluctance to embrace a programme of radical formal experimentation in the pursuit of an innovative mode of olfactory representation.

A recognition of the need to creatively manipulate language to address a deficit of odour descriptors is, however, demonstrated by the activities of the Smell Society. An interview with Appelbe in 1937 displays an awareness of the restricted available semantic field in relation to the experience of olfaction: ‘The English language has hundreds of words to identify color through its subtlest shades [...] we lack a single word specifying any kind of smell, like that of roast turkey, mimosa, wool or tar’.⁵⁷ The same article notes the efforts of the Smell Society to compose a new vocabulary to address this deficiency, which is not extended to the repertory of unpleasant odours which constitute a locus of disquiet. Odour’s conflictual relationship with language as an embedded feature of Western societies is more pessimistically addressed by Gloag in his short story ‘Jungle’ (1938). The narrator admits linguistic impotence when required to relate the complex of odours typical of a jungle: ‘you can’t describe smells. It’s not possible. The words aren’t here. There’s no language of the nose’.⁵⁸ The prospect of reinventing language to more adequately describe the experience of olfaction is signalled by *The New Pleasure*, but fails to materialise within the text. This deficiency resonates with the novel’s criticism of the avant-garde, which, as noted, is granted satirical emphasis by the figure of Crew, and by a more general indifference with regard to artistic innovation. It is noteworthy that the post-Voe society envisioned by the text does not elaborate upon the placement of art within an olfactorily-enabled culture; the ‘exciting possibilities’ foretold by Frankby at the beginning of the novel are not demonstrated within the domain of aesthetics. Particularly pertinent, when considered in comparison with *Brave New World*, is the diminishment of the agency of cinema in *The New Pleasure*

⁵⁷ Anon, ‘500 New Names for Smells Are Wanted’, *The Mail [Adelaide]*, 2 January 1937, p. 3 (p. 3) <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/55842209>> [accessed 30 June 2015].

⁵⁸ John Gloag, ‘Jungle’, in *First One and Twenty* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1946), pp. 231–36 (p. 233).

as an influential form of mass entertainment. Film is initially disparaged in the novel as an economic, rather than artistically-motivated enterprise. Moguls are, the text states, characterised by ‘squalid insensitiveness’, an attribute which ensures that cinema remains confined within an ‘industrial stage’ of development (p. 117). Following the arrival of Voe, the novel observes, movie theatres are shunned by odour-conscious patrons (p. 118). Faced with dwindling profits, the cinema industry embarks upon a radical programme of ventilating picture houses to render them tolerable for the new race of Voe consumers (p. 119). This initiative fails, and provokes a wave of arson attacks by disgruntled cinema owners anxious to recoup their dwindling profits (p. 121). *The New Pleasure* concludes by restating the deleterious effects of olfactory consciousness upon the ‘entertainment business’, and cites the film industry as a salutary example of the re-engineering of consumer preferences inspired by Voe. Studios are forced ‘to be content with smaller profits’, but escape total annihilation by ‘redesigning cinemas all over Europe and America’ (p. 197). Movies, the text implies, are now retrograde, representative of a past dominated by visual, rather than olfactory imperatives.

The novel’s refusal to countenance the prospect of linking odours and images in the service of popular entertainment is in marked contrast to a broader, dissenting anticipation of the harmonious fusion of cinema and olfaction. I have noted the arrival of the ‘smellies’ predicted by Chaplin as an apparently logical development of the film industry’s quest for constant innovation. Gloag’s reluctance to capitalise upon this trope – which in turn alludes to the wider prospect of the technological mastery of odour, in common with vision and audition – is in contrast to the representation of recreational olfaction offered by *Brave New World*. The novel reiterates the insistence upon hygiene and the suppression of primal human odours

described in *The New Pleasure*, exemplified by Lenina's observation that 'cleanliness is next to fordliness'.⁵⁹ However, the narrative vacuum at the heart of *The New Pleasure* – the text's lack of speculation on the technological manipulation of odour as an index of civilised progression – is addressed by *Brave New World*. Here, odour is recruited in the service of erotic entertainment. The narrative describes the heightened mimesis embodied by the coupling of 'a gigantic negro and a golden-haired young brachycephalic Beta-Plus female': 'dazzling and incomparably more solid-looking than they would have seemed in actual flesh and blood, far more real than reality' (p. 198).

Central to the heightened cinematic experience described by *Brave New World* is the augmentation of the visual with other sense modalities to generate an unprecedentedly immersive experience. Huxley's 'feelies' commingle vision, olfaction and tactility to create a sensate totality which problematises the maintenance of a distinction between that which is real, and that which is merely depicted. The criticism of film advanced, for example, by Lawrence, which is dependent upon this differentiation, founders when read against the futuristic cinema of *Brave New World*. Key to Lawrence's dislike of the popular appeal of early cinema is a perceived disjunction between a film's insubstantial protagonists – 'black-and-white', 'shadows of people' – and the consequent incapacity of their spectators to experience genuine affect when viewing a film (*The Poems*, I, p. 385).⁶⁰ For Lawrence, this gulf is addressed by the alternative, aesthetically valid experience of the circus, which offers a salutary check to the hollowness of cinema. 'When I went to the circus—' simultaneously mourns and reifies live entertainment

⁵⁹ Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1932), p. 127.

⁶⁰ However, it is also necessary to note the inconsistency of Lawrence's denunciation of cinema; in 1920, he expressed an interest in selling the film rights to his work (*Letters*, III, p. 546).

– a threatened ‘birthright’ of children – but is reliant upon an appeal to sensory holism to distinguish the circus from the movie theatre (*The Poems*, I, p. 387). The circus, contends Lawrence, is characterised by an array of olfactory impressions absent from experience of film: ‘the smell of horses and other beasts | instead of merely the smell of man’ (‘When I went to the circus—’, p. 385). I have described Lawrence’s framing of the olfactory as evocative of the real in my previous chapter; in this instance, the deployment of an array of olfactory and tactile impressions by the ‘feelies’ of *Brave New World* lends futuristic cinema a veridical authority previously confined to the genuine, lived experience of the circus lauded by Lawrence.⁶¹ Intensified by the influence of odour, cinema accordingly supplants literature as a state-sanctioned art form. Eschewing books, Dr Gaffney proposes that if ‘our young people need distraction, they can get it at the feelies’ (p. 192).

More pertinent, however, is the conflict between the apparent sensate verities offered by Huxley’s expanded concept of cinema, and the question of their derivation. *Brave New World* does not specify the origin of the ‘pure musk’ circulated to lend further verisimilitude to the coupling of the ‘negro’ and the ‘Beta-plus female’ but there is a tacit assumption that such an odour is artificial, rather than naturally derived.⁶² This presumption is, in part, supported by the narrative’s conspicuous rejection of those odours associated with bodily functions. The shock of

⁶¹ In 1938, *The New York Times* records the ‘dismal news’ that plans are afoot to deodorise the experience of the circus: ‘Consider the elements compacted into that entrancing odor-sawdust, popcorn, peanuts, the smell of the good earth’ (Anon, ‘The Circus Smell’, *The New York Times*, 9 November 1938, p. 22 (p. 22) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/102373275?accountid=14664>> [accessed 26 May 2016]).

⁶² The prospect of recruiting the odour of musk to highlight the reception of a theatrical performance is suggested by John Rodker in 1914: ‘It is conceivable that a smell of musk wafted through a theatre would affect an audience more poignantly, more profoundly, than anything they had before then experienced’ (John Rodker, ‘The Theatre’, *The Egoist*, 2 November 1914, 414–15 (p. 414) <in *The Modernist Journals Project* <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 11 December 2014]).

the new – or rather, of the unfamiliar old – represented by Lenina and Bernard's arrival in the pueblo of Malpais is granted emphasis through the agency of olfaction. The text notes Lenina's gesture of revulsion inspired by the 'dirt [...] the piles of rubbish, the dust, the dogs, the flies. Her face wrinkled in a grimace of disgust. She held her handkerchief to her nose' (p. 127).

The incongruity of unpleasant smells to a nose habituated to a particularly sanitised olfactory mode is yoked to the wider cultural dissonance of the encounter with the Indians, in which their strangeness is indexed against the strength and redolence of their odour: 'It was all oppressively queer, and the Indian smelt stronger and stronger' (p. 125). Following the logic of this position, the cinematic experience described by the novel is amplified by ersatz odours, the products of technical ingenuity rather than human biology. Thus, the aroma of coition to which the novel refers is doubly illusory. It does not directly emanate from the onscreen lovers, but is also a synthetic engineering of what the odour of sex should be, at least according to the prohibitions surrounding that which is deemed culturally acceptable by the World State, where children are unconsciously socialised into cleanliness through 'hypnopædic lessons in hygiene' (p. 173). The dystopia of *Brave New World* enacts the eradication not only of the primal human scent in favour of artificial perfumes and odours, but also presents the effacing of the inaugural source of olfactory awareness. The text notes breast-feeding as one of the 'horrors of Malpais', describing it as a 'revoltingly viviparous scene' (p. 129). The elimination of natural reproduction in favour of hatcheries and reproductive centres for the propagation of children removes the point at which babies become aware of exteriority, an awareness mediated through odour: 'Tactile and olfactory cues play a predominant

role', in which the baby 'becomes aware of the breast at first primarily through the senses of touch, smell, and taste' (*Metamorphosis*, p. 28).

In the absence of organic odours, *Brave New World* offers an alternative exploration of the human capacity for olfaction, in which odour is manufactured as an object of mass consumption. In its evocation of a Santa Fe hotel of AD 2540, the narrative notes that 'Liquid air, television, vibro-vacuum massage, radio, boiling caffeine solution, hot contraceptives, and eight different kinds of scent were laid on in every bedroom' (p. 116). The ambient nature of odours and their inherent tendency to diffusion, rather than segregation, is here constrained by technology to admit a precise taxonomy. There are exactly eight pre-defined odours in each hotel room, with the implication that each scent is clearly recognisable and distinct, a conscious contribution to the environment of the room analogous to its fixtures and furnishings, rather than an incidental by-product.

This projection of the cultural importance of olfaction in a future society, as the focus of industrial production, is in marked contrast to *The New Pleasure*. Gloag's evocation of a reconfigured olfactory awareness is not accompanied by a comparable recasting of odour as a manufactured source of pleasure or recreation. Although the text notes that 'science had to make a fresh start' following the widespread adoption of Voe, the markers of technological progress cited by the novel – improvements in transport, architecture and the production of energy – are conspicuously non-odorous (p. 285). The significance of odour's hedonic value is conceded by the narrative; Jules de Rojaques, 'the controller of an international perfumery combine' recognises the commercial importance of Voe and is responsible for the early marketing and dissemination of the product (p. 28). Consequently, *The New Pleasure* draws a causal (but unelaborated) link between an

enhanced olfactory appreciation and an increased public appetite for artificial scents. Rojaques anticipates ‘a stupendous growth of appreciation for all kinds of beautiful perfumes [Voe] will stimulate and expand a thousand new markets’ (p. 40). Rojaques’ prediction is fulfilled, as the text records that as a consequence of the advent of Voe, ‘All Europe is buying perfumes’ (p. 174). While, as I have argued, *The New Pleasure* offers a fictional rendering of contemporaneous disquiet in relation to a malodour permeating Western civilisation, whether embodied by the malodour of the human body or the stench of industrialisation, the novel does not directly engage with the significance of perfume within modern culture, as a dually aesthetic and technological entity.

Comparably, Lawrence, as I have demonstrated in Chapters One and Two, demonstrates an awareness of the arresting and apparently irresistible impact of odour upon the modern subject. While odour, for Lawrence, is suggestive of the veridical, it is also recognised as a source of anxiety, and is consequently mobilised to suggest those aspects of modern culture which are deemed undesirable. These, as Lawrence suggests, include the spread of urbanisation and an unsavoury emphasis upon the minutiae of bodily functions typical of ‘very modern novels’. However, while Lawrence attaches importance to olfaction as a conduit for intuitive, rather than intellectual knowledge, he is equally intolerant of a perceived excessive olfactory squeamishness, a criticism shared by Lewis, who similarly recruits odour as a master conceit to signal undesirable features of modernity. This negative framing of olfaction described in this chapter – odour is co-opted to signal that which is to be repudiated – has excluded pleasurable odours. Accordingly, my next chapter will shift focus from the foul to the fragrant, as I expand upon Huxley’s linkage of odour and cinema to more fully examine perfume’s placement as an object of mass

consumption throughout the early twentieth century, and as a contested mode of aesthetic expression.

Chapter Three

Marketing odour: modernist aesthetics, mass entertainment and the art of perfume

The significance accorded to odour as a source of pleasure in the dystopias of Glog and Huxley is granted historical context by the rapid and unprecedented increase in the consumption of perfume throughout the early years of the twentieth century. The industrial production of perfume – and its consequent popular accessibility – was enabled by the synthetic reproduction of naturally-occurring sources of odour. William Augustus Tilden, describing advances in perfumery in 1917, notes that ‘There is perhaps no department of applied organic chemistry which has attracted during the last thirty years a larger number of workers, nor one in which a larger amount of definite progress has been achieved’.¹ Prior to this, as *The English Illustrated Magazine* notes in 1909, the production of perfume had been an individual pastime: ‘There was a time when ladies kept a private still where they manufactured their own perfumes’.² However, following the technological innovations noted by Tilden, ‘Such is no longer the case [...] Good perfumes are plentiful, and with the best recipes in the world ladies would be quite unable to equal the production of our laboratories’ (*Chemical Discovery*, p. 370).

By 1933, 40,000 perfume brands had been registered in France alone, creating a ‘little crisis in the perfume industry in Paris because manufacturers have

¹ William A. Tilden, *Chemical Discovery and Invention in the Twentieth Century* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1917), pp. 343–44.

² Peter Penn, ‘About Sweet Odours’, *The English Illustrated Magazine*, July 1909, 370–72 (p. 370).

run short of attractive names'.³ The importance of assigning an appropriate name to perfume to ensure its commercial success was noted by *Collier's Weekly* in 1929: 'A woman usually buys her first bottle of perfume by the name, because she thinks it sounds smart or fascinating'⁴. Such names, *The Yorkshire Post* suggests in 1933, are typically derived from 'popular films, poems or musical compositions' (p. 6). Yet even when faced with this apparently insoluble descriptive challenge, the paper notes that 'each of the makers aims at adding at least six [perfumes] to the list every year' (p. 6). The prospect of the perfume industry's continuous expansion – which logically suggests an undiminished demand for its products – is described by a further *Collier's Weekly* article of 1944, which describes the 'staggering demand' for fragrances among American consumers throughout the Second World War.⁵ This boom – which accordingly suggests a yearning for palliatives during a period of national crisis – saw perfume become the 'No. 1 wartime luxury item' (p. 80). Accordingly, the magazine suggests, citing a 'harassed perfume manufacturer', demand threatened to outstrip supply: "Bottles are gobbled up as fast as they're put, on the counters [...] If we didn't ration our customers, our entire year's supply would vanish in a month'" (p. 80).

The corollary of an increased public appetite for the products of the perfume industry was the generation of vast profits. Perfume's implication in the processes of capitalism, of production and exchange, is suggested in the language used to describe its operation as a business; the term 'empire' is frequently used in discussions of

³ Anon, '10,000 Scents – and More Wanted', *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 14 November 1933, p. 6 (p. 6)

<<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000273/19331114/203/0006>> [accessed 2 February 2016].

⁴ Hazel Rawson Cades, 'Follow Your Nose', *Collier's Weekly*, 25 May 1929, 30–32 (p. 30) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Colliers-1929may25-00030>> [accessed 4 February 2016].

⁵ Elsie McCormick, 'Dollars for Scents', *Collier's Weekly*, 4 November 1944, pp. 80, 92 (p. 80) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Colliers-1944nov04-00080>> [accessed 21 January 2016].

perfume production. François Coty, creator of the Coty cosmetics label, was France's first billionaire: 'The perfume magnate's monthly spending exceeded 3 million francs by 1926, and his perfume empire reached its apex in 1929, thanks to American sales'.⁶ Indeed, by 1936, *The Literary Digest* notes that the bulk of perfumes purchased by American consumers were manufactured by Coty Inc., the 'General Motors of the scent industry', with total sales of \$5m in 1935.⁷ An interview with Coco Chanel in *Life* in 1969 similarly notes the accumulation of wealth derived from the production of perfume: 'By 1930 she was a millionaire many times over, partly because of her immensely popular Chanel No.5 perfume'.⁸ The ubiquity of perfume within late modern culture observed by 'Dollars for Scents' – 'The whole country reeks with exotic smells' (p. 80) – would appear to echo the linkage between futurity and olfactory awareness central to *Brave New World* and *The New Pleasure*. However, in drawing this comparison, it should be noted that perfume is not accorded mercantile significance throughout *Brave New World*, but rather, is an instrument of state control.

By contrast, as I have described in my previous chapter, corporate interests are at the heart of the narrative of *The New Pleasure* – the perfume industry is directly responsible for the popularisation of Voe. De Rojaque's prediction of 'stupendous growth' in the public appreciation of manufactured fragrances resonates with the historical proliferation of perfumes observed during the 1930s. Conversely, the absence of private enterprise in *Brave New World* in turn diminishes the significance of brand awareness as a means of capturing market share. Put simply,

⁶ Roulhac Toledano, *François Coty: Fragrance, Power, Money* (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Company, 2009), p. 9.

⁷ Anon, 'Odors of Araby', *The Literary Digest*, 17 October 1936, 46 (p. 46) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LiteraryDigest-1936oct17-00044>> [accessed 8 March 2016].

⁸ Anon, 'The Real Coco', *Life*, 19 December 1969, 38–45 (p. 38).

although the text stresses the omnipresence of artificially-generated perfumes as an attribute of civilisation, these odours remain largely innominate and undescribed, stated merely as an aggregate of ‘eight different kinds of scent’ as a standard feature of life in AD 2540.⁹ It is, however, important to acknowledge the novel’s distinction between odour as personal adornment, and odour as a source of mass entertainment. Huxley’s evocation of the scent organ offers a detailed recitation of discrete odours – commingling the foul and the fragrant – which harnesses olfaction for deliberate effect:

The scent organ was playing a delightfully refreshing Herbal Capriccio – rippling arpeggios of thyme and lavender, of rosemary, basil, myrtle, tarragon; a series of daring modulations through the spice keys into ambergris; and a slow return through sandalwood, camphor, cedar and new-mown hay (with occasional subtle touches of discord – a whiff of kidney pudding, the faintest suspicion of pig’s dung) back to the simple aromatics with which the piece began. The final blast of thyme died away. (*Brave New World*, pp. 196-197)

Huxley’s scent organ enables odour to act as a form of narrative, imposing structure on that which is transient, a conceit to which I will return later in this chapter, in relation to perfume’s contested admissibility as art. Of more immediate relevance, with regard to the modern conception of perfume, is the mimetic and segregated nature of the odours catalogued by the text. Here, odours refer unambiguously to those odour objects with which they are associated. The scent of rosemary – or ambergris, or pig’s dung – directly represents an assumed and material

⁹ With the exception of Eau de Cologne (*Brave New World*, p. 42). However, I argue that Huxley’s mention, in this instance, of an established brand, suggests its successful assimilation as a generic consumable, rather than a trademarked product.

source of odour. This notionally linear relationship between an odour and an odour object will assume greater significance as the argument(s) of this thesis unfold. For the purposes of the present discussion, I want to emphasise the disparity between the emulative odours generated by the scent organ, and the anti-mimetic fragrances created by a range of modern perfumers. Such perfumes, I assert, constitute an aromatic counterpart to the pollutant odours described in Chapter Two of this study, and support my broader contention of an idiosyncratically modernist conception of odour. It can, of course, be argued that Huxley's isolation of individual odours – each, in other words, amenable to identification – is reflective of the formal constraints governing the composition of *Brave New World*. Conversely, an olfactory episode comprised of multiple odours – typified by an encounter with perfume – tells against the conceptual coherence imposed by Huxley's scent organ. Perfume signals the presence of an odour complex resistant to textual encoding, a problem compounded by the tendency towards abstraction critically associated with an array of modern perfumers. Luca Turin, for example, traces the shift in emphasis from mimetic, naturally-derived perfumes to the emergence of Fougère Royale by Houbigant in 1882. This perfume, writes Turin, was dominated by synthesised coumarin, and was a seminal event in the use of the ersatz in the composition of a perfume: 'Fougère Royale is to fragrance what Kandinsky's abstract gouache of 1910 is to painting: a turning point. Even the tongue-in-cheek name (royal fern) announces that the game has changed: ferns, of course, have no smell, and there is nothing royal about them'.¹⁰

Turin's analogy of painting – an inescapably visual medium – in his description of Fougère Royale's break from previous models of perfume, is a

¹⁰ Luca Turin, *The Secret of Scent: Adventures in Perfume and the Science of Smell* (London: Faber and Faber, 2007), p. 21.

significant rhetorical device to which I will return. More pertinently, his identification of abstraction as a marker of modern perfume, with the corollary that synthetic perfumes are liberated from the imperative of mimesis, is echoed by other perfume historians in relation to Chanel No.5. The latter offered a shift in the concept of scent as a mode of representation, away from perfumes intended to recall their source of origin through their name – whether a variety of flower or a generalised geographic location such as Arabia – and instead offered an explicit identification of itself as a product of industrial chemistry. ‘No.5’, Judith Brown suggests, ‘offered no visual image, no metaphor, no description of the contents of the bottle. Instead, it announced nothing, save for the perfume’s clinical, or industrial, modernity’.¹¹ Turin’s appropriation of Kandinsky to evoke a ‘typical’ modernist sundering from naturalistic representation is echoed by Chandler Burr, in an equivalence which links No.5’s industrial origins with industrial motifs in graphic art: ‘It was like jumping from Delacroix’s neoclassic people with arms that looked like, well, human arms into a nonhuman, natureless Kandinsky world of triangles, dots, and machine-tooled blobs’.¹² In part, No.5’s abstraction was derived from its non-contingent naming, the origin of which remains indeterminate, as Turin notes: ‘Stories abound on this subject, and every perfumer seems to have his or her own version’ (*The Secret of Scent*, p. 53). Although the influence of Dadaism had waned by the early 1920s, the movement’s deliberately contradictory accounts of the genesis of its own name offers a point of congruence with the ambivalent naming of No.5.¹³

¹¹ Judith Brown, *Glamour in 6 Dimensions: Modernism and the Radiance of Form* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 21.

¹² Chandler Burr, *The Emperor of Scent* (London: Arrow, 2004), p. 315.

¹³ Tristan Tzara, *Seven Dada Manifestos and Lampisteries* (London: Calder, 1977), p. 4.

The putatively ‘modernist’ character of No.5 was also suggested by its incorporation of aldehydes, products of modern industrial chemistry, but also – as perfumers have noted – synthetically-produced substances operating in unison with naturally-occurring floral extracts. The aroma of aldehyde was itself suggestive of modernist abstraction, Turin states, through its ‘snowy, blinding’ nature, a description he refines, again with recourse to visual imagery: ‘these molecules lent an abstract, marmoreal, blue-white radiance to what would otherwise have been a lush but relatively tame floral’ (*The Secret of Scent*, p. 54). Turin’s analogy, which conflates the chemical and the visual, is further refined by his description of the influence of aldehydes on perfumes: ‘imagine painting a watercolour on Scotchlite, the stuff cyclists wear to be seen in car headlights: floral colours turn strikingly transparent on this strange background, at once opaque and luminous’ (p. 54). Turin’s evocation of the aroma of aldehydes, or more properly, their synthetic modification of natural odours, rehearses a foundational problem for the textual representation of olfactory experience; that of a restricted vocabulary for the evocation of odours, in contrast with a plurality of visual descriptors.

As I have begun to argue, the conceptual challenge embodied by odours characteristically prompts recourse to rival sense modalities – optical and visual – to meaningfully communicate olfactory experience. However, equally germane, in this instance, is the question of perfume’s legitimacy as an aesthetic object – and consequently the status of perfumers as artists, rather than artisans – which shadows Turin’s comparison of painting and perfume, or more specifically, of Fougère Royale and Kandinsky’s art. Turin’s correlation of perfume and art is in turn situated within modernism’s broader promotion and devaluation of an array of aesthetic practices. I have noted Lawrence’s scepticism concerning the cultural legitimacy of cinema and

the medium's imputed imposition of passivity upon its viewers. As Ann L. Ardis proposes, this hostility is informed by Lawrence's perception of the deteriorating cultural capital of the novel: 'aesthetic production at the turn of the twentieth century was a varied, highly unstable, and contested field, and the literary field was only one among many newly specialized discourses struggling for legitimacy' (*Modernism and Cultural Conflict*, p. 86). Perfume, I suggest, represents a contested mode of aesthetic expression subject to pressures comparable to those afflicting early cinema; that is, a constant negotiation between 'the equation of the film as an art and the equation of the film as an industry'.¹⁴ This congruence between perfume and cinema as unstable cultural productions, dually aesthetic and industrial, is exemplified by their negative presentation in *Brave New World*. Both are cited as debased vehicles of mass entertainment, prized for their anodyne qualities and consequently denied aesthetic legitimacy. As the Controller notes: 'We've sacrificed the high art. We have the feelies and the scent organ instead' (p. 260).

Conversely, while cinema is disparaged as a mode of industrial production in *The New Pleasure*, the text offers perfume – or more accurately, the perfumer – as a harmonious and unproblematic conflation of commercial and artistic imperatives. 'I am an artist before I am a man of business', de Rojaques states, 'and I am an artist when I am a man of business' (p. 40). The correspondence between cinema and perfumery as analogous enterprises is further underscored by their shared reliance upon corporate production. Unlike literature, for example, the creation of films and perfumes – at least those intended for mass circulation – was dependent upon the efforts of an array of trained specialists, an attribute which accordingly destabilised the artist as the locus of aesthetic production. The methodologies of capitalist

¹⁴ Paul Rotha, *The Film Till Now: A Survey of World Cinema*, *The Film Till Now: A Survey of World Cinema* (London: Spring Books, 1967), p. 783.

production were embedded in the creation of films, a process which reached its apogee in America, and which saw the appropriation of aesthetic developments from domains of 'legitimate' art:

filmmaking [...] was a group effort involving a strict division of labour with a producer at the helm [...] like modern business enterprises, Hollywood had organised all phases of the production process in a rational manner, from story acquisition to editing [...] moguls did not rely on hunches or attempt to foist their personal tastes on the public; rather, studios organized story departments in New York, Hollywood and London to keep in close contact with Broadway, publishing, and the literary world.¹⁵

The similarity between the cinema and the perfume industry enables a comparison between the studio mogul and the respective heads of the Coty and Chanel fashion houses. Neither Coty nor Chanel created the perfumes associated with their name; the research chemist Ernest Beaux applied his knowledge of organic chemistry to create No.5 in 1920, and Coty enjoyed access to an equally proficient pool of industrial chemists. Viewed in this way, the perfumer, valorised as an artist, becomes analogous to the auteur operating within the constraints of the business imperatives of cinema, simultaneously enabled and circumscribed by the conditions of their employment, as Tino Balio further notes: 'the studio gave the illusion that it was possible for a talented director to achieve the status of an auteur within the studio system' (p. 80).

It is important to qualify this comparison, however, by noting that while perfumers may theoretically have shared the auteur's ambiguous relationship with

¹⁵ Tino Balio, *Grand Design: Hollywood as a Modern Business Enterprise, 1930-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 10.

the categories of business and art, they were not generally celebrated as the source of the ensuing product's (disputed) artistic credibility. As Peter Gay notes, the isolation of the auteur from the inherently collaborative enterprise of film-making, and its consequent valorisation of the individual artist, was a characteristically modern enterprise.¹⁶ The privileging of the role of the artist emerged, he contends, from the demands of film criticism: 'the very complexity of making a movie [...] furnished, ironically enough, one reason why the *auteur* theory was so appealing: it eased the work of the critic by singling out one member of a collectivity for public acclaim or censure' (p. 363).

Cognately, critical accounts of perfume's interrelationship with modernism have identified 1920 as a watershed year in the creation of scents, exemplified by the creation of Chanel No.5 following a meeting between Coco Chanel and the research chemist Ernest Beaux.¹⁷ The identification of – or heuristic need for – an inaugural instance in the evolution of a movement resonates with critical evaluations of the constitution of literary modernism. Michael Levenson, for example, cites 1922 as the year in which literary modernism came of age, exemplified by the founding of the *Criterion*, but supported by the publication of *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*.¹⁸ While not discounting the significance of Chanel No.5 as a cultural product typifying a range of qualities held to be representative of modernism, it should be noted that the perfume was not the first to rely on a mixture of synthetic and organic scents,

¹⁶ Gay notes that the auteur theory was first articulated by Francois Truffaut in 1954, but adds that it was 'implicit long before' (Peter Gay, *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy: From Baudelaire to Beckett and Beyond* (London: William Heinemann, 2007), p. 362).

¹⁷ Isabella Alston and Kathryn Dixon, *Coco Chanel* (Charlotte, N.C.: TAJ Books International, 2014), p. 44.

¹⁸ Michael H. Levenson, *A Genealogy of Modernism: A Study of English Literary Doctrine, 1908-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 213.

contrary to what has been critically asserted.¹⁹ Chanel, in this instance, becomes metonymic through her eponymous association with modern perfume, a linkage paralleled by a broader popular (and reductive) identification of writers and artists with a range of aesthetic movements. Kandinsky was coterminous with Expressionism, Picasso with Cubism; Pound and Lewis were both vociferous proponents of their own aesthetic vanguards; critical practice, exemplified by Eliot, Leavis and New Criticism, sought to identify those modernists most emblematic of an approved set of reading and writing practices, and simultaneously, to reject alternative, competing cultural representations. I have noted Lawrence's antipathy to cinema in 'When I Went to the Film—'; a comparable aversion is demonstrated by Leavis in 'Mass Civilization and Minority Culture' (1930). His essay accords film a seductive and threatening potency derived from its apparent verisimilitude and mass appeal: 'They [films] provide now the main form of recreation in the civilised world; and they involve surrender, under conditions of hypnotic receptivity, to the cheapest emotional appeals, appeals the more insidious because they are associated with a compellingly vivid illusion of actual life'.²⁰ Leavis's critique of the perceived pernicious influence of cinema anticipates Huxley's later, fictitious disparagement of film as an instrument of state control in *Brave New World*, but can also be fruitfully read against the marketing of perfume as a cognate object of popular consumption.

¹⁹ Judith Brown suggests that No.5 'shares many of the aesthetic and material preoccupations of modernism, including a move away from the mimetic interest in representation' (*Glamour*, p. 21)). However, her assertion that No.5 was 'the first to rely on a mixture of synthetic and organic scents' (p. 20) is contradicted by Charles Sell, who identifies the creation of Fougère Royale (1882) and Jicky (1889) as the first perfumes to combine the natural and the artificial (Charles S. Sell, *The Chemistry of Fragrances: From Perfumer to Consumer* (Cambridge: Royal Society of Chemistry, 2007), p. 19).

²⁰ F. R. Leavis, 'Mass Civilization and Minority Culture', ed. by John Storey (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2006), pp. 12–20 (p. 14).

The immersive experience of cinema and its heightened emotional appeal created an environment conducive to product placement, particularly in relation to perfume. ‘Propaganda Stealing the Movies’ (1931) notes a blurring of the distinction between advertisement and film, following a screening of ‘Seduction — featuring Blanche la Belle’.²¹ The article notes the banality of the film’s narrative – ‘The plot was of little importance’ – the quality of which is subordinate to its covert ambition of suggesting the ‘irresistible attracting powers of a seductive perfume’ (p. 122). ‘Propaganda Stealing the Movies’ further observes that three days after a single screening of the film ‘the two drug stores in the neighborhood had completely sold out their stock of “Seduction Fleur Parfum”’ (p. 122). The economic travails of the cinema industry, the article concludes, are responsible for the aggressive marketing of perfume, a gesture designed to recoup the ‘colossal expenses’ occasioned by an obligatory investment in ‘sound apparatus; new cameras, screens, films and developing equipment for the wide screen and for colour pictures’ (p. 122). The accreditation of perfume with a transformative, ethereal effect distinct from its presence as material object – its glamorisation, to adopt Judith Brown’s terminology – was in turn dependent upon an increasingly sophisticated array of copywriting strategies, recalling the ‘almost prose poems’ identified by Lawrence as an attribute of the American advertising industry (‘Pornography and Obscenity’, p. 238). *Collier’s* describes a particular narrative mode characteristic of the marketing of perfume, encoded within an array of ‘star-dripping advertisements’ (‘Dollars for Scents’, p.80), which invoke the conditions of stupor and receptivity decried by Leavis as a defining feature of cinema. The magazine records the ‘powerful hypnotic

²¹ Darwin Teilhet, ‘Propaganda Stealing the Movies’, *The Outlook*, 27 May 1931, 112–13 (p. 112) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Outlook-1931may27-00112>> [accessed 25 January 2016].

effect' induced by the 'strange, swooning lingo' deployed by the advertisers of perfume (p. 80).

So far, I have emphasised a particular vein of criticism in relation to perfume's placement within modern culture, typically derived from the perceived threat of fragrance embodied by its mass appeal, and its conflicted identity as a product of industrial chemistry and as a notional aesthetic object. This dichotomy between the reproducibility enabled by mass production and the authenticity of the original work of art invites a theoretical contextualisation which I will address later in this chapter with reference to the writings of Walter Benjamin. Here, it is more pertinent to first consider other, associated arguments which denied perfume the status of art for reasons other than its increasing influence as an accessible luxury and source of popular pleasure.

Modern critiques of perfume's legitimacy as an artistic medium note its lack of formal fixity, an attribute held to support the designation of perfume as craft, the product of a chemist's skill, rather than the expression of an artist. Willard Huntingdon Wright, writing in 1916 in *Seven Arts* magazine, offers form as *the* defining characteristic of the work of art:

The sense of beauty is always related to form [...] But a perfume or a texture never implies beauty. No matter how exquisite a perfume may be, there is no sense of form attached to it; and a series of perfumes is no more exquisite than the most exquisite individual perfume in the series.²²

²² Willard Huntingdon Wright, 'Aesthetic Form', *The Seven Arts*, December 1916, 171–78 (p. 173) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 2 September 2012].

The problem of perfume's perceived lack of form emerges as a recurrent concern of modern aesthetic criticism, reflecting the protocols which govern definitions of that which is tenable as legitimate art. The dismissal of perfume as a means of signifying beauty in 'Aesthetic Form' derives its authority from the framing of odour within a schema which is governed by the distance between elements of an aesthetic unity, and of the negotiation of the distance between subject and object:

All colours and musical notes are portions of a form which can be completed by other colors and notes. Colors either advance or retreat from the eye; and notes either advance or retreat from the ear. At once there is the implication of a spatial dimension which is a quality of form (p. 172).

Wright's delimiting of perfume as a legitimate mode of artistic expression on formal grounds is reiterated by interrelated commentaries on the general characteristics of olfaction. The botanist Albert Blakeslee, writing in *Science* (1918), notes the impermanence of odour and the difficulty of discriminating between different variations of olfactory experience, or of achieving consensus on the character of discrete aromas. Blakeslee describes two cases of anosmia relating to the odour of flowers as a mean of illustrating the agency of individual perception in processing odours. While classifying verbena flowers, Blakeslee noted that while he perceived an 'especially pleasing' odour from one specimen, his assistant was unable to detect any odour from the flower. Blakeslee continues: 'Moreover, when he [the assistant] arranged the pedigree according to the strength of the fragrance which they gave to him it was roughly in the reverse order from that in which I should have arranged

them'.²³ His paper concludes by comparing this inconsistency in the ability to discern an individual odour to that of differing auditory abilities, rehearsing a persistent trope in olfactory aesthetics; that of evoking the process of olfaction through other sense modalities:

It is well known that people differ considerably in their ability to hear tones of higher musical pitch [...] The peculiarity in the perception of the verbena fragrance might resemble the individual peculiarities in the powers of hearing' ('Unlike Reaction', p. 299).

Blakeslee's recruitment of musical terminology to suggest the viability of an idiosyncratic, individuated response to odour, accordingly invites the prospect of the cultivation of an olfactory aesthetic sensibility, and by association, odour's consequent admissibility as an artistic medium. This possibility has been addressed by more recent olfactory theoreticians. Larry Shiner and Yulia Kriskovets, writing in 'The Aesthetics of Smelly Art', suggest that the 'objection that odors are not susceptible to aesthetic *discrimination* is less about our ability to tell one odor from another [...] than about the supposed lack of complexity and structure of odors [emphasis in original]'.²⁴ Tellingly, Shiner and Kriskovets fall back upon visuality to suggest the refinement of olfactory perception: 'a neophyte can be taught to distinguish several elements on a particular smell, just as one can be taught to distinguish fine color nuances in a painting' (p. 276).²⁵

²³ A. F. Blakeslee, 'Unlike Reaction of Different Individuals to Fragrance in Verbena Flowers', *Science*, 48.1238 (1918), 298–99 (pp. 298–99) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1644073>>.

²⁴ Larry Shiner and Yulia Kriskovets, 'The Aesthetics of Smelly Art', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 65.3 (2007), 273–86 (pp. 277–78) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/4622240>>.

²⁵ In 1947, New York University launched a 'Course in Smells', intended to 'develop in the student an acute sense of smell', in response to a growing demand for trained olfactors

By contrast, the issue of form as a prerequisite for art, or more accurately, of a lack of form resident within perfume, remained largely unaddressed by modern perfumers, who regarded it as axiomatic that the creation of scents was an artistic endeavour. One representative of the profession, speaking to *Scribner's Magazine* in 1921, reveals a concern to differentiate the scientist from the perfumer, contrasting the art object of perfume with the commodities of cosmetics and toiletries:

do not call me a chemist. I am a chemist, but I prefer to be called a perfumer. Any man who makes a cold cream, nowadays, calls himself a chemist. But a perfumer – that is different. A perfumer must have originality, he must have personality, he must have originality [...] A high grade perfumer is an artist.²⁶

The writer of the article notes that perfumers returned to a signature metaphor to represent the construction of a scent: ‘comparisons to music were frequent. One perfumer speaks of “orchestrating an odour”’ (p. 581). It is, of course, necessary to acknowledge a prior awareness of the comparability of music and olfaction. The linkage of sounds and scents is, for example, proposed by the French chemist G. W. Septimus Piesse in *The Art of Perfumery* (1857): ‘Scents, like sounds, appear to influence the olfactory nerve in certain definite degrees. There is, as it were, an octave of odors like an octave in music; certain odors coincide, like the keys of an

within the perfume industry (Anon, ‘N. Y. U. Now Teaches Smell Perception’, *The New York Times*, 2 November 1947, p. 13 (p. 13) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/108050493?accountid=14664>> [accessed 26 January 2016]).

²⁶ Viola I. Paradise, ‘Sipping and Sniffing’, *Scribner's Magazine*, November 1921, 577–83 (p. 581) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 10 October 2012].

instrument'.²⁷ Moreover, Piesse's contention is given extended, literary expression in *À rebours* (1884), glossed by Richard Ellmann as 'the guidebook of decadence'.²⁸

The novel describes the odorous experiments of the aristocrat Jean des Esseintes, who, after withdrawing from Parisian society, suffers from 'les hallucinations de l'odorat' ['hallucinations of odour'].²⁹ Accordingly, des Esseintes attempts to eliminate these illusory olfactory impressions by blending a range of perfumes into 'l'odorante orchestration' ['a fragrant orchestration'] (*À rebours*, p. 156).

While again noting the precursive influence of fin de siècle texts on the modernist concept of olfaction, it is useful to draw a distinction between the private and exclusive nature of des Esseinte's experiments and the popular appeal embodied by modern perfumes as objects of mass consumption. Furthermore, in this instance I want to emphasise the apparent inescapability of metaphor, of sensorial parallel, in the representation of odour. This in turn highlights a quality of transience shared by olfaction and audition, a congruence recognised by Proust and Joyce, as I will demonstrate in Chapters Four and Five. This shared attribute is recruited by Shiner and Kriskovets to address Hegel's influential depreciation of odour, which suggests a division between the theoretical and practical senses, with olfaction and taste representing the latter, and accordingly incapable of maintaining an appropriate distance between subject and object: 'we can smell only what is in the process of wasting away, and we can taste only by destroying' (*Aesthetics*, I, p. 138). However, contend Shiner and Kriskovets, musical notes are heard, and then dissipate; odours are registered, but are subject to decay, and their original odour objects offer only a finite source of odorous emission: 'No doubt we can more easily return to a painting

²⁷ G. W. Septimus Piesse, *The Art of Perfumery* (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1857), p. 85.

²⁸ Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), p. 252.

²⁹ Joris-Karl Huysmans, *À rebours* (Paris: G. Charpentier et Cie, 1884), p. 148.

or musical performance, especially to their reproductions in other mediums, but the sounds of a live, improvisatory musical performance also die away' (p. 275).

The affinity between music and odour proposed by 'The Aesthetics of Smelly Art' is rehearsed by Huxley's conceit of the scent organ, and its capacity to lend structure to that which is innately diffuse and resistant to caesurae. It is difficult to halt the dispersal of an odour, whereas a musical note occupies a distinct and preordained interval of time prior to its supersession by another note or phrase. Conversely, the disposition of odours towards an aesthetic end is problematised by their tendency to commingle, thus denying their effective orchestration for artistic effect. The appeal of imposing the temporal coherence of music upon the experience of olfaction is demonstrated in its recurrence as a motif in modern fiction. For example, *Star Maker* (1937), by Olaf Stapledon, an associate of John Glogau and playfully cited at the conclusion of *The New Pleasure* – again recruits the prospect of the technological mastery of olfaction as a marker of a futuristic society. The novel describes the supplanting of music by odour as a broadcast medium: 'The place of music [...] was taken by taste- and smell-themes, which were translated into patterns of ethereal undulation, transmitted by all the great national stations'.³⁰ In addition, the narrative extends Huxley's earlier presentation of erotica's transformation from a source of private and illicit pleasure, to mass spectacle through its co-option by the feelies. *Star Maker* recounts the creation of the 'sexual receiving set', an 'extraordinary invention' which directly stimulates the brain to create an erotic and immersive experience through 'a combination of radio-touch, -taste, -odour, and -sound' (p. 44).

³⁰ Olaf Stapledon, *Star Maker* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 44.

As fictional speculations, *Brave New World* and *Star Maker* are unfettered by the practical difficulties encountered in the manipulation of odour in the service of mass entertainment. Conversely, historical accounts of attempts to harness olfaction for aesthetic effect cite the characteristically intransigent properties of odour as an obstacle to their successful transmission and reception. In particular, Sadakichi Hartmann, writing in 1913, anticipates the postulation of Huxley's scent organ in his detailed record of 'an apparatus which drives the odors from the stage forcibly enough to fill a large space almost instantaneously and to produce precise impressions in an audience', a device constructed following 'many experiments'.³¹ Despite the apparent promise signalled by Hartmann's machine, which relied upon currents of air streamed over perfume-saturated sheets to direct an array of fragrances at an audience, it 'proved a complete failure' when trialled before the public in New York in 1902 ('In Perfume Land', p. 224).³² This was due, admits Hartmann, to the inability of his machine to surmount the idiosyncratic nature of odours, but was also attributable to a lack of aesthetic discrimination on the part of the theatre audience, characterised by a 'vulgar tendency' (p. 224). The problem of this lack of receptivity, writes Hartmann, was compounded by the failure of his apparatus to circulate its repertory of odours quickly enough. Moreover, a variability relating to the 'the velocity of diffusion of different perfumes' thwarted the performance's ambition of constructing a carefully orchestrated narrative of olfactory effects (p. 225). Whereas Hartmann, as a self-declared olfactophile, was

³¹ Sadakichi Hartmann, 'In Perfume Land', *The Forum*, August 1913, pp. 217–28 (p. 223) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Forum-1913aug-00217>> [accessed 19 September 2014].

³² However, twenty years later, *The New York Times* reports that perfume concerts are now dismissed as a *démodé* mode of entertainment: 'the perfume concert is a stale novelty of seasons long ago' (M. B. Levick, 'The Nose Test for Cities', *The New York Times*, 23 December 1923, p. 2 (p. 2) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/103152918?accountid=14664>> [accessed 27 May 2016]).

capable of clearly distinguishing between ‘a succession of ten or eleven perfumes’, the absence of a shared heightened olfactory sensibility by his audience was exacerbated by a lack of consensus with regard to the associations aroused by each fragrance (p. 219). As Hartmann notes, ‘few perfumes produce in different persons the same effect’ (p. 225). This heterogeneity of effect was lessened, he continues, among audiences ‘of a more intellectual order’, but still remained an embedded and insoluble feature of olfaction (p. 226).

The range of associations evoked by individual odours – and their consequent lack of univocality – prompts comparison with the instability of language as a system of signification, a correspondence which permeates this study. However, for the moment, I want to emphasise the significance of Hartmann’s stymied endeavour, which reaffirms modernism’s engagement with the prospect of odour’s technological mastery, but which offers a conspicuous point of difference with the demotic application of perfume described in *Brave New World*, and more widely, with the mass consumption of perfume by private individuals throughout modern culture. Pivotal to the reception of Hartmann’s perfume concerts is their reliance upon a cultivated olfactory discernment, in contrast with the universal accessibility of the cinema and mass-produced perfumes. In other words, ‘In Perfume Land’ tacitly asserts that the deployment of odour for artistic effect is the preserve of the aesthete, eloquent of high culture, rather than comparable to the mass appeal of film. It is telling that Hartmann concludes his essay with a bleak prediction which affirms the unfeasibility of recruiting perfume as a source of communal entertainment, relegating it instead to an augmentative role: ‘I am afraid that at present an appreciation of perfume would be eligible only in conjunction with scenery, music and acting’ (‘In Perfume Land’, p. 228). Accordingly, Hartmann offers the example

of ‘a Japanese pantomime play’ as an appropriate vehicle for such an enterprise, an ascription which accordingly reinforces his placement of perfume as invested with cultural capital, rather than an adjunct to more popular forms of theatrical entertainment (p. 228).

The scepticism with which Hartmann’s perfume concerts were greeted by an unenlightened audience suggests a discrepancy between the public acceptance of perfume’s legitimacy as an object of mass consumption, and a popular suspicion of odour when co-opted in the service of aesthetic innovation. Despite the prevalence of colour and graphic art motifs in discussions of the representation of odour, and the validity of its representation *as art*, demonstrated by Turin’s equation of Fougère Royale and Kandinsky, the association of odour with painting was also recruited in the service of satire, to suggest an aesthetic illegitimacy, epitomised by Italian Futurism. In 1912, *The New Age* featured an anonymous pastiche of the aspirations of the Futurists, under the title ‘Initial Manifesto of the ‘Fatuists’ to the Public’. Central to the project of – parodic – Futurism is a rejection of vision as the principal means of apprehending the work of art. The broadening of visually-determined graphic art – and by extension, literature – to embrace rival sense modalities was dismissed a year later by Henry Poore as emblematic of the vitiating pursuit of modernity for its own sake. The pictorial, he insists, ‘can mean no other experiences than visual ones, because vision is the only sense by which we can become cognizant of a design on canvas’.³³

The parody of the ‘Fatuists’ suggests that sight is *démodé*, a sense modality relegated to redundant aesthetic schemas: ‘the day is not far distant when the painter

³³ Henry R. Poore, *The New Tendency In Art* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1913), pp. 13–14.

who attempts to appeal to the emotions through the sense of *sight* will be as dead as Marionetti [*sic*] himself'.³⁴ In lampooning Futurist art criticism, the anonymous satirist conflates hearing, olfaction and vision to create an incoherence of perception, a strategy calculated to undermine the aesthetic credibility of the art object under consideration, a portrait of a wire-walking innominate woman: 'Fulsome's immortal picture of Mme. X is the finest painting we have heard since smelling Bunkum's memorable 'Afterglow in a Turkish Bath' in the galleries at Versailles' ('Initial Manifesto', p. 524). The odour of aesthetic censure becomes palpable as the combined auditor/viewer/olfactor moves closer to the painting:

As one approaches the canvas, a curious, sickening odour is perceptible; this is expressive of Mme. X's opinion of the 'Fatuists.' The gradual crescendo of sound vibrations following the first sensation of scent is a masterly interpretation of the wire's contempt for the rather ponderous lady whose name gives the title to the picture. (p. 524)

The detection of an idiosyncratic odour echoes Lewis's cognate use of olfaction to signal untenable, yet inarticulable qualities of modernity. However, odour, in this instance, becomes performative, framed by the language of musicology as the art object modulates to suggest 'the strengthening odour of stale eggs and decaying vegetables', accompanied by 'a staccato movement in two syllables; this may be aptly described as a polyphonic scent symphony in duet form' (p. 524). The ridicule of the text, its mechanism of parody, is governed by the yoking of Italian Futurism to that which is held to be repellent (stale eggs and rotten vegetables), but also underlines odour's exclusion from the domain of the serious artist. Richard

³⁴ Anon, 'Initial Manifesto of the "Fatuists" to the Public', *The New Age*, March 1912, 524 (p. 524) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 10 October 2012].

Aldington, for example, writing in *The Egoist* in 1914, debars the olfactory from inclusion within legitimate art. He suggests that the recruitment of odour (particularly malodour) in support of aesthetics is a misguided venture, echoing Lawrence's criticism of the modern novel. It is, Aldington states, indicative of an undesirable shift in the focus of art towards the foetid, rather than the aesthetically rigorous: 'everyone must have noted that the tendency of art to-day is to become more and more exclusively interested in the dust-bin and the backyard'.³⁵ Aldington continues, in his declaration of the characteristics of 'a very bad artist': 'To drag smells of petrol, refrigerators, ocean greyhounds, President Wilson and analine dyes into a work of art will not compensate for lack of talent and of technique' (p. 443). In turn, Aldington's prohibition of the olfactory in the service of aesthetic production is foregrounded by Nordau in 1892 as representative of degenerate art, the product of 'comprehensive drivelers', particularised by the 'symphony of perfumes' in *À rebours*, and by the augmentation of recitals of Symbolist poetry with odours, both of which anticipate Hartmann's later perfume concerts.³⁶

A thorough account of the precursive influence of Symbolism in the emergence of Italian Futurism lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Moreover, by invoking the role of Italian Futurism in shaping the modernist conception of odour, it is also obligatory to acknowledge the contentious political tenor of the movement. However, for the purposes of the present discussion, I argue that what is noteworthy, in this instance, is the continuity of odour's disputed status within the field of aesthetics, as evocative of a meretricious striving for innovation, but also of rupture, as a means of announcing a desired schism from established artistic conventions.

³⁵ Richard Aldington, 'Parochialism in Art', *The Egoist*, 1 December 1914, 443 (p. 443) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjournal.org>>> [accessed 9 October 2012].

³⁶ Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1895), p. 502.

Futurism's acknowledgment of the diminution of the olfactory as an object of literary interest – as that which can be viably encoded, or more accurately, given the ambitions of Futuristic poetics, offered presence in textual form – is stated within Marinetti's *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista*, which identifies odour as that which was 'finora trascurati' ['hitherto neglected'].³⁷ However, the incorporation of odour into art – graphic and textual – recommended by Futurism does not suggest a correspondent rehabilitation. The olfactory – at least within the context of Futurist poetics – obtains value precisely *because* of its established critical contentiousness. To assimilate odour into the aesthetic object is disquieting, a provocative action comparable to the linguistic re-engineering embraced by Futurism, characterised by the movement's deliberate pursuit of dissonance, rather than euphony, as an affront to established – bourgeois – modes of representation. Accordingly, the publication of *Risposte alle obiezioni* (1912) as a supplement to the *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* calls for 'La distruzione del periodo tradizionale, l'abolizione dell'aggettivo, dell'avverbio e della punteggiatura' (*I manifesti del futurismo*, p. 100) ['The destruction of the traditional period, the abolition of the adjective, and of the adverb of punctuation']. The literary products of Futurism, the text implies, are designed to aesthetically terrorise; such writing, as Lawrence Rainey notes, embodies 'the primal language of shock'.³⁸

Yet, I argue, the recurrence of the olfactory as a point of interest within Futurist texts suggests more than the prizing of odour on purely insurrectionary grounds, and is instead indicative of an awareness and appreciation of odour's

³⁷ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and others, *I manifesti del futurismo* (Firenze: Edizione di 'Lacerba', 1914), p. 93.

³⁸ Lawrence Rainey, 'Shock Effects: Marinetti, Pathology, and Italian Avant-Garde Poetics', in *The Mind of Modernism: Medicine, Psychology, and the Cultural Arts in Europe and America, 1880-1940*, ed. by Mark S. Micale (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 197–213 (p. 208).

conflicted interrelationship with language, a foundational concern of this thesis. For the moment, it is important to note that the formal properties of an olfactory experience – apparently veridical, persistently referenced as that which is eloquent of the *real*, rather than illusorily mimetic – resonate with the Futurist project of transcending the representational limitations of language, a strategy signalled by the movement’s discounting of metaphoricity as a ‘dividing screen that separates word and thing. Marinetti desires to remove this mechanism of separation, making word and thing into one being’.³⁹ Key to the program of grammatical and syntactic innovation recommended by Futurist poetics is the use of onomatopoeia: ‘il poeta futurista potrà finalmente utilizzare tutte le onomatopoeie, anche le più cacofoniche, che riproducono gl’innumerevoli rumori della materia in movimento’ (*I manifesti del futurismo*, p. 100) [‘the Futurist poet can finally use all onomatopoeia, even the most cacophonous, that reproduce innumerable sounds of matter in motion’].

The poetry endorsed by Futurism embraces cacophony; it is intended to be acoustically offensive, a manoeuvre comparable to the movement’s deliberate deployment of odour. However, equally insistent is the desire to erase the signficatory aspect of language altogether, closing the mediating distance between sign and object and granting materiality to the text; in other words, to lend language the visceral immediacy of odour, an ambition signalled through the movement’s recruitment of onomatopoeia. Consequently, the Futurist poet reproduces sounds particular to all ‘materia in movimento’, with an implied fidelity lacking in conventional forms of representation. Language does not, in this context, offer an analogue for the represented object; it becomes the object it signifies, and in doing

³⁹ Helen Palmer, *Deleuze and Futurism: A Manifesto for Nonsense* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 138.

so, obtains an immediacy more typically associated with odour, a transmutation I will return to in my final chapter, in relation to Joyce's erotic correspondence. Conversely, the continual deferment of this objective – language cannot *be* that which it strives to represent – points to an apparent paradox at the heart of Futurist aesthetics. The somatic and irrational, epitomised by the olfactory, coexists with the inescapable ordering and abstraction typical of language, embodied in Marinetti's endorsement of 'breveissimi od anonimi segni matematici e musicali' ['short or anonymous mathematical and musical symbols'], which suggests the prospect of language as purely logical entity (*I manifesti del futurismo*, p. 143). The mathematically-inspired narrative method championed by Marinetti is, however, offset by a dissenting Futurist appeal for the investment of emotion, rather than intellect, within art, an anti-rationalism which stresses the sensational, rather than the intellectual. Carrà's *La pittura dei suoni, rumori e odori* recommends an aesthetic in which formal restraint is subordinate to an animating 'grande emozione e quasi un delirio nell'artista' (p. 157) ['a great emotion and almost a frenzy in the artist's painting']. Such art, suggests Carrà, is accordingly a complex, irreducible to a series of components or contributory elements, and consequently must be 'un vortice di sensazioni, una forza pittorica, e non un freddo intelletto logico' (p. 157) ['a vortex of feelings, a pictorial force, and not a cold logical intellect'].

The capacity of art to convey the immediacy of percepts, rather than the conceptual or cerebral, resonates with Futurism's valuation of onomatopoeia as an antidote to the abstraction framed as typical of established modes of literary production. This endorsement is supported by the antithetical placement of onomatopoeia in relation to 'rational' discourse, or more precisely, the independence of such neologisms from the controls of accepted orthography or syntax.

Onomatopoeia, states David Herman, ‘represents a kind of linguistic irrationality, an irrationality of language’.⁴⁰ Correspondently, Marinetti associates onomatopoeia with ‘elementi crudi e brutali di realtà’ [‘crude and brutal elements of reality’], an assertion which invites reference to odour as a signature example (*I manifesti del futurismo*, p. 142).

While Carrà’s recommendation of a sensorially-grounded aesthetic is rooted in graphic, pictorial art, Marinetti’s guidance for the composition of Futurist literature is equally characterised by an emphasis upon the inclusion of odour as a contributory element of ‘lirismo multilineo’ [multilinear lyricism] (*I manifesti del futurismo*, p. 144). Accordingly, Marinetti offers a textual counterpart to Carrà’s ‘vortice’, in which visuality, audition, touch and olfaction are all granted equal significance via their encoding within the narrative: ‘Il poeta lancerà su parecchie linee parallele parecchie catene di colori, suoni, odori, rumori, pesi, spessori, analogie. Una di queste linee potrà essere per esempio odorosa’ (*I manifesti del futurismo*, p. 144) [‘The poet will launch on several parallel lines several chains of colors, sounds, smells, sounds, weights, thicknesses, analogies. One of these lines can be for example odorous’].

Marinetti’s theoretical framing of perceptual holism, suggested through a layering of contributory sense modalities, finds literary expression in ‘Zang Tumb Tumb’ (1914), through the narrator’s exhortation to ‘see hear smell drink everything’.⁴¹ However, the willingness of Futurist aesthetic discourse to embrace odour as an object of literary interest is counteracted, compromised, by an absence of

⁴⁰ David Herman, *Universal Grammar and Narrative Form* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1995), p. 77.

⁴¹ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Selected Poems and Related Prose*, trans. by Elizabeth R. Napier and Barbara R. Studholme (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 75.

olfactory onomatopoeia, a hiatus represented even within those texts apparently cognisant of the power of odour to signify irreducible ‘elementi [...] di realtà’. ‘Zang Tumb Tumb’ offers a barrage of malodorous olfactory impressions, a recitation presented as an assault upon the tremulous olfactor. The ‘quivering leaves of the olfactory nerves’ are assailed by the combinative force of ‘fecal smell of dysentery honeyed stench of plague sweat ammoniacal smell of the cholera patients sweet stink of gangrene consumptives acidulous smell of the fever patients cellar smell cat urine’ (p. 73).

Yet despite the text’s wealth of odour signification, ‘Zang Tumb Tumb’ simultaneously rehearses the limited available repertory of olfactory terminology, a restriction signalled by the interplay of odour and odour object within the poem. The narrative fields a circumscribed vocabulary of odour – it is represented simply as ‘smell’ – an attribute which in this instance, underlines a correspondent disjunction of sign and object. ‘Smell’, within ‘Zang Tumb Tumb’, is always the odour *of* something, an abstraction which tells against the desired materiality of Futurist texts, an ambition ideally enabled, as noted, through the capacity of onomatopoeia to efface the mediating presence of text.

Tellingly, the absence of odorous onomatopoeic effects within the products of Italian Futurist literature is in marked contrast to a wealth of phonemic innovations designed to evoke a range of auditory experiences – machinegun fire (‘taratatata’); marching feet (‘krook-kraak’) and sheep bells (‘dong-dang-dong-ding-baaa’) – a characteristic which reaffirms the status of language as a dually textual and acoustic construct (‘Zang Tumb Tumb’, p. 75). However, Futurist writing demonstrates an equal willingness to ascribe onomatopoeically-inspired

presence to objects and properties less intimately associated with text and audition, such as chromatic values. *La pittura dei suoni, rumori e odori* offers a narrative encoding of colour that, while not onomatopoeic in the strict sense of the term – in the sense that it does not represent an acoustic source – nevertheless attempts to assert a correlation between colour and sound, or more specifically, the suggestion of colour through orthographic innovation. Carrà describes the necessity of red in the Futurist colour palette: ‘I rossi, roooooossssi roooooosssississimi che griiiiiidano’ (*I manifesti del futurismo*, p. 154) [‘Reds, reeeeds reeeeds who scream’]. Cognately, Carrà observes ‘I verdi i non mai abbastanza verdi, veeeeerdiisssssissimi, che striiiiiidono’ (p. 154) [‘I do not get enough of the green, green greeeeeeen, that screeches’]. The text’s encoding of colour and sound – eloquent of a desire to bypass the representational limitations of established modes of literary discourse – suggests a range of rhetorical effects at play. The elongating of the initial vowels of ‘rossi’ and ‘verdi’ transforms the original – ‘ordinary’ – signs denoting ‘red’ and ‘green’ into neologisms which offer a transposition to the sphere of audition. Such terms provoke a verbal articulation, a stimulus supported by the text’s accompanying personification of colour for literary effect. Red ‘screams’, green ‘screeches’, but the density of conceits promoted by the narrative ironically underscores the orthographic stretching of colour-related nouns.

The attempt to transcend mimesis – for text to *be* the object it seeks to represent – is, at least with reference to Carrà’s encoding of colour, stretched, pushed to a point where the deliberately veridical ambitions of onomatopoeia are exposed, drawing attention, as Derek Attridge notes, ‘to itself as a rhetorical device instead of

melting away in a presentation of unmediated reality'.⁴² The striving of Carrà's manifesto to offer a heightened experience in contrast to prior, retrograde representational models exposes the artificiality of such an enterprise. The pursuit of a viscerally affective aesthetic enforces the abstract, intractably visual nature of language, and by extension, its conflicted relationship with odour, an opposition typically negotiated by a recourse to analogue – a smell *of*, a smell *like*. Such a manoeuvre necessarily underscores the circumscribed nature of text as always already an approximation of Marinetti's 'elementi crudi e brutali di realtà'.

While I argue that Futurism signals a radical attempt to perturb established conceptions of odour, the disruptive ambitions encoded in this enterprise in turn qualify the significance of the movement's contribution to reshaping modernist olfactory aesthetics. Put simply, the lack of popular currency enjoyed by the products of Futurism – at least when viewed in comparison with the wider cultural familiarity and economic significance of the cinema and perfume – rehearses the divisions between high/low culture which inform Hartmann's attempts to introduce orchestrated perfumes to an unresponsive and critical audience. In both cases, the recruitment of the olfactory by the avant-garde presupposes the existence of a receptive cognoscenti, those representative of Hartmann's 'intellectual order' or interrelatedly, those disinclined to satirise attempts to offer a reimagining of art and literature through the agency of olfaction, and sympathetic to the ambitions of Futurism. Moreover, despite the enthusiasm of Futurists for 'industrialization, mass production and technical innovation', these processes were apparently not harnessed in the production of appropriately Futurist fragrances; evidence is lacking for the creation and dissemination of a perfume formulated in accordance with Futurist

⁴² Derek Attridge, *Peculiar Language* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 156.

aesthetics.⁴³ Even if such a perfume *had* been created and circulated through industrial production, such an action would have been incompatible with Futurism's mandate to provoke and scandalise, states Franca Zoccoli: 'The Futurist cry of rebellion would have been senseless if it had been mitigated by the reductive effect of mass circulation'.⁴⁴

If it is accepted that the products of Futurism are connotative of aesthetic exclusivity – again, with the caveat that this assertion is relative to the commodification of films and fragrances within modern culture – then this suggests that such objects are accordingly liberated from the dialectic between mass production and aesthetic legitimacy characteristic of perfume. 'Sipping and Sniffing' notes the contrast between the commercial relevance of perfume – it is manufactured to a uniform standard, it is marketed, it is sold – and its value as art.⁴⁵ The consistency of perfume as a product, logic would imply, ensures its economic value. Despite their volatility and variability of effect depending on the body odour of their wearers, perfumes nonetheless are required to express a standard quality and character to reify their status *as* products. The formulae of scents such as Chanel No.5 and Coty's Chypre were trade secrets, betraying an anxiety surrounding the reproducibility of perfume, and its susceptibility to the ease of manufacture. Any rival fashion house possessing the recipe for an exclusive perfume could

⁴³ Alexander Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 217.

⁴⁴ Franca Zoccoli, 'Futurist Accessories', in *Accessorizing the Body: Habits of Being*, ed. by Cristina Giorcelli and Paula Rabinowitz (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), pp. 54–82 (p. 77).

⁴⁵ The concept of the perfumer as artist was firmly established prior to the beginning of the twentieth century, demonstrating a divergence in the discourses of the chemist, characterised by the univocality of 'scientific' discourse, and the discursive language of the perfumer, with its own, emergent descriptive terminology. As Alain Corbin notes: 'As early as 1855, Piesse suggested a scale of smells that aroused the mirth of contemporary chemists. Here were perfumers daring to talk about harmony, perfect accords (sunflower/vanilla/orange blossom), dissonances (laurel/pink/thyme)' (*The Foul and the Fragrant*, p. 198)

theoretically create the original product, provided they could replicate the process of its assembly.⁴⁶ Consequently, the perfumer faced a dilemma, especially in the context of perfume's postulation as art. To maintain perfume's viability as an object of economic exchange, it needed to be mass produced, a reproducibility at odds with its suggested aesthetic counterpart of painting, embodied, for example, by the art of Kandinsky. Yet to represent itself as art, it accordingly needed to assert the presence of the artist. This dichotomy found expression in the distinction between the perfumer as a commercial entity, and the perfumer as an artist, ostensibly distinct from economic considerations. An unnamed perfumer quoted in *Scribner's* explains: 'Some manufacturers [...] are purely commercial. They make certain products according to formulae and go on selling the same perfume [...] year after year – millions of one kind. They are content with that. But that is not the real perfumer!' ('Sipping and Sniffing', p. 581)

This casting of the notionally 'modernist' perfumer, driven by the imperative to transcend the formal conventions of their discipline, to 'make it new', rehearses broader modern definitions of the artist and the purpose of art. Brecht, echoing Pound's imperative for novelty (but not, as Peter Childs points out, the ideological underpinnings of his mandate) locates the artist as a locus of intelligibility in response to shifting historical conditions and contingencies: 'time moves on [...] new problems loom up and demand new techniques. Reality alters; to represent it the means of representation must alter too. Nothing arises from nothing; the new springs

⁴⁶ The secrecy attending No.5's composition is noted by Hal Vaughan: 'Except to a handful of the initiated, the formula for making Chanel No.5 remains secret. It is known to be exceptionally complicated' (*Sleeping with the Enemy: Coco Chanel's Secret War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), p. 31).

from the old, but that is just what makes it new'.⁴⁷ In associating perfumery with Brecht's championing of modernist avant-garde aesthetics it is necessary to acknowledge his casting of artistic innovation as politically motivated, a response to the incorporation of aesthetic – and revolutionary – forms of art by capitalist interests. The function of art, stated Brecht, was to alienate the audience, to force them to reappraise social and political norms. By contrast, perfume's implication in the processes of capitalism, of production and exchange, is suggested in the language used to describe its operation as a business; I have noted the use of 'empire' in discussing the businesses of leading perfumer manufacturers.

Perfume and cinema offer themselves as evident examples of modernism's interrelationship with mass culture; comparably, the presence of market concerns within the literary avant-garde suggest a persistent negotiation between the imperative to engage in economic exchange, and to preserve the aesthetic authority of art by suggesting its exclusivity from popular culture. Ástráður Eysteinnsson, in his discussion of the promotional strategies of canonical modernism, notes that: 'in their public face and their work, Eliot, Pound, and other members of the self-perceived modernist avant-garde often presented the illusion of being separated from market matters – even though they were at times very open about their interest in these crass concerns with editors, publishers and patrons'.⁴⁸ That this dichotomy was also experienced by perfumers is suggested in *Scribner's*, with a distinction drawn between the 'lack of public subtlety in sense discrimination' and the artistic investment which inheres within the creation of a perfume and the skill of the perfumer to 'originate a bouquet, to think of a fragrance that has never existed, to

⁴⁷ Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*, ed. by John Willett (New York: Hill and Wang, 1965), p. 110.

⁴⁸ *Modernism*, ed. by Ástráður Eysteinnsson and Vivian Liska (Amsterdam/NL: John Benjamins Publishing, 2007), p. 621.

compose it in your mind [...] combining ingredients in new ways to create it' ('Sipping and Sniffing,' p. 581). The product of the perfumer's skill was contrasted with its subsequent marketing and packaging, and its reception as a commercial product within a mass market: 'Although great skill and art are used in perfecting a perfume, not only an uneducated public taste, but the character of the container in which the perfume is put up may militate against it' (p. 582).

This desire to emphasise the exclusivity of the aesthetic object is cognately expressed by Lawrence in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*: 'I count it a misfortune that serious books are exposed in the public market, like slaves exposed naked for sale' (*Psychoanalysis*, p. 62). In this context, Lawrence's designation of 'serious' books can be interpreted as those texts which embody aesthetic trends which are differentiated from popular culture through their status as 'art', rather than as objects of mass consumption. Yet, Lawrence also displays a simultaneous awareness of the financial implications of creating, publishing and selling a book. Ann L. Ardis has drawn attention to the status of *The Lost Girl* as a commercial Lawrentian text, a 'money-making project' which invites an examination of its status as serious art, in the light of the proscriptions against the popular dissemination of literary, 'serious' texts expressed in *Fantasia (Modernism and Cultural Conflict*, p. 82). Lawrence's own commentary on *The Lost Girl* is equivocal, oscillating between a defence of the novel as answering a legitimate aesthetic requirement – 'the real, deep want of the English people' – and an implicit erosion of artistic credibility because of its anticipated widespread appeal: 'this novel is perhaps not such good art, but it is what they want, need, more or less' (*Letters*, I, p. 511).

As foregrounded in my introduction, a discussion of the correspondence between the art object and its dissemination within – and as an aspect *of* – mass

culture within the context of modernism, invites a consideration of the aesthetic theories of Walter Benjamin. His influential essay ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’ provides a means of critical ingress into the concerns expressed by *Scribner’s* perfumers, and modernism’s broader maintenance of the divisions between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture. Benjamin’s projected diminution of the artist in the face of mechanical reproduction finds particular resonance with the work of the perfumer in his description of the actor alienated by the studio system, or more specifically, by the camera. To create modern cinema – or modern perfumes – is to engage with a market which is estranged from the moment of production or creation by the artist:

[the artist] knows that ultimately he will face the public, the consumers who constitute the market. This market, where he offers not only his labour, but also his whole self, his heart and soul, is beyond his reach. During the shooting he has as little contact with it as any article made in a factory.⁴⁹

Benjamin’s alienated actor echoes the marketing and valorisation of a fashion house’s perfume through their shared reliance upon an invented corporate or institutional identity to reinvest qualities diminished – vaporised – during the process of their manufacture. The essay notes that the ‘cult of the movie star, fostered by the money of the film industry, preserves not the unique aura of the person but the ‘spell of the personality,’ the phony spell of the commodity’ (p. 224). Films and perfumes, as I have described earlier in this chapter, demonstrate a joint appeal to glamour and escapism, in which cinema is mobilised to assist the marketing of a particular fragrance. It is worth noting, therefore, in the comparison of the product of film with

⁴⁹ Walter Benjamin, ‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’, in *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), pp. 211–44 (p. 224).

the product of perfume, that Coco Chanel was already established as a couturier prior to the launch of No.5, and that the perfume derived influence and authority because of its association with her fashion house and her established identity as a fashion designer, as much as its original olfactory appeal.⁵⁰ The reproducibility of No.5 – Chanel was able to offer an identical combination of chemicals in each instance – echoes Benjamin’s distinction between the ‘negative theology in the form of the idea of ‘pure art’ and the status of the modern aesthetic product as embodying an original authenticity: ‘To an ever greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility’ (‘The Work of Art’, p. 218).

Outlining modernism’s interrelationship with perfume through Benjamin entails a qualification of his theory of art, which views the modern art object as explicitly political, in contrast to all preceding works of art, which offer themselves as adjuncts to ritual: ‘the earliest art works originated in the service of a ritual – first the magical, then the religious kind [...] the unique value of the ‘authentic’ work of art has its basis in ritual, the location of its original use value’ (‘The Work of Art’, p. 217). While acknowledging the dominance of the political significance of modern art as a theme of his essay, I want to recruit Benjamin’s concept of ‘aura’, and the metaphorical resonance of this term, as a means of exploring the representation of perfume, and of odour more generally, within modernism. Aura’s interrelationship with odour suggests itself initially on a semantic level, with the range of synonyms associated with the former – atmosphere, suggestion, tone, semblance, ambience – evocative of the diffuse properties of the olfactory, of that which can be ascribed

⁵⁰ ‘Chanel launched Chanel No.5 by wearing it to a dinner party in Cannes. As she had predicted, people asked her what it was. Next, she gave bottles to her favourite clients as Christmas gifts. They came to her boutique asking for more – and so did their friends’ (Mark Tungate, *Branded Beauty: How Marketing Changed the Way We Look* (Philadelphia: Kogan Page, 2011), p. 119).

definite presence, but which simultaneously defies fixity. Additionally, aura's suggestion of a luminal emanation or penumbra provides a further instance of odour's evocation through analogue, whether sonic or visual, a motif to which I will return in Chapter Four, in relation to Proust. Operating in tandem with aura's connotations of ethereality and intangibility is its lack of closure as a theoretical construct within Benjamin's writings. As John Joseph McCole notes: 'Benjamin never gave a definitive, discursive analysis of his concept of the aura. Instead he evoked an image of what it is like to experience an object auratically'.⁵¹ Benjamin offers the example of an actor performing on stage, in contrast to a performance captured on film, as a means of illustrating the properties of aura:

aura is tied to his [the actor's] presence; there can be no replica of it. The aura which, on the stage, emanates from Macbeth, cannot be separated for the spectators from that of the actor. However, the singularity of the shot in the studio is that the camera is substituted for the public. Consequently, the aura that envelops the actor vanishes, and with it the aura of the figure he portrays. ('The Work of Art', p. 223)

Benjamin's description of aura – or more precisely – of its action, provides a range of suggestive similarities with the properties of odour. Aura is always already implicated in the concept of individuation, of the unique. It tacitly asserts itself as a category resistant to analysis in a manner which recalls Shiner and Kriskovets' observation that a perceived lack of definition attending complex odours notionally

⁵¹ John McCole, *Walter Benjamin and the Antinomies of Tradition* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 3.

disqualifies the olfactory from consideration as legitimate art.⁵² Aura's lack of definition – the key to its resistance to reproducibility – is in turn embodied in its lack of theoretical fixity within Benjamin's writings. Like odour, it can be approached through analogy, and its effects observed, but it resists textual enclosure. The destruction of aura as a consequence of the widespread dissemination of mass-produced reproductions of the art object, provides further congruencies with the properties of odour, or more particularly, of the evanescence of olfactory experience, particularised by perfume. Aura's demise is couched in language suggestive of deliquescence, of the evaporation of an original, intangible property of uniqueness: 'that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art' ('The Work of Art', p. 215).

Re-iterating Benjamin's theory of the work of art states the obvious – the reproduction of the work of art can never be the original exemplar – but offers an important point if, as I propose, its metaphorical implications are considered in the context of the viability of mimesis within literature in general and with particular reference to modernism. In particular, I want to co-opt Benjamin's concept of aura – and its attendant associations of vaporousness and intangibility – to illuminate a particular rhetoric deployed by literary modernists and aestheticians to suggest a cognate elusive quality inhering in the legitimate work of art. Such rhetoric, as I will demonstrate, is characterised by a persistent recourse to the terminology of perfume, or interrelatedly, of chemical reaction. However, it is helpful to preface this reading by first noting Benjamin's theory of language outlined in his essay 'The Task of Translator', which evokes a detectable, yet evanescent quality operating at the heart

⁵² 'The lack of complexity and structure objection probably gets its initial plausibility from the little training most of us have had in distinguishing and analysing odors' ('The Aesthetics of Smelly Art', p. 276).

of language, comparable to that embodied by aura. The text offers the example of bread as a means of evoking the variability of translation, of the play of meaning between different linguistic systems in evoking the same object:

The words *Brot* and *pain* ‘intend’ the same object, but the modes of this intention are not the same. It is owing to these words that the word *Brot* means something different to a German than the word *pain* to a Frenchman, that these words are not interchangeable for them, that, in fact, they strive to exclude each other.⁵³

Following the logic of Benjamin’s argument, the accuracy of a translation is not derived from the linear substitution of one word for another. The possibility of linguistic fidelity is represented as a futile attempt to affix semantic certainty onto that which is endlessly variegated and changeable: ‘Meaning is never found in relative independence, as in individual words or sentences; rather, it is in a constant state of flux – until it is able to emerge as pure language from the harmony of all the various modes of intention’ (‘Task of the Translator’, p. 75). The exact nature of Benjamin’s ‘pure language’ remains elusive but offers the tacit assertion that an extra-textual meaning inheres within significant works of art: ‘to some degree all great texts contain their potential translation between the lines’ (p. 82). The suggestion of a domain existing ‘between the lines’, of an area of intangible yet apparent linguistic potentialities, provides a point of comparison with the idea of aura, and its combination of influence and ambiguity.

I will return to the significance of Benjamin’s postulation of ‘pure language’ in my following chapter, in relation to the writing of Proust. For now, I want to offer

⁵³ Walter Benjamin, ‘The Task of the Translator’, in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), pp. 70–82 (p. 75).

a refinement of this suggestion that a text's 'meaning' – its core significance which evades direct representation – exists instead 'between the lines'. Mikel Dufrenne comparably recruits odour to suggest the essentiality of a text, by speaking of the form of a poem as constitutive of its meaning, and which is 'not so much the logical meaning which can be extracted from the poem in order to be translated into the language of prose as it is the poem's poetic meaning, which is exhaled like perfume and is the work's genuine garment'.⁵⁴ Dufrenne's gloss of poetic meaning is simultaneously suggestive of evanescence and materiality. His description modulates from the use of simile to evoke the operation of poetic meaning – its contact with the reader is achieved through a process in which it behaves *like* perfume, but is not the object it represents. Dufrenne's use of 'exhaled' is incongruous in this context, particularly in its implication that the exhalation of perfume represents a commonplace, rather than the conventional presupposition that perfume is inhaled by the perceiving subject. Finally, Dufrenne's simile is transposed into metaphor with his assertion that the – intangible, volatile – 'perfume' of the poem's meaning acts as its garment. The use of the word 'garment' in this context is suggestive of an appurtenance, rather than the expression of an intrinsic quality. It disguises, rather than acts as means of disclosing the essential character or meaning of a text. By extension, the sense of the word implies that it cannot be 'genuine'; a garment is selected arbitrarily; it is an assumed, rather than an innate attribute.

This reading of Dufrenne's argument serves to highlight the problematic nature of Benjamin's projection of a 'pure language' existing in latent form within a text and exemplified locally through Dufrenne's harnessing of the simile of perfume to evoke the real – and elusive – meaning located in the liminal space 'between the

⁵⁴ Mikel Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 143.

lines'. This meaning, like perfume, does not readily submit to a critical deconstruction into its constituent elements. Its significance resides in its totality of effect as a self-contained system, comparable to the concept of 'accord' within perfumery, in which individual scent notes are merged into a unified odour impression.

This assertion of an analogical relationship between perfume and poetry, supported by the theories of Benjamin and Dufrenne, can be further extended to offer a correlation between the perfumer and the creators of modernist poetry. As my preceding discussion has demonstrated, those engaged in the formulation of perfumes throughout the early twentieth century sought to legitimise their products and consequent cultural placement by adopting the rhetoric of aesthetics, rather than of mass production and industrial chemistry. Simultaneously, the perfumer remained dependent upon their employ within a wider corporate concern to guarantee the manufacture and circulation of their inventions. Thus, the perfumer resists a definitive categorisation, at once described as a 'virtuoso', but also an artisan governed as much by manufacturing regulations and cost considerations as aesthetic imperatives.⁵⁵ There are, 'The Art of the Perfumer' continues, 'artists — in their obscure way — who can stretch a \$2.65 pound of neroli till it can be sold profitably for \$20 a pound' (p. 58).

While perfume epitomises modernism's wider dialectic between mass production and the individual art object, and interrelatedly, the conflict between 'high' and 'low' modes of cultural production, I will conclude this chapter by considering a further attribute of the perfumer in relation to modernist literature; that

⁵⁵ Henry Tetlow, 'The Art of the Perfumer', *The American Mercury*, May 1925, 57–58 (p. 58) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/AmMercury-1925may-00057>> [accessed 28 January 2016].

of the perfumer as chemist, or more loosely, as a scientist. Perfume's adoption of aesthetic terminology to support its claims to cultural legitimacy was paralleled by a correspondent recruitment of scientific rhetoric by literary modernists to authorise and lend precision to the process of poetic composition. In turn, this drive to incorporate the methodologies and language of science into aesthetic production rehearsed the apparent incompatibilities associated with perfumery. These combined an appeal to the instinctive, irrational and inarticulate signalled by odour, accompanied by the prerequisite of scientific exactitude to manufacture a commercially viable perfume according to an agreed industrial standard.

In particular, the project of Imagism entailed a negotiation between the perceived value of a text as the sum of its (indivisible) components, and conversely, of poetry as a scientific endeavour, exemplified by the movement's demands for a stringent discrimination in relation to language. To state that a poem simply *is* suggests the numinous – its effects are penumbral, a proposition alluded to in Pound's familiar definition of Imagism: 'An "Image" is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time'.⁵⁶ Like Dufrenne's presentation of poetic meaning, Pound's description of Imagism is densely imagined, suggesting a knotting of potentially incompatible categories in its conflation of the intellectual and emotional, but also echoes the former's use of perfume as a means of evoking the evasive locus of meaning within a text. The 'Image' is a complex, suggesting the stability of a unit of contributory elements, but it also embodies temporality through its inhabitation of 'an instant of time', in a manner equally reminiscent of the transitory properties of odour.

⁵⁶ Ezra Pound, 'A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste', *Poetry: A Magazine Of Verse*, March 1913, 200–206 (p. 200) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 6 October 2012].

Set against this ethereality is an equal and antithetical insistence upon the amenability of language to submit to a universality of meaning, a belief expressed by the introduction to *Some Imagist Poets*. Echoing Lawrence and Pound's valorisation of the artist, Amy Lowell identifies an informed literary minority – 'united by certain common principles' – coexisting uneasily with the consumers of literary products: 'we have thought it wise to tell the public what our aims are'.⁵⁷ The writer's credibility, according to the protocols of Imagism, depends upon the exactitude of their language, suggesting a new (or as Lowell states, rediscovered) discrimination in the disposition of language towards a literary end. To be validated as an artist, the writer should endeavour to 'use the language of common speech, but to employ always the *exact* word, not the nearly exact, nor the merely decorative word' (*Some Imagist Poets*, p. vi).

Lowell's injunction to abandon artifice – in this case, the garment (to adopt Dufrenne's terminology) cloaking transparent meaning – finds cognate expression within the writing of T. E. Hulme, who stipulates an equivalent precision as the marker of artistic credibility, combined with an injunction to reject established and defunct modes of artistic expression. Hulme uses the analogy of 'ordinary language' as a form of architectural template (*Speculations*, p. 160). The architect, like the aspiring artist, is limited by the approximate nature of the means by which they achieve aesthetic expression. Knowledge of this deficiency 'breeds in him [the artist] a dissatisfaction with the conventional means of expression which allow all its individualities to escape' (*Speculations*, p. 160). To be used effectively, as a meaningful system of signification, language must therefore be approached scientifically. The artist is required to 'force the mechanism of expression out of the

⁵⁷ Richard Aldington and others, *Some Imagist Poets: An Anthology* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915), p. vi.

way in which it tends to go and into the way he wants' (p. 160). Pound extends Hulme's metaphor further, to offer a transformation (and validation) of the artist as embodying the certitude of science through the exactitude of their language. Such language is, as Lowell contends, 'hard and clear, never blurred nor indefinite', a recommendation which rehearses Pound's mandate to 'Consider the way of the scientists rather than the way of an advertising agent for a new soap' when engaged in literary composition.⁵⁸

Despite Imagism's insistence upon the accurate use of language as central to artistic credibility, Imagist texts demonstrate a simultaneous tacit questioning of this ostensible authority, exemplified by Lowell's poem 'Venus Transiens'.⁵⁹ The opening lines offer a negotiation between the established traditions of visual art, and the capacity of text to transcend this historical imagining. The poem animates the originally static image of Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, a modulation suggested by Lowell's initial use of the verb 'topped', which is strengthened, granted the immediacy of the present through the evocation of Venus 'Drifting shoreward | On her plaited shell'.⁶⁰ The failure of graphic art to adequately signify the object of its representation is asserted through Lowell's description of the 'painted rosebuds' created by Botticelli. Their presence as mimesis, as artifice, is signalled through the text's deliberate recognition of the fact that they are 'painted' – they are not real.

⁵⁸ (*Some Imagist Poets*, p. vii; 'A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste', p. 203)

⁵⁹ It is important to qualify a classification of 'Venus Transiens' as a product of Imagism by noting the movement's deliberate representation of its members as aggregated according to their artistic similarities, rather than by an adherence to a preordained aesthetic orthodoxy: 'We wish it to be clearly understood that we do not represent an exclusive artistic sect; we publish our work together because of mutual artistic sympathy' (*Some Imagist Poets*, p. vii).

⁶⁰ 'Venus Transiens', in *Some Imagist Poets: An Anthology* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915), p. 81.

While questioning Botticelli's artistic authority, the poem offers an evaluation of the basis of its own means of representation, suggested through a comparison of graphic and textual art. In comparing the painted Venus with the focus of the poem's subject matter – the innominate 'you' – the text subverts its own claims to representational accuracy through a shift in emphasis:

the words I blow about you
 To cover your too great loveliness
 As with a gauze
 Of misted silver (p. 81)

These lines demonstrate a nexus – an Imagist complex – of antitheses. The text's explicit comparison between Botticelli's capacity to meaningfully represent the sign 'Venus' and the narrator's handling of the concept ('Was Botticelli's vision | Fairer than mine' (p. 81)) is undermined by a latent questioning of its own value *as* text, of its ability to encode anything at all. Words are accorded insubstantiality; they are framed at once as exhalations, and as objects light enough to be transmitted via breath. Simultaneously, and despite their ethereality, words act as a screen, obscuring the object with which they are engaged in representing. They are 'a gauze', at once transparent but palpable, a suggestion of combined solidity and intangibility which is reinforced through the metaphor of 'misted silver' and its combined suggestion of vapour and metal (p. 81).

The poem's conclusion offers a reiteration of its questioning of text's representative capabilities, suggested in the narrative voice's admission of partiality: 'For *me* [my emphasis] | you stand poised | In the blue and buoyant air' (p. 81). The text's encoding of the motif of 'Venus' – an encoding always already mindful of

Botticelli's painting – is frustrated in its attempt to create an authoritative depiction, a failure indicated by the suggestion of a spatial distancing. The real Venus, the poem implies, lies beyond the reach of a definitive artistic manipulation, through her location in the sky, or in the sea, while the narrator remains, relegated to the status of a shore-bound spectator and denied full contact with the object of representation: 'the waves which precede you | Ripple and stir | The sands at my feet' (p. 82).

'Venus Transiens' provides a localised example of the problems haunting literary modernism's recommendation of scientific rigour – and of the metaphors of science – in the legitimisation of its cultural products. The text's status as an Imagist poem (acknowledging the fluidity of Imagism as an artistic movement), as emblematic of a new, aspired-to precision in language, tells against the poem's struggle to identify and articulate its own meaning. This difficulty is enacted in a questioning of the medium upon which the poem is dependent for articulation. The modernist *agon* of a desired exactitude of language, operating in tandem with a poetic meaning which is inherently resistant to definitive critical exegesis (and consequently, reduction), generates a process in which meaning, the attempt of a text to enclose and evoke its subject matter through language, vaporises into metaphorical assertion.

The modernist drive to mobilise scientific models, to adopt the language of the laboratory to grant legitimacy and precision to poetic composition, finds explicit expression in T. S. Eliot's influential essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'. Eliot echoes Pound's demand for empirical rigour through his assertion that 'art may be said to approach the condition of science', or less equivocally, that 'it is useful [...] not to compare poetry to science, but to start out with the view that poetry *is* a

science'.⁶¹ This assertion of equivalence, in this instance, not only reifies the producers of literary texts as guided by scientific objectivity, but also reaffirms the value – and scientific credibility – of the nascent discipline of literary criticism. Crucially, in terms of the essay's intended readership (that is to say, an audience more likely engaged with aesthetic concerns, rather than composed of scientific professionals), Eliot's appropriation of science to support poetic production and discrimination is framed as an inherently literary framing of the concept. The essay's chemically-inspired metaphor of the reaction of platinum with oxygen and sulphur dioxide is clearly 'scientific', even if, as David Ward notes, it does not engage with 'the activity, or the method, or the philosophy of science, but what happens on the laboratory bench; that is, the most obvious kind of material or evidence with which a scientist has to deal'.⁶²

Eliot's awareness of the selectivity of his scientific reference, and his desire to borrow the notional objectivity of science without engaging with the wider apparatus of scientific thought, is suggested by his explicit framing of science as metaphor for literary composition.⁶³ As he points out, the equivalence of a chemical reaction to the creation of poetry within the poet's mind is 'a suggestive analogy', but it is not the process of aesthetic production itself ('Tradition and the Individual Talent', p. 47). Nor does the rhetoric of the laboratory, of molecular transformation, map seamlessly onto the language of aesthetics. This deficiency is alluded to by Eliot

⁶¹ T. S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1920), pp. 42–53 (p. 47); T. S. Eliot, 'Modern Tendencies In Poetry', *Shama'a*, April 1920, 9–18 (p. 9).

⁶² David Ward, *T. S. Eliot Between Two Worlds: A Reading of T. S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 52–53.

⁶³ The scientific legitimacy of Eliot's use of chemical imagery to evoke literary production is further destabilised by the questionable accuracy of the reaction he describes, dismissed as a 'howler in elementary chemistry' by Michael Roberts in his review of Eliot's *Selected Essays*, (*Aldephi*, V, (Nov. 1932), p.141-4), quoted in *Einstein's Wake*, p. 135.

later in his essay, when he switches to an alternative mode of metaphysical discourse to approach the problem of poetic activity: ‘The point of view which I am struggling to attack is perhaps related to the metaphysical theory of the substantial unity of the soul’ (p. 50). As Judith Brown points out, Eliot’s chemical imagery is also modified throughout the text, as the metaphor attempts to fully evoke the object of its representation (*Glamour in Six Dimensions*, p. 32).

Eliot’s analogy of catalytic reaction highlights literary modernism’s recruitment of science to mark a watershed between its own cultural practices and the Georgian and Romantic models which preceded it. In addition, the volatility of this metaphor, which shifts conceptual ground throughout the essay, alludes to the wider problem of anatomising a literary text to expose its inner workings. As Eliot demonstrates, this ambition invites recourse to analogy or similitude to describe poetic effects, typified by the invocation of the empyreal to suggest the relationship between subject and object, and the role of language in negotiating this divide, and ultimately, of divining the poetic meaning of a text. Eliot’s essay ‘From Poe To Valéry’ offers an affirmation of the concept of the poem as a holistic system, in contrast to the will-to-scientific objectivity which provides the dominant critical conceit of ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’. The poem, the aesthetic object, simply *is*, Eliot implies, and is not (meaningfully) reducible to a series of components identifiable as ‘form’, ‘theme’ or, in this case ‘subject matter’: ‘A poem may employ several subjects, combining them in a particular way; and it may be meaningless to ask ‘What is the subject of the poem?’ From the union of several subjects there appears, not another subject, but the poem’.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ T. S. Eliot, ‘From Poe To Valéry’, in *To Criticize the Critic, and Other Writings* (Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), pp. 27–42 (p. 39).

Eliot's retreat into holism in the face of an apparently irreducible critical problem – how to meaningfully isolate the constituent elements of a literary text when its 'meaning' resides within its totality of affect – suggests the moment at which his investment in the language of science to support the ideal of a rigorous model of literary production becomes unstable and uncooperative as a metaphorical resource. Eliot's willingness to recruit the language of mysticism in tandem with the rhetoric of empiricism alludes to the wider accommodation by literary modernism of those ideological formations notionally antithetical to modern science. Modernism's preoccupation with anti-rationalism, and consequently, with the anti-cognitive and ineffable, runs counter to (limiting) critical designations of its aesthetic practices as marking an absolute rejection of Romanticism. Existing in parallel to T. E. Hulme's prophecy that the birth of modernism would inaugurate 'a period of dry, hard, classical verse' (*Speculations*, p. 133), characterised by its rejection of the mimetic in favour of the abstract, was an equally powerful fascination with paganism and mythic structures. The repository of myths offered by James Frazer in *The Golden Bough* was exploited by (among others) Eliot in *The Wasteland* and points to a desire to engage with the numinous as well as with the apparent realities offered by scientific discourse. As Leon Surette notes:

there existed a modernist *Weltanschauung* shared by occultism, Nietzscheans, Wagnerians, anthropology, philosophy of history and literary modernism [...] This claim flies in the face of the standard view [...] that modernism was a turn away from the mysticism and emotionalism of Romanticism and towards the hard, dry, clear edges of classicism.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Leon Surette, *The Birth of Modernism: Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, and the Occult* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), p. 29.

Modernism's engagement with the apparently irreconcilable paradigms of science and mysticism reflects the broader heterogeneity of its interests – which admitted the commingling of micro-cosmic polarities, to adopt the terminology of Wyndham Lewis – an attribute which reflects the plurality of modernism itself.⁶⁶ Literary modernism's adoption and assimilation of apparently antithetical narrative and metaphorical structures was paralleled by the willingness of scientists to embrace apparently illogical formulations, or interrelatedly, to acknowledge the apparent irrationality of modern science. Eliot's co-option of the discipline of chemistry in support of aesthetics is complemented by the comparable engagement of industrial chemists with the irrationality of the occult. For example, Aleister Crowley's interest in chemistry has been noted by Mark Morrisson, who cites the former's induction into the occult practices of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn as a direct consequence of contact with contemporaneous industrial chemists such as George Cecil Jones.⁶⁷ In turn, as I have argued, this conflation of incompatibilities is exemplified by the categorisation of perfume within modern culture. That is, a commercial product created by the dexterity of industrial chemists, yet simultaneously credited as an aesthetic object, and consequently, persistently co-opted as a metaphor for an ineffability inhering within legitimate art.

Chemistry's viability as a scientific system amenable to aesthetic appropriation can be traced to its interrelationship with alchemy, which combined the terminology of scientific investigation in its descriptions of apparatus designed to distil or catalyse compounds, but which also offered a wider repertory of practices and rituals than those admitted within the domain of modern science. Crucially,

⁶⁶ Eugene Lunn, *Marxism and Modernism: An Historical Study of Lukács, Brecht, Benjamin, and Adorno* (London: Verso, 1985), p. 33.

⁶⁷ Mark S. Morrisson, *Modern Alchemy: Occultism and the Emergence of Atomic Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 45.

alchemy's status as a progenitor of chemistry (and of modern medicine and pharmacology) offered an interrogation of empiricism, by implicitly underlining the status of modern science as an historical construct built upon the 'irrational' project of the occult. Indeed, a review of Floyd Darrow's *The Story of Chemistry* by *The New York Times* in 1928 suggests a well-established recognition of modern chemistry's indebtedness to alchemy: 'the relation of alchemy to modern chemistry has been traced over and over again'.⁶⁸ However, the hierarchical relationship suggest by this linkage, which suggest the transcendence of alchemy by empirical science, is subverted by modernism's persistent assertion of chemistry, perfumery and alchemy as cognate enterprises, or of the chemist and alchemist as interchangeable figures. George Sylvester Viereck, questioning the empirical credibility of psychoanalysis in 'Is Psycho-Analysis a Science?' (1925), additionally proposes that 'Modern chemistry revives the hopes of the alchemists', an association stated more emphatically by *The Literary Digest* in 1905, that as a consequence of investigations into the radioactive properties of uranium, 'The alchemist became the chemist, and the chemist has become the alchemist'.⁶⁹ Central to this elision was the apparently limitless ingenuity displayed by industrial chemists in their formulation of artificial odours, which, as noted, accordingly transformed the manufacture of perfume at the turn of the twentieth century. In time, *The Literary Digest* predicts in

⁶⁸ Waldemar Kaempffert, 'Mr. Darrow's "Story of Chemistry" Is Up-to-the-Minute"', *The New York Times Book Review*, 4 March 1928, p. 8 (p. 8) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/104312902?accountid=14664>> [accessed 1 February 2016].

⁶⁹ George Sylvester Viereck, 'Is Psycho-Analysis a Science?', *The Forum*, March 1925, p. 304 <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Forum-1925mar-00302>> [accessed 1 February 2016]; Anon, 'Modern Alchemy', *The Literary Digest*, 6 May 1905, 661–62 (p. 661) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LiteraryDigest-1905may06-00661>> [accessed 1 February 2016].

1920, chemists ‘will discover and synthesize the refreshing odor of the sea-borne breeze, the exhilarating fragrance abounding within the forest after a warm rain’.⁷⁰

The framing of such a development within an as yet unrealised futurity is, of course, granted extensive fictional expression in *Brave New World* through the novel’s extensive repertory of ersatz odours. However, adjunct to the proliferation of perfumes as manifestations of rational science was the inaccessibility of such science – at least in its unmediated form – to the lay reader, a communicative liability which suggests an accompanying need for an enabling analogy or ‘expository metaphor’, as Whitworth notes (*Einstein’s Wake*, p. 231). Alchemy’s foundational association with the transmutation of base metals into gold offered a ready correlative for industrial chemistry’s transformation of coal-tar derivatives into such diverse products as luxury perfumes or explosives.⁷¹ Interrelatedly, alchemy’s popular connotation of the irrational, of a mystic body of knowledge available to a privileged and enlightened minority was recruited in the marketing of perfume, to suggest the exclusivity of the product it was co-opted to advertise. For example, the promotion of the perfume powder ‘Evening In Paris’ (1942) entailed a direct appeal to alchemy as an authorising construct, supplemented by a reference to the congruity of odour and music. The advertising copy notes the ‘alchemy of a lovely fragrance about her, part of her – a lyrical aura singing her beauty in perfume’.⁷² Alchemy’s utility as a metaphorical resource to suggest the penumbral presence of glamour

⁷⁰ Anon, ‘Duplicating Nature’, *The Literary Digest*, 10 January 1920, 94, 96–98 (p. 98) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LiteraryDigest-1920jan10-00046:84>> [accessed 2 February 2016].

⁷¹ Anon, ‘Explosives and Perfumes Are Cousins’, *The Literary Digest*, 13 November 1920, 127, 129–30 (p. 127) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LiteraryDigest-1920nov13-00091:117>> [accessed 2 February 2016].

⁷² Anon, ‘Evening for Two Means.. Evening in Paris’, *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, 27 March 1942, p. 3 (p. 3) <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0000273/19420327/032/0003>> [accessed 3 February 2106].

associated with a manufactured perfume is offered cognate expression in the juxtaposition of alchemist and perfumer as cognate figures. ‘The Magic of Perfume’ (1935) evokes the perfumer as a collector of rare and costly odour objects, an implicitly retrograde designation, given the rapid growth of artificially-derived fragrances throughout the modern era: ‘Lumps of ambergris, and strange smelling pastes from Tibet and Abyssinia [...] combine to make the laboratory as romantic as the tower of an old time alchemist’.⁷³

The remainder of this chapter will read the modernist representation of perfume against alchemy’s consonant placement as an intermediary between the desired objectivity attending modern science, and an enabling, non-rational aesthetic subjectivity. These concerns, as I will demonstrate, find expression in the poetry of H. D.. *Trilogy* recruits the proto-scientific terminology of the alchemists through the text’s repeated references to chemical apparatus, typified by the crucible as a locus of dissolution and transmutation: ‘Now polish the crucible | and in the bowl distill [...]’.⁷⁴ These references echo the earlier, punning ascription of chemical properties (and consequently, the sanctioning authority of science) to literary composition proposed by *Some Imagist Poets*: ‘concentration is of the very essence of poetry’ (p. vii). However, despite this assertion of the language of the laboratory, *Trilogy* rehearses the ambiguity of alchemy’s relationship with science through its injunction to abandon empiricism in the pursuit of knowledge; ‘the alchemist’s key’, *Trilogy* states, ‘the elixir of life, the philosopher’s stone | is yours if you surrender | sterile logic, trivial reason’ (p. 40). The text’s circumscription of logic as representative of an inherently limited system of meaning, exemplified by the discourse of science, in

⁷³ E. F., ‘The Magic of Perfume’, *The Nottingham Evening Post*, 23 November 1935, p. 4 (p. 4) <<http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000321/19351123/010/0004>> [accessed 3 February 2016].

⁷⁴ H. D., *Trilogy* (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1997), p. 71.

turn suggests a gap in understanding receptive to competing doctrines – ‘occult lore’ – and their viability as a means of illumination (p. 40).

This imperative to embrace non-rational models of understanding does not, the text implies, represent a regressive adoption of mythic archetypes. Rather, *Trilogy* suggests that the need to transcend reliance upon established epistemological constructions of knowledge emerges as a consequence of the uncertainties of a particular historical moment. The circumstances of the poems’ composition – the late years of the Second World War – offer themselves as an obvious source of personal and national upheaval, but the text’s description of destabilisation offers itself as equally evocative of advances in modern atomic physics. The unsettling possibilities offered by relativity, through its interpretation as superseding established conceptions of an objective universe, are here represented as an enabling rather than a traumatic event. In addition, this framing valorises the figure of the independently-minded enquirer: ‘this is the age of the new dimension, | dare, seek, seek further, dare more’ (*Trilogy*, p. 40). Consequent to this appeal to innovation – a mandate which echoes earlier modernist demands for aesthetic ingenuity – is a process of admixture and transmutation, suggested through the metaphor of alchemy in *Trilogy*. Central to this process of reinvention is the dissolution of existing categories – aesthetic and scientific – as they ‘melt down and integrate’ (p. 63). This chemical transformation is elided with the text’s creative interrogation of existing poetic practices, enacted through a plea to Hermes Trismegistus, the patron of alchemists and a purported mythological fusion of the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god Thoth.⁷⁵ The text’s invocation to the deity to ‘re-invoke, re-create’ is framed by an awareness, reiterated throughout *Trilogy*, of the transformative capacities of

⁷⁵ Garth Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind*, Mythos (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 18.

language, suggested through its punning assertion that ‘his metal is quicksilver’ (p. 63). This positing of an original linguistic instability obtains further resonance through the poem’s linkage of alchemical reaction with semantic variation:

Now polish the crucible
 and in the bowl distill
 a word most bitter, *marah*,
 a word bitterer still, *mar* (p. 71)

The modification and contraction of the word ‘marah’ is elided with the process of distillation, a transformation which is further suggestive of chemical alteration through its evocation of increased intensity accompanying the reduction of ‘marah’ to ‘mar’. The act of distillation renders the word ‘bitterer still’, comparable to the concentration of an element or compound resultant from distillation. The text extends verbal and chemical alteration through its repeated incantation:

Now polish the crucible
 and set the jet of flame
 under, till *marah-mar*
 are melted, fuse and join
 and change and alter,
 mer, mere, mère, mater, Maia, Mary (p. 71)

Here, linguistic signs are ascribed the tangibility of solid objects in their consecutive melting and fusion, a local metaphorical assertion which underlines the text’s broader concern with verbal transmutation. Consequent upon the commingling of ‘marah’ and ‘mar’ is the multilingual transformation from ‘mer’ as a transitional

term between ‘mar’ and ‘mere’, to its final rendering as a proper noun in the form of Mary. ‘Mer’, the initial word of this sequence, offers itself as suggestively ambiguous, or more accurately, its ambiguity rehearses the motif of transition – and of liminality – which preoccupies the text, and is shaped by the metaphor of alchemy and chemical reaction. ‘Mer’, in this context, in addition to resonating with the poem’s later allusion to Mary as the ‘Star of the Sea’ is more obliquely evocative of the terminology of chemistry and biology, demonstrated through its use as an affix representative of a repeat unit in both disciplines, embodied by the word ‘polymer’. In turn, this chemical reference reinforces the text’s theme of linguistic plurality, through the compound nature of polymers as molecules composed of skeins of repeated structural units, a parallel which echoes the poem’s linear transposition, and shift in meaning, from ‘mer’ to ‘Mary’. This process of semantic transmutation – the transformation of one lexical item through its reaction with another (marah-mar) – underscores the text’s awareness of language as a construct which simultaneously obscures, as well as illuminates, its object(s) of representation.

The lack of clarity attending the representative capabilities of language supports the text’s appeal to alternative modes of apprehension, and its initial rejection of ‘sterile logic’ and ‘sterile invention’. As the narrator asserts: ‘I know, I feel | The meaning that words hide; | they are anagrams, cryptograms’ (p. 53). Words, in this instance, are offered as a prism, through which meaning is refracted and altered, rather than a transparent medium through which significance can pass unimpeded. Here, language’s efforts to represent are depicted as a process of re-encoding. The encrypted meaning within words, the poem suggests, is approached through intuition, rather than logical deduction. Tellingly, this apprehension is not offered as an unravelling of the anagram or cryptogram, but an appreciation of the

contours of a word's significance, despite its verbal cloaking: the poet *feels* the meaning of words as an occult property mediated through an obscuring layer. By contrast, visuality is represented as a characteristically limited mode of perception, a proposition supported by the text's representation of agate, the product of alchemical reaction. The verse advances a specific query – 'What is the jewel colour?' – a question which is met with a circumscribed response, confined to the chromatic attributes of the stone; it is 'green-white, opalescent, | with under-layer of changing blue, | with rose-vein; a white agate' (p. 76).

Trilogy shifts from a recitation of agate's visual properties, to an exploration of its more intangible qualities, represented through the evanescence of odour. Echoing Dufrenne, the stone is ascribed organicity – 'it lives, it breathes' – which is particularised through the language of olfaction. In turn, this evocation mirrors the diffusive capacities of perfume, and the difficulty of fixing locality to odour objects: 'it gives off – fragrance? | I do not know what it gives, | a vibration we can not name' (p. 76). Mirroring the transmutation of 'mer' to 'Mary', the text enacts a slippage in meaning. The poem offers 'fragrance' as an approximation of the essential nature of agate, which is consequently rejected following an admission of narrative incapacity and the deficiencies of language to adequately encode the numinous: 'I do not know what it gives'. The difficulties attending the transmutation of agate into an aesthetic object are presented as a consequence of an original absence of an adequate terminology – 'there is no name for it' – but additionally, of the constraints surrounding literary innovation, exemplified locally through the motif of odour, as a property characteristically evasive of textual evocation: 'I can not invent it' (p. 76, p. 77).

Rejecting the putative authority of nomination (and the subsequent reduction imposed by the act of naming), the narrative disregards descriptive exactitude – the futility of which is suggested by an earlier dismissal of meretricious ‘overworked assonance, nonsense, | juxtaposition of words for words’ sake’ (p. 44). Instead, the text embraces a poetics of approximation, and of a dissolution of the boundary between subject and object. The limited vocabulary associated with odours becomes an enabling, rather than a disabling property, as it serves as a metaphorical resource to highlight the text’s preoccupation with the ethereal and innominate. Odour, the verse implies, is an analogy, but one which is advanced hesitantly as an approximation, rather than as a definitive solution to a narrative problem:

I said, it lived, it gave –
 fragrance – was near enough
 to explain that quality
 for which there is no name (p. 77)

Here, fragrance is co-opted to offer conceptual clarity to that which can be acknowledged, but is resistant to exegesis. This tendency, as I have argued, recurs throughout modernist aesthetics, across a range of artistic disciplines and cultural representations, but is counterbalanced by an entrenched scepticism in relation to the admissibility of odour *as* art. Odour, in other words, fulfils a signficatory function as a prevalent metaphor, while retaining its characteristic ambiguity. While olfaction offers conceptual clarity when deployed in a metaphorical context, it remains defiant of analysis when encountered as a percept. Accordingly, odour encourages a recourse to ostensibly rival sense modalities such as vision and audition when communicating its operation and effects. An analogue for the qualities inherent

within the legitimate work of art, odour is in turn rendered explicable through a correspondent similitude; a ‘capriccio’ of olfactory sensations; the ‘marmoreal, blue-white radiance’ of Chanel No.5 suggested by Luca Turin.

These attributes encourage a return to this study’s postulation of a fundamental affinity between odour and language. The remainder of this thesis will expand upon this interrelationship, by establishing further congruities between the properties of odour and language, but will do so by more closely investigating more familiar, ‘canonical’ exemplars of literary modernism’s encounter with olfaction, shifting away from my broader socio-cultural survey of the placement of perfume within modern culture. Thus, my next chapter will more fully consider the innate metaphoricity of olfactory experience in relation to the writing of Proust. Odour suggests itself as a prevalent metaphor for the intangibilities of aesthetic experience, but equally invites a recourse to metaphor when more directly addressed as an object of representation. Metaphor, to state the obvious, evokes a concept or object by reference to that which it is *not*, an attribute which I propose to read against the placement of synaesthesia within modern culture – that is, the experience of one sense modality through the agency of another. Such a reading provides a neuroscientific context for the interoperability between different artistic forms signalled by odour’s interplay with music and painting. However, I argue that the underlying metaphoricity informing this exchange underscores odour’s deep-seated consonance with language, which is expressed at a fundamental level in the congruity of odour/object and sign/object as binary, yet unstable entities. By placing the representational fallibilities of language at the forefront of my discussion, I will more comprehensively address the question which has emerged in the course of my preceding argument; that of literary modernism’s awareness of the difficulties and

creative opportunities encountered in the encoding of olfactory perception through the medium of text, and of the rhetorical strategies recruited to address this challenge.

Chapter Four

‘Où l’appréhender?’ holistic perception and the metaphoricity of translation in *A la recherche du temps perdu*

As noted in my introduction, any attempt to examine the engagement of literary modernism with odour is obliged, *pace* Rindisbacher, to consider the writing of Joyce and Proust. My intention, throughout the preceding chapters of this thesis, has been to trace the significance of odour as an object of interest across an array of interdisciplinary networks. This mapping not only demonstrates the hitherto-unremarked breadth and richness of odour’s representation across a range of discursive fields, but also provides an invaluable backdrop when addressing those texts deemed axiomatically relevant to the interrelationship between modernist literature and odour.

My previous chapter established the utility of Benjamin’s postulation of ‘pure language’ and the auratic as a means of signalling an intangible quiddity inhering within the work of art. Thus, I will return to ‘The Task of the Translator’ to lend theoretical context to Proust’s comparable valuation of evanescence as an aesthetic resource. Further reference to Benjamin fruitfully highlights the metaphoricity of translation in *A la recherche du temps perdu*, as evocative not only of the mediation between disparate languages (exemplified by the novel’s disputed status *as* an act of translation), but additionally, of the agency of text in encoding – translating – the experience of sensory perception, a central preoccupation and

declared ambition of the novel. Moreover, as I will demonstrate at the conclusion of this chapter, Proust's correlation of language and the sensorium extends the categorisation of metaphor as a rhetorical effect, to suggest the synaesthesiac interplay of the senses; that is, the (disputed) apprehension of one sense modality through the intercession of another. In the case of *A la recherche*, this interplay is granted extensive (but not exclusive) expression through the asserted congruence of music and olfaction, an association which I will consider in the context of the alleged synaesthesia of the composer Alexander Scriabin.

Reading Joyce and Proust against the socio-cultural foregrounding I have established serves to underscore the situation of these writers in relation to wider cultural conceptions of odour, but also invites closer scrutiny of their institutionalisation as olfactorily-preoccupied modernists, a shared attribute which underscores their more general critical constitution as interrelated figureheads. Eliot, for example, writing in 1941, assesses the significance of Joyce's literary career through a direct comparison with Proust: '*Ulysses* still seems the most considerable work of imagination in English of our time, comparable in importance [...] with the work of Marcel Proust'.¹ More recent scholarship has sustained this juxtaposition; John McCourt notes the 'forceful yoking of Joyce and Proust' as a 'staple of French criticism'.² A thorough investigation of the entwined critical legacies of both writers lies beyond the compass of this thesis; of more immediate relevance is their migration into popular consciousness as coterminous with olfactory experience, a process described by André Benhaïm: "'Proust' has been so much read [...] (that is, has been so well assimilated), that it has transcended the canonical library and has

¹ T. S. Eliot, 'A Message to the Fish', *Horizon*, March 1941, 173–75 (p. 173).

² Jean-Michel Rabaté, 'Paris', in *James Joyce in Context*, ed. by John McCourt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 216–27 (p. 218).

been adopted into the culture at large'.³ This cultural dissemination is exemplified by Proust's co-option by the discourse of neuroscience. Proust is the only literary modernist to have been credited with an eponymous psychological effect; the Proust phenomenon describes the role of olfaction in prompting vivid, highly detailed autobiographical memories.⁴ The incorporation of Proust into neuroscientific terminology reaffirms the embedding of *A la recherche du temps perdu* as a signature text in the representation of odour, but also provides an insight into the ascription of canonical status to the novel. Central to this designation is the presumption of originality informing Proust's allegedly inaugural yoking of olfaction and memory, signalling a moment of discontinuity with previous models. As Jonah Lehrer suggests, rehearsing this attribution, 'One of Proust's deep insights was that our senses of smell and taste bear a unique burden of memory'.⁵ The placement of *A la recherche* as emblematic of a shift away from previous attempts to describe the influence of odour is asserted in early reviews of the novel, which suggest that its publication marked a watershed moment in literary modernism. M. Edmond Jaloux, writing in 1921, offers an initial assertion of Proust's interrelationship with neuroscience and significance as a modernist innovator: 'Proust is clearly one of the

³ *The Strange M. Proust*, ed. by André Benhaïm (London: Legenda, 2009), p. 5.

⁴ The identification and naming of the Proust phenomenon is credited to Simon Chu and John J. Downes (Marieke B. J. Toffolo, Monique A. M. Smeets and Marcel A. van den Hout, 'Proust Revisited: Odours as Triggers of Aversive Memories', *Cognition & Emotion*, 26 (2012), 83–92 (p. 83) <doi:10.1080/02699931.2011.555475>). However, Chu and Downes' paper ('Odour-evoked Autobiographical Memories: Psychological Investigations of Proustian phenomena', *Chemical Senses*, 25 (2000), 111–116 <doi:10.1093/chemse/25.1.111>), does not explicitly claim discovery of the Proust phenomenon, stating that it is already embedded within popular culture: 'Folk wisdom dictates that odours are especially powerful reminders of autobiographical experience, an effect which has become known as the Proust phenomenon' (p. 111).

⁵ Jonah Lehrer, *Proust Was a Neuroscientist* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007), p. 80.

most eminent men of the time [...] It may be said henceforth that there was a psychology before Proust and that there will be one after him'.⁶

However, subsequent critical accounts of Proust's status as a standard-bearer for modernism's engagement with odour have questioned the radicalism of the representation of the olfactory offered by *A la recherche*. Avery Gilbert, suggesting Proust's 'questionable' reputation for psychological accuracy, further discounts the originality of the novel's contribution to literary representations of odour: 'The record is clear, and it does not favor Proust'.⁷ Gilbert cites Edgar Allen Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Oliver Wendell Holmes as literary antecedents who identified the association of memory and odour prior to Proust: 'In American literature the memory-evoking power of smell was a commonplace observation long before *Swann's Way*' (p. 192).

An original paucity of olfactory images within *A la recherche* is suggested by Victor E. Graham, following a detailed statistical analysis of the novel. According to Graham, the frequency of odour-related imagery within the text is dwarfed by a wealth of visually-accented description which constitutes the narrative's dominant mode of perception: 'This examination revealed very clearly the fundamentally visual quality of Proust's images [...] Less than one per cent are gustatory and olfactory'.⁸ Graham identifies a total of 2,827 visual references within the text, compared with a mere 16 which are explicitly olfactory (p. 260). This apparently

⁶ M. Edmond Jaloux, 'Literature', *The Times*, 4 October 1921, p. xiii (p. xiii) <<http://0-find.galegroup.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/ttda/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=leedsuni&tabID=T003&docPage=article&searchType=BasicSearchForm&docId=CS554242372&type=multipage&contentSet=LTO&version=1.0>> [accessed 11 December 2013].

⁷ Avery N. Gilbert, *What The Nose Knows: The Science Of Scent In Everyday Life* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2008), p. 192.

⁸ Victor E. Graham, *The Imagery Of Proust* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966), p. 8.

undeniable discrepancy between the representation of the visual and the olfactory would appear to discount popular conceptions of odour as a central concern within *A la recherche*.

While acknowledging the imbalance between the visual and the odorous suggested by Graham's dissection of the novel, I argue that the quantitative prevalence of visuality within the text does not outweigh the narrative significance with which odour is invested by Proust. The novel's imagery may be typified by visuality but the (relative) scarcity of odour's frequency within *A la recherche* is counterbalanced by the leverage olfaction exerts within the text. Consequently, the narrator suggests that 'cette région où nous éprouvons la qualité des odeurs' ['that region in which we test the quality of odours'] is, accordingly, 'cette région plus intime que celle où nous voyons et où nous entendons' ['that region more intimate than those in which we see and hear'].⁹ This disproportion between an isolated olfactory episode and its narrative significance is exemplified by the image of the madeleine, credited as *the* animating conceit of *A la recherche*: 'With the taste of a *madeleine* dipped in tea Proust creates a universe [emphasis in original]'.¹⁰ Accordingly, the embedding of the madeleine within popular culture recommends it as a starting point from which to examine Proust's representation of the olfactory. The madeleine is persistently referenced as an example of the affective influence of odour, operating in concert with memory. William J. Turkel notes 'smell's close relationship to memory, *à la* Proust's madeleine', yet this isolation of the madeleine as the central olfactory motif within *A la recherche* segregates the image from the

⁹ Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu, A L'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs, I* (Paris: Nouvelle Revue Française, 1918), II, p. 217; Marcel Proust, 'Within a Budding Grove', in *Remembrance Of Things Past*, trans. by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff (New York: Random House, 1932), I, 331–714 (p. 506).

¹⁰ Angel Flores, 'Marcel Proust in Review', *The Bookman*, May 1928, 272–76 (p. 273) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Bookman-1928may-00272>> [accessed 11 February 2016].

complex of contributory sense modalities which frame its presentation within the text.¹¹ This, as I will describe later, is an important qualification, given the novel's asserted congruity between the interplay of percepts and the metaphoricity of language. The madeleine is not exclusively an odorous phenomenon, the narrative suggests; rather, it is primarily a gustatory experience. That is, a composite of the senses of taste, touch and olfaction, an amalgamation suggestive of holistic perception, a sensory (and aesthetic) mode which, as I will demonstrate, is accorded foundational significance throughout *A la recherche*.¹²

The moment of the madeleine is initially presented through the medium of touch, but this haptic impression is rapidly displaced by the narrator's reaction to the cake, rather than the assertion of a specific sense modality:

Mais à l'instant même où la gorgée mêlée des miettes du gâteau toucha mon palais, je tressaillis, attentif à ce qui se passait d'extraordinaire en moi. Un plaisir délicieux m'avait envahi, isolé, sans la notion de sa cause.¹³

[No sooner had the warm liquid, and the crumbs with it, touched my palate than a shudder ran through my whole body, and I stopped, intent upon the extraordinary changes that were taking place. An exquisite pleasure had

¹¹ William J. Turkel, 'Intervention: Hacking History, from Analogue to Digital and Back Again', *Rethinking History*, 15.2 (2011), 287–96 (p. 293) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13642529.2011.564840>>.

¹² The casting of taste as multi-sensorial rather than a distinct sense modality is supported by philosophical descriptions of the sensorium. Kant, for example, suggests smell and taste are interrelated: 'Both senses are closely related to each other, and he who lacks a sense of smell always has only a dull sense of taste' (Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology, History, and Education*, trans. by Günter Zöller and Robert B. Loudon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.49).

¹³ Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu, Du côté de chez Swann* (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1919), I, p. 46.

invaded my senses, but individual, detached, with no suggestion of its origin.¹⁴]

The emergence of the madeleine within *A la recherche* is marked by an emphasis upon objective certainties – the narrator perceives not just *a* cake, but a specific variety: ‘Elle envoya chercher un de ces gâteaux courts et dodus appelés Petites Madeleines qui semblent avoir été moulés dans la valve rainurée d’une coquille de Saint-Jacques’ (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 46) [‘She sent out for one of those short, plump little cakes called ‘petites madeleines,’ which look as though they had been moulded in the fluted scallop of a pilgrim’s shell’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 34)]. The conspicuous visual specificity of the madeleine’s description – it engenders an *image* of the object it describes – modulates into a dissolution of narrative authority, as the text acknowledges the representational challenge of rendering the experience of subjective perception as the madeleine is eaten. The ‘plaisir délicieux’ it elicits is ambiguous, resistant to textual enclosure – there is, the text admits, ‘sans la notion de sa cause’. The holistic apprehension of the madeleine – it is tasted, smelled, touched and seen – can be acknowledged, but the source of the affective intensity associated with its perception remains elusive, prompting the narrator to ask: ‘D’où venait-elle? Que signifiait-elle? Où l’appréhender?’ (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 46) [‘Whence did it come? What did it signify? How could I seize upon and define it?’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 34)

The text’s self-reflexive commentary highlights an underlying concern of *A la recherche*, that of the narrative’s drive to satisfactorily represent the experience of subjective consciousness. This project abuts the logical structuring and abstraction

¹⁴ Marcel Proust, ‘Swann’s Way’, in *Remembrance Of Things Past*, trans. by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff (New York: Random House, 1932), I, 3–325 (p. 34).

upon which text is dependent for its intelligibility, against the non-verbal, pre-logical nature of sensory perception, of which the olfactory is a key example. The ambition of *A la recherche*, the narrative implies, is to act as a point of mediation between that which is idiosyncratic and inimical to analysis – recalling *Trilogy*'s postulation of a 'quality | for which there is no name' – and the rhetorical pressures inherent in creating a communally accessible text. The act of writing marks a moment of intervention – 'I' apprehender' – and a correspondent reduction of the flow of experience entailed by the process of selection and omission inherent in the construction of a narrative. This casting of narrative production as a negotiation between private perception and its accessibility within a wider linguistic community is noted by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in *The Social Construction of Reality*:

An objectively available sign system bestows a status of incipient anonymity on the sedimented experiences by detaching them from their original context of concrete individual biographies and making them generally available to all who share, or may share in the future, in the sign system in question. The experiences thus become readily transmittable.¹⁵

Throughout *A la recherche* the centrality of the perceiving subject is asserted, through the narrator's discounting of external objects as constitutive of reality: 'Je m'étais rendu compte que seule la perception grossière et erronée place tout dans l'objet, quand tout est dans l'esprit' ['I realised that only superficial and defective observation attaches all importance to the object, when the mind is everything'].¹⁶ In

¹⁵ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 85.

¹⁶ Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu, Le Temps retrouvé, II* (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1927), VIII, p. 1025; Marcel Proust, 'The Past Recaptured', in

positing the ‘caractère purement mental de la réalité’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 74 [‘the purely mental character of reality’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1040), Proust implicitly locates the narrator as an intermediary, interpretative agent between the objects represented by text, and their successful decoding by the reader, a relationship which tracks the migration of the narrator’s perceptions from private sensations to intelligible narrative. This investment in the narrator as the focus of textual authority within *A la recherche* is offset by the novel’s admission of the inherent unreliability of perception: ‘Certes, il est bien d’autres erreurs de nos sens [...] qui faussent pour nous l’aspect réel de ce monde’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 256) [‘There are, it is true [...] many other errors of our senses which distort for us the true aspect of this world’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1121)]. The apparent paradox contained within this observation – the existence of an ‘aspect réel de ce monde’, existing in parallel with the text’s central structuring principle of subjectivity – is prefigured by *Du côté de chez Swann*, which describes the moment of contact between externality and the perceiving consciousness:

Quand je voyais un objet extérieur, la conscience que je le voyais restait entre moi et lui, lé bordait d’un mince liséré spirituel qui m’empêchait de jamais toucher directement sa matière. (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 81)

[When I saw any external object, my consciousness that I was seeing it would remain between me and it, enclosing it in a slender, incorporeal outline which prevented me from ever coming directly in contact with the material form.

(*Swann’s Way*, p. 63)]

Consciousness, in this instance, is represented as a (partially) obscuring influence, denying full contact with the object of scrutiny, and conflicting with the novel's will-to-apprehend, its desire to segregate and interrogate the flow of perception. Indeed, as Schachtel notes, the etymology of 'perception' – the Latin 'per-cipere', 'to take' – underscores the desire to accord fixity to the observed object, 'to wrest it from the infinite process of world and life, and to fix it at a definite point where we can take hold of it again, recall it, refind it' (*Metamorphosis*, p. 200). Telling, in the light of the casting of *A la recherche* as an olfactorily-influenced text, is Proust's recruitment of visual imagery as the primary sense modality in the construction of ontogenesis. The narrator *sees* the external object but the ensuing inadequacy of a purely visual mode of apprehension prompts recourse to other sense modalities such as touch. The external object, the narrator notes,

se volatilisait en quelque sorte avant que je prisse contact avec elle, comme un corps incandescent qu'on approche d'un objet mouillé ne touche pas son humidité parce qu'il se fait toujours précéder d'une zone d'évaporation. (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 81)

[would volatilise itself in some way before I could touch it, just as an incandescent body which is moved towards something wet never actually touches moisture, since it is always preceded, itself, by a zone of evaporation. (*Swann's Way*, p. 81)]

Extrinsic realities, the text suggests, become diffuse, indeterminate, when encountered by consciousness, or more precisely, by the attempts of consciousness to analyse (and by extension to circumscribe) their essentiality. Meaning – the text's desire to achieve transparent signification of the experience of perception – is

frustrated by a ‘zone of evaporation’, a vanishing point of ambiguity which occludes vision and eludes touch, and is insubmissive to textual enclosure, attributes which recall the modern recruitment of the properties of perfume described in my previous chapter. The text’s attempt to describe this problem enacts the representational difficulties it laments. It is reliant upon analogue – ‘*comme un corps incandescent* [my emphasis]’ – to communicate the limitations of narrative. The act of writing, Proust contends, may strive towards verities, but is always already implicated by a slippage in meaning between the experience of private perception, and its subsequent textual rendering. This interrelationship, and its tacit diminution of the interpretative capabilities of the narrator, is echoed by *Du côté de chez Swann*, in which the essential qualities of external objects are presented as inimical to intellectual enquiry. The text recounts the experience of the narrator – ‘immobile, à regarder, à respirer, à tâcher d’aller avec ma pensée au delà de l’image ou de l’odeur’ (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 165) [‘motionless, gazing, breathing, endeavouring to penetrate with my mind beyond the thing seen or smelt’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 137)]. Attempts to intercept the act of perception, to appropriate it for the purposes of literary discourse, are frustrated by its volatile intransigence. The essential nature of a sensory episode, the text contends, is unstable and evanescent when probed by the consciousness and incorporated within an enclosing narrative.

The ethereal, ambiguous status of subjective perception within *A la recherche* – it can be signalled, but not seized upon or defined – emerges as a central preoccupation of the novel, and offers a means of shifting critical ground, away from the canonically-embedded dyad of *mémoire involuntaire* and odour and their duality

of effect in heightening the experience of recollection.¹⁷ While not discounting the importance of *mémoire involontaire* as a focal motif of *A la recherche*, I argue that an underlying concern with the representative capabilities of language – in particular, its ability to communicate the numinous, epitomised by the olfactory – enjoys comparable significance within Proust’s writing. The primacy attached to language in *A la recherche* is suggested by *Le Temps retrouvé*, in which it is identified by the narrator as the key indicator of artistic merit, rather than any aesthetic theories which it serves to transmit. *What* is being said, the text implies, is of secondary importance to *how* it is being said: ‘peut-être est-ce plutôt à la qualité du langage qu’au genre d’esthétique qu’on peut juger du degré auquel a été porté le travail intellectuel et moral’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 29) [‘perhaps it is more by the quality of the language used than by the aesthetic principles observed that one can determine to what level an intellectual or moral effort has been carried’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1003)].

The foundational linkage of language and perception as interrelated categories in *A la recherche* is demonstrated by the text’s assertion of the writer and translator as coterminous figures: ‘Le devoir et la tâche d’un écrivain sont ceux d’un traducteur’ (*ibid.*, p. 41) [‘The duty and the task of a writer are those of translator’ (*ibid.*, p. 1009)]. Proust’s equation of writing and translation contains an implicit commentary on the act of writing, negating the presupposition of invention. The translator, after all, does not (generally speaking) create the text which undergoes the process of translation. Instead, the author is characterised as an interpreter, with the process of literary production framed as a response to a structure of existing signs. In

¹⁷ The institution of *mémoire involontaire* as a point of critical focus within *A la recherche* is noted by James Reid: ‘Literary history has tended to memorialize Proust’s novel as a monument to memory’ (James H. Reid, *Proust, Beckett, and Narration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 13).

the case of *A la recherche*, the writer is cast as an enabling intermediary between two domains – an externality composed of subjective sense perceptions – and the medium of text. However, the writer, like the translator, contends Proust, responds to that which is already pre-existent and linguistically inflected: ‘je m’apercevais que pour exprimer ces impressions pour écrire [...] un grand écrivain n’a pas dans le sens courant à l’inventer puisque il existe déjà en chacun de nous, mais à le traduire’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 41) [‘I perceived that, to describe these impressions, to write [...] a great writer does not need to invent it, in the current sense of the term, since it already exists in each one of us, but merely to translate it’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1009)]. The latent presence of the ‘livre essentiel, le seul livre vrai’ (p. 41) [‘that essential book, the only true book’ (p. 1009)], the writing of which is described as the ultimate aesthetic objective of the narrator, at once nullifies the creative power of the artist by negating the value of invention, but offers a compensatory reification. *A la recherche* repositions the writer as the excavator of the ‘seul livre vrai’, an attribution of autonomy to the work of art as pre-existent to its originator, an authorising manoeuvre which accords it natural inevitability, rather than aesthetic contingency. The work of art, the text states: ‘préexistant à nous, nous devons, à la fois parce qu’elle est nécessaire et cachée, et comme nous ferions pour une loi de la nature, la découvrir’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 28) [‘existed prior to us and we should seek to discover it as we would a natural law because it is both necessary and hidden’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1002)]. This ascription of scientific inevitability to the (inevitably) selective and idiosyncratic act of literary composition contrasts with the novel’s wider championing of the value of subjectivity as a pivotal feature of *A la recherche*. The narrator notes: ‘Seule l’impression [...] est un critérium de vérité’ (p. 26) [‘Only the subjective impression [...] is a criterion of truth’ (p. 1001)], an

observation which is qualified by the text's later, stark admission that this 'essence est en partie subjective et incommunicable' (p. 34) ['this essence is in part subjective and cannot be communicated to others' (p. 1005)]. In this instance, the narrative questions the representational capabilities of language by asserting a lack of satisfactory textual analogues for private perceptions.¹⁸ The original art object, present, yet dependent for its realisation upon the subjective intervention of the author, is therefore an unstable resource, existing only in a provisional form as a consequence of its modification into an 'objectively available' medium.

This ambiguity is paralleled by the comparable negotiation between the precursive presence of a text and the opportunities its reception presents for variant decodings within different linguistic systems, none of which can be asserted as a definitive reading. This instability is in turn mirrored by the historical circumstances which frame the production of *A la recherche*. It is a contested text, a literary isotope, reflecting the difficulty facing editors in their efforts to compile an authoritative version of the novel in the light of the extensive revisions made by Proust, and the heterogeneity of sources from which *A la recherche* is compiled. Available manuscripts which comprise *A la recherche* have defied scholarly consensus, as Allen Thiher observes: 'Successive editions have made greater and greater refinements of the text. Points of contention remain about what should be the proper editing of some sections'.¹⁹ The stability of the text is additionally compromised by the threat of hitherto unseen archive material surfacing as a

¹⁸ The possibility of a private language to relay an individual's private percepts is, of course, (sceptically) advanced by Wittgenstein: 'what about the language which describes my inner experiences and which only I myself can understand? How do I use words to stand for my sensations? – As we ordinarily do? Then are my words for sensations tied up with my natural expressions of sensation? In that case my language is not a 'private' one' (*Philosophical Investigations*, p. 91).

¹⁹ Allen Thiher, *Fiction Refracts Science: Modernist Writers from Proust to Borges* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005), p. 101.

consequence of Proust's well-documented productivity: 'Given his [Proust's] idiosyncratic work habits, some new versions of parts of *A la recherche* may turn up and a new critical edition be called for'.²⁰ The original variability of the French text finds correspondent proliferation in translations of *A la recherche*, which in the context of this discussion, I will confine to English interpretations of the novel. In her review of Kilmartin's revised edition of *Remembrance of Things Past*, Germaine Bree contrasts the 'more ornate, 'more poetic' rendition' offered by Moncrieff, with 'Kilmartin's clarification of Proust's complex syntax' (p. 366). Both translations embody a quality which is missing from its rival, a qualification which points to the implicit impossibility of a perfect fidelity of translation. The essentiality of the text – a function (in part) of an unanalysed, evanescent 'poetic' quality and syntactic construction – is resistant to translation, a difficulty demonstrated by Proust's reported dislike of Moncrieff's interpretation of *A la recherche*, an antipathy stemming from the perceived inaccuracy of the title *Remembrance of Things Past*: 'The novelist [Proust] himself protested against the title in a letter he wrote to his English translator only weeks before he died. Scott-Moncrieff had missed, he complained, the "deliberate amphibology" in the French'.²¹ The perceived infelicity of Moncrieff's translation, as reported by Sturrock, does not stem from linear lexical or syntactical inaccuracy. Moncrieff has not selected the 'wrong' English word to represent a counterpart from the linguistic system labelled 'French'. Rather, the objection to the English translation of the title stems from the gnomic nature of the original title: 'There is much to be read, then, into the deceptively plain French title, *A la recherche du temps perdu*' (p. 115). A latent quality of the original French text

²⁰ Germaine Brée, 'Scott Moncrieff's "Remembrance of Things Past" Revisited: Kilmartin's Revised Edition', *Contemporary Literature*, 23 (1982), 365–367 (p. 367) <doi:10.2307/1208160>.

²¹ John Sturrock, *The Word from Paris: Essays on Modern French Thinkers and Writers* (London: Verso, 1998), p.114.

– typified by its title – has failed to find expression within the re-encoding consequent upon translation.

This feature of translation, specifically, its attempts to preserve the aesthetic integrity of a text when transposing it to another linguistic system, invites a return to the writing of Benjamin to provide theoretical context. ‘The Task of the Translator’, offers a guiding rubric for a consideration not only of *A la recherche* as a multi-lingual text, but also of the novel’s drive to meaningfully represent the evaporative, volatile nature of perception exemplified by the apparent incompatibility of olfaction and semantic classification. Although Benjamin initially disparages a (putatively) naïve and reductive sundering of a text’s ‘information’ from a coexistent ‘unfathomable [...] mysterious [...] ‘poetic’ repository of meaning, the presence of a fugitive aesthetic essentiality is implicitly asserted later in his essay (‘The Task of the Translator’, p. 70). Benjamin comments: ‘In all language and linguistic creations there remains in addition to what can be conveyed something that cannot be communicated [...] it is something that symbolizes or something symbolized’ (p. 80). It is helpful at this point to reiterate Wyndham Lewis’s exhortation, cited in Chapter Two, to ‘read between the lines’ in order to expose an impermissible, odour-inflected didactic primitivism. The polemic of *Blasting and Bombardiering* recruits the language of olfaction to signal a discernible, yet indescribable strain of modernism; congruently, Proust co-opts olfaction in *A la recherche* to evoke a disjunction between that which can be conveyed, and that which can be communicated. This gap in signification, the text suggests, is approached through a comparable process of reading – or smelling – between the lines. After receiving a letter from Mme Goupil, the narrator contrasts the rhetorical formalities of the letter, and its restricted expression of sentiment, with its odorous and emotional subtext.

The former, the texts states, constitute ‘palissades’ [‘watertight compartments’], which are breached by genuine, but encoded feeling: ‘des cris de joie, d’admiration, peuvent jaillir comme des fleurs, et des gerbes pencher par-dessus la palisade leur parfum odorant’ [‘cries of joy, of admiration may spring up like flowers, and their clusters waft over the barriers their entrancing fragrance’].²² In this instance, the novel’s conceit rehearses the formal properties of odour, and its capacity to evade segregation, but also posits a suggestive congruence between the latent yet detectable properties of a text, and the incommunicability of olfactory experience.

As noted in my previous chapter, the exact nature of Benjamin’s postulated ‘pure language’ remains elusive. Here, it is comparable with Proust’s evaporative zone of perception – it can be sensed, acknowledged, but escapes full textual exegesis – and mobilises a similar terminology of rarefaction to suggest its presence. It is, Benjamin notes, echoing the chemical accenting of Proust’s analogy of perception, ‘concealed in concentrated fashion in translations’ (p. 77), yet decompresses, volatilises during the act of translation: ‘[translation’s] goal is undeniably a final, conclusive, decisive stage of all linguistic creation. In translation the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air’ (p. 75). However, Benjamin’s analogy is haunted by an implicit contradiction. The closure identified with the act of translation (‘final, conclusive, decisive’) is contrasted with the suggestion of movement within the latter half of the conceit; there is no assertion of an upper limit to the atmosphere of ‘higher and purer linguistic air’ through which the translated text rises and dissipates.

²² Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu, Albertine disparue, II* (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1925), VII, p. 60; Marcel Proust, ‘The Sweet Cheat Gone’, in *Remembrance Of Things Past*, trans. by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff and F. A. Blossom (New York: Random House, 1932), II, 675–868 (p. 798).

The attempt to render ‘that element in a translation which goes beyond transmittal of subject matter’ (p. 76), prompts a recourse to metaphoricity, a narrative reflex mirrored by Proust’s local image of the incandescent body, and the wider strategies deployed within *A la recherche* to signify incommunicable experiences, of which subjective consciousness is a key example. ‘The Task of the Translator’ twice identifies a ‘nucleus’ of ‘pure language’ (p. 76, p. 80), but is unable to effect critical ingress into the concept.²³ The text merely reiterates the problem – ‘it [pure language] inhabits linguistic creations only in symbolized form’ (p. 80) – or recruits metaphorical language to suggest what the pure language inhabiting successful translation is *like*, but not what it *is*: ‘While content and language form a certain unity in the original, like a fruit and its skin, the language of the translation envelops its content like a royal robe with ample folds’ (p. 76). The similetic language of Benjamin’s description underlines the signficatory gap consequent upon the act of translation. The text from which the translation is sourced is accorded an organic integrity, which remains intact despite the transposition of the narrative into another lexical domain. The ‘fruit and its skin’ remain an indissoluble whole, whereas the text of translation assumes the character of an external appurtenance, which fails to hug the contours of the source text with the close fidelity of a skin. It is, Benjamin notes, a ‘robe with ample folds’, echoing my earlier reference to Dufrenne’s cognate image of the evanescent, perfumed ‘genuine garment’ characteristic of a poem’s essential meaning. Benjamin’s ‘robe’ is connotative of pockets of ambiguity, lacunae where the translated text has failed to transmit the

²³ By contrast, Ricoeur suggests the futility of Benjamin’s ‘pure language’, and endorses a ‘happiness associated with translating’ derived from a celebration of rival linguistic codes, rather than a putative underlying and unrealisable harmony: ‘In spite of the agonistics that make a drama of the translator’s task, he can find his happiness in what I would like to call linguistic hospitality’ (*On Translation*, trans. by Eileen Brennan (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 10).

authentic – and elusive – essentiality of the original. The quality of the translation – its adherence to the syntax of the original, or its ‘ornate’ or ‘poetic’ language – is always already encoded as extrinsic to the maternal text, and (following the logic of Benjamin’s analogy) occludes – ‘envelops’ – as much as it illuminates.

It is, however, necessary to qualify the parallels between the handling of the trope of translation by Benjamin and Proust by highlighting the former’s distinction between the creative composition of a text, and its translation. Proust’s elision of the two activities as coterminous is explicitly rejected by ‘The Task of the Translator’, with translation segregated from the production of literature as ‘a different effort altogether’ (‘The Task of the Translator’, p. 77). Benjamin attributes autonomy to the artist as a locus of aesthetic production – ‘spontaneous, primary, graphic’ – in contrast to the figure of the translator as inevitably dependent upon a source text, ‘derivative, ultimate, ideational’ (p. 77). Yet, I argue, the congruencies between the framing of the role of translator by both writers are supported by their identification of a lack of fixity common to language and percepts. The ‘subjective memories’ and ‘external objects’ from which the narrative of *A la recherche* is derived are presented as inimical to authorial control – their resistance to manipulation and schematisation is presented as evidence of their suitability for their textual enclosure: ‘leur premier caractère était que je n’étais pas libre de les choisir, qu’elles m’étaient données telles quelles. Et je sentais que ce devait être la griffe de leur authenticité’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 25) [‘their first characteristic was that I was not free to choose them but they came to my mind pell-mell. And I felt that that must surely be the hall mark of their genuineness’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1001)].

Pivotal to Benjamin’s structuring of the interrelationship between an original text and its interlingual transposition is the presumption of a fundamental similarity

informing the operation of all languages. ‘The Task of the Translator’ describes the ‘totality of their [languages’] intentions supplementing each other: pure language’ (p. 76). This is a significant point, when considered in the context of my broader contention of the underlying congruence of language and olfaction. Benjamin’s emphasis upon a similarity informing the operation of ostensibly rival linguistic systems for harmonious effect invites comparison with the co-operative interplay of different sense modalities valorised by modernist aesthetics, demonstrated, for example, in the mandate for perceptual holism advanced by Italian Futurist aesthetics. I will discuss the progression of this interrelationship, in which sense modalities shift from mutual augmentation, to *become* each other, at the close of this chapter, in relation to modernism’s encoding of synaesthesia. For now, I will stay with ‘The Task of the Translator’, to more fully illuminate the comparability of text and sensory perception advanced by Proust.

This universality of intention, ‘The Task of the Translator’ suggests, is not explicitly articulated, but – revealingly – is signalled, alluded to, by the act of translation: ‘Translation [...] ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the central reciprocal relationship between languages. It cannot possibly reveal or establish this hidden relationship itself; but it can represent it by realizing it in embryonic or intensive form’ (p. 73). Translation, the act of interpretation, is framed by Benjamin as an act evocative of encryption, particularised by the recourse to metaphoricity prompted by the narrator’s efforts to suggest a gnomic, evanescent quality embodied by the source text – its ‘poetic’ meaning, but which is also enforced by an original lack of equivalence between signs resident within different linguistic systems, a problem heightened in the case of literary language. As Jakobson bleakly suggests:

‘poetry by definition is untranslatable’.²⁴ This intractable problem of difference, expressed locally by the lack of interchangeability between individual lexical items, in conjunction with the translation of ‘literary’ texts, is addressed by Benjamin’s identification not of languages, but *Language* as a unitary construct, an aggregation of disparate linguistic codes.

Benjamin’s identification of an unarticulated universally intelligible language emerges within *A la recherche*, through the prospect of an underlying and transcendent source of signification, with which the writer is tasked to communicate: ‘s’il est un moyen pour nous d’apprendre à comprendre ces mots oubliés; ce moyen ne devons-nous pas l’employer, fallût-il pour cela les transcrire d’abord en un langage universel’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 60) [‘if there exists a way for us to learn to understand these forgotten words, should we not employ it, even though it be necessary first to transcribe them into a universal language’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1019)]. Proust’s framing of memory, in this instance, is grounded in language, through the text’s identification of ‘mots oubliés’, and its correspondent assertion that the repertory of recollections which form the subject matter of the novel are not composed of inchoate, inarticulable percepts awaiting narrative enclosure, but are always already implicated by language. This is, as I will demonstrate later in this chapter, and in relation to Joyce in my concluding chapter, an important contention when considered in the context of odour’s notional alienation from language, exemplified by a lack of available descriptors for olfactory experience. The suggestion of a reciprocal encounter between perception and text, and of reality as linguistically rooted, is advanced throughout *A la recherche*, with reality defined as inscriptive in character, with which the writer is tasked to translate:

²⁴ Roman Jakobson, ‘On Linguistic Aspects Of Translation’, in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. by Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 113–18 (p. 118).

‘Le livre intérieur de ces signes inconnus [...] Ce livre, le plus pénible de tous à déchiffrer, est aussi le seul que nous ait dicté la réalité’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, pp. 25-26) [‘the subjective book of these strange signs [...] This book, the most difficult of all to decipher, is also the only one dictated to us by reality’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1001)].

The narrator’s use of ‘transcrire’, rather than ‘traduire’ – is revealing in its suggestion of the mechanical representation of one text by the script of another, rather than the transfer of an elusive ‘meaning’ associated with the act of translation. However, the exact nature of Proust’s postulated ‘universal language’ remains unarticulated, but is suggested, like the transcendent and ethereal ‘pure language’ of Benjamin by a shift from fragmentation to consolidation. The production of literary discourse is legitimised, within the context of *A la recherche*, through the author’s meticulous accumulation and recollection of documentary details, rather than an inaugural act of imaginative speculation. As the narrator suggests: ‘quand il [the writer] écrit, il n’est pas un geste de ses personnages, un tic, un accent, qui n’ait été apporté à son inspiration par sa mémoire’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 54) [‘when he writes, there is not a gesture of one of his characters, not a single nervous mannerism or intonation that was not suggested to him by his memory’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1016)]. Implicitly asserted within this model of aesthetic production endorsed by the novel is the intelligibility conferred by a movement away from the aggregation of minutiae, to the general principles embodied by ostensible trivialities, Proust’s ‘des riens puérils’ (p. 55). Accordingly, the novel contends, the artist may amass a wealth of observations – ‘l’accent avec lequel avait été dite une phrase et l’air de figure et le mouvement d’épaules’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 55) [‘the tone in which a sentence had been spoken, the facial expression and movement of the shoulders’ (*The Past*

Recaptured, p. 1016)] – but these particularities are only admissible as art if they are universally intelligible. In turn, this ambition tacitly recommends *A la recherche* as transcendent of the language – particularised by French – upon which the novel is dependent for its successful translation and transmission. This process follows the logic of the argument advanced by Benjamin outlined within ‘The Task of the Translator’, in which the (ideal) act of translation seeks to identify the interrelated intentionality resident within all language – and the consequent identification of the ‘pure language’ of aesthetic essentiality.

In the case of *A la recherche*, this universality of meaning, transcendent of competing linguistic systems, is extended to encompass the interplay of ostensibly rival modes of artistic expression. For example, the novel’s castigation of literature produced under the influence of populist or nationalist concerns is supported by the narrator’s invocation of painters such as Watteau and La Tour (*Le Temps retrouvé*, III, pp. 38-39) [*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1008]. This manoeuvre, as I will argue later, finds cognate expression in the novel’s synaesthesiac co-mingling of sense modalities, in which audition, vision and olfaction are harmonised for aesthetic effect. Here, by recruiting graphic and literary art to support a unitary aesthetic manifesto, guided by an overriding drive to identify and render the universal from an accrual of particularities, the narrative effectively offers a meta-language of art, an approach signalled by capitalisation; the text speaks of ‘les lois de l’Art’ (p. 38). This local erasure of difference between rival aesthetic domains, in which they are subsumed in the pursuit of a common objective, is offset by the novel’s broader awareness of the apparent incompatibilities governing the interrelationship between disparate modes of artistic expression. The writer, suggests the narrator, envies the painter – ‘Le littérateur envie le peintre’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 54) – as a

consequence of the latter's ability to guide the production of their work with the aid of preliminary sketches: 'il [the writer] aimerait prendre des croquis, des notes, il est perdu s'il le fait' (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 54) ['he would like to take sketches and notes – he is ruined as a writer if he does so' (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1016)]. The writer is instead reliant upon the unconscious accumulation of details – 'l'écrivain lui aussi a fait son carnet de croquis sans le savoir' (p. 54) ['he, too, has been making a sketchbook without knowing it' (p. 1016)] – a fidelity of recall which is nonetheless discounted by a comparison with the affective power of music, typified by the fictional composer Vinteuil: 'cette musique me semblait quelque chose de plus vrai que tous les livres connus' (*La Prisonnière*, II, p. 233) ['this music seemed to me to be something truer than all the books that I knew' (*The Captive*, p. 642)].

Noteworthy, when considered in the context of *A la recherche* as an olfactorily-preoccupied text, is the narrative's identification of music and odour as comparably resistant to analysis, and suggestive of the veridical – 'quelque chose de plus vrai que tous les livres connus' – in contrast to the representative liabilities of language. This linkage rehearses the co-option of music to support the aesthetic legitimacy of perfume previously described in this study; the music of Vinteuil and 'une odeur de vieux bois' ['a smell of mouldering wood'] are, the text contends, united by their shared appeal to the sensual and irrational (*La Prisonnière*, II, p. 243) [*The Captive*, p. 642]. Both are 'inintellectuelle' ['unintellectual'] sensory experiences, an association foregrounded by the novel's earlier description of the 'ramifications de son parfum' ['wandering currents of [...] fragrance' left in the wake of Vinteuil's music (*Du côté de chez Swann*, II, p. 196) [*Swann's Way*, p. 162], and Proust's alignment of musical and olfactory appreciation as analogous sensory experiences: 'Et le plaisir que lui donnait [Swann] la musique et qui allait bientôt

créer chez lui un véritable besoin, ressemblait en effet [...] au plaisir qu'il aurait eu à expérimenter des parfums (*Du côté de chez Swann*, II, p. 219) ['the pleasure which the music gave him [Swann] was in fact closely akin [...] to the pleasure which he would have derived from experimenting with perfumes' (*Swann's Way*, p. 182)].

Proust's juxtaposition of distinct (and by implication competing) forms of art, accompanied by a postulated unifying aesthetic intention (variously glossed as the identification of 'law' or 'truth') invites consideration within the wider context of modernist attempts to interlink disparate modes of aesthetic expression. As I have noted in my previous chapter, the incorporation of odour within graphic or literary art is framed as a contentious act, a reaction derived in part from the perceived inadmissibility of olfaction as an artistic medium. Of more direct relevance, when viewed in the context of Proust's interconnection of language and sensory perception and Benjamin's postulated 'universality of intention' underlying all languages, is the modernist quest for a universal language of aesthetics.

For example, W. L. George, writing in 1913, offers the successful embedding of Esperanto within popular consciousness as a linguistically-accented metaphor for a comparable desired universal intelligibility underlying the creation of art. 'The Esperanto Of Art' suggests an original discordance informing the relationship between various aesthetic modes. Music, painting and literature exist in problematic relation to one another as a consequence of a lack of unifying language, a disunity given contemporaneous significance: 'It is established and accepted to-day that a painter may not like music, that a writer may yawn in a picture-gallery'.²⁵

Disharmony between the arts is cast as linguistically determined – 'every form of art

²⁵ W. L. George, 'The Esperanto Of Art', *The Blue Review*, May 1913, 28–36 (p. 28) <in The Modernist Journals Project <<http://www.modjourn.org>>> [accessed 6 January 2014].

has its own jargon' (p. 28) – a disabling status which in turn validates the text's search for commonalities – universals – underpinning the creation of all art.

The scope and urgency ascribed by George to the task of artistic unification – 'There is, there must be a link between the painter, the sculptor, the writer, the musician, the actor, between the poet' (p. 28) rehearses the comparable ambition of neuroscience to satisfactorily classify an array of synaesthiac experiences as a verifiable clinical phenomenon, a correspondence which I will address later in this chapter. 'The Esperanto of Art' is however dogged by its inherent subjectivity, a particularity which is admitted, but which also emerges in the text as a tacit pronouncement of aesthetic presuppositions. George qualifies his assertion of an Esperanto for art by highlighting its subjective nature: 'it represents no more than a personal point of view' (p. 29). This admission of partiality is framed by the nature of the aesthetic medium which encloses and enables George's argument – it is text-based, an attribute which tells against the desired transcendence of his manifesto: it is inescapably exclusive of rival modes of artistic expression. The attempt to debabelize aesthetics by emphasising their inherent congruencies is destabilised by cultural preconditioning, a fallibility demonstrated through George's distinction between grace and harmony as artistic concepts: 'Obviously there is no *grace* in Rodin's Balzac, while there is *grace* in every note of Lulli and Gluck' (p. 35). As noted, George's identification of distinct formal properties underpinning the creation of rival modes of artistic production is qualified by its assertion of subjectivity – the text comments upon its own 'tentative spirit' (p. 29), and draws a deliberate distinction between claims to scientific veracity, and the self-asserted metaphysical nature of the argument advanced by George. Referring to Leonard Inskter's

‘standardisation of artistic terms’, the text comments: ‘I prefer to his [Inkster’s] scientific way the more inspired suggestion of “esperanto,”’ (p. 35).

George’s assertion of subjectivity represents a point of departure from other, associated instances of modernism’s engagement with the concept of universal language, and its application within the field of aesthetics. A comprehensive discussion of the will-to-universality demonstrated by, for example, the modernist valuation of the Chinese ideogram and the invention of Isotype lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Here, I want to emphasise the co-option of scientific objectivity to sanction the creation of a universally-accessible aesthetic language. Proust’s inclusive programme of artistic production – of an assertion of *Art*, rather than arts – is granted epistemological support through its identification of a shared methodology with science, a strategy which recalls Imagism’s recommendation of scientific exactitude in the creation of literature. The artist, the narrator of *A la recherche* states, is properly engaged ‘au moment où il étudie les lois de l’Art, institue ses expériences et fait ses découvertes, aussi délicates que celles de la Science’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 38) [‘when he is studying the laws of Art, making his experiments and his discoveries, as delicate as those of Science’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1008)]. Proust’s capitalisation of ‘science’ signals a strategy comparable to the text’s treatment (in this instance) of aesthetics. By unifying arts under the aegis of Art and aggregating sciences as Science, the narrative suggests a further point of confluence – that of aesthetics and science as mutually supportive constructs. The project of aesthetic production is validated through the assertion of a shared purpose – and rigour – exemplified by the (ideally) systematic enterprise of science, and its (typical) attendant connotations of conformity to universally-held principles.

Set against this rigour is the endorsement of subjectivity advanced by *A la recherche*, a tolerance of apparently incompatible categories which provides a further point of congruence with my preceding discussion of literary modernism's broader willingness to tolerate apparently antithetical fields of knowledge. Thus, the valuation of univocality shadowing the ascription of scientific exactitude to aesthetic production is offset by Proust's contention of language as an idiosyncratic, rather than a monolithic entity. In a letter of 1908, Proust offers a Saussurean discrimination between the *langue* of a (postulated) generalised French language, and the *parole* embodied by its speakers:

Cette idée qu'il y a une langue française, existant en dehors des écrivains et qu'on protège, est inouïe. Chaque écrivain est obligé de se faire sa langue, comme chaque violoniste est obligé de se faire son 'son'. Et entre le son de tel violoniste médiocre, et le son, (pour la même note) de Thibaut, il y a un infiniment petit, qui est un monde!²⁶

[The idea that there is a French language that exists outside of the writers who use it and that it must be protected, is fantastic. Each writer is bound to create his own language as each violinist must create his own 'tone'. And between the tone of some mediocre violinist and Thibaud's tone [...] there is an infinitely small difference that embodies a whole world!'²⁷]

The view of language projected within Proust's letter is metonymic, with language – particularised by French – comprised of idiolects, each competing for legitimacy, a contestation suggested by the text's differentiation between 'mediocre' and

²⁶ Marcel Proust, *Correspondance*, ed. by Philip Kolb (Paris: Plon, 1977), III, p. 276.

²⁷ Marcel Proust, *Letters of Marcel Proust*, trans. by Mina Curtiss (London: Chatto & Windus, 1950), p. 151.

exemplary art, with the latter exemplified (in this instance) by the music of Thibaut. Suggestively, this ‘infiniment petit’ discrimination is ascribed a significance – symptomatic of ‘un monde’ of difference – to which Proust does not grant extensive discursive space. An individual’s manipulation of language, their idiolect, is glossed through the metaphor of ‘son’, which correspondently suggests an idiosyncratic quality resistant to exegesis. A difference in ‘language’ or ‘tone’, Proust implies, can be readily perceived, but, paralleling olfactory experience, is difficult to quantify and is infinitely prolific. Throughout *A la recherche*, this efflorescence is transmitted through the intercession of art, and its capacity to signify a plurality of individual perceptions, an association which simultaneously valorises the communicative possibilities of aesthetic discourse: ‘Grâce à l’art au lieu de voir un seul monde, le nôtre, nous le voyons se multiplier et autant qu’il y a des artistes originaux’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 49) [‘Thanks to art, instead of seeing only one world, our own, we see it under multiple forms, and as many as there are original artists’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1013)]. In this instance, no hierarchy is imposed on the juxtaposition of competing aesthetic discourses – all are granted equal validity as a result of their admissibility as art. Such art, states Proust, enables a decoding of the private experience of perception, and consequently generates an empathetic awareness of alterity:

Par l’art seulement, nous pouvons sortir de nous, savoir ce que voit un autre de cet univers qui n’est pas le même que le nôtre et dont les paysages nous seraient restés aussi inconnus que ceux qu’il peut y avoir dans la lune. (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 49)

[Only by art can we get outside ourselves, know what another sees of his universe, which is not the same as ours and the different views of which

would otherwise have remained as unknown to us as those there may be on the moon. (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1013)]

Suggestive, when viewed against the critical primacy accorded to the madeleine as an odorous conceit in *A la recherche*, is the narrator's recruitment in this instance of the visual, rather than the olfactory as the central sense modality through which art offers a translation of experience for aesthetic dissemination. The production of art – particularised by literary composition – is dependent not upon 'technique, mais de *vision* [my emphasis]', an optical and vatic accenting which accordingly tells against the text's self-reflexive commentary on the labour and deliberation expended upon its composition (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 48). The artist's interrogation of 'reality' – which can be categorised as an aggregate of cumulative and disparate sense impressions – equally entails a process of sensory discrimination, a classification of contributory sense modalities, of which odour, as I have noted, is a conspicuously intractable example. The text is at pains to point out that what is significant is not the intensity of sensory perceptions – heightened sense modalities are discounted as an enabling aesthetic resource within *A la recherche*, in contrast to the alleged hyperaesthesia of Proust which I will address in my next chapter. Accordingly, the narrator discounts the proposition that 'l'homme serait [...] capable d'une poésie plus haute, si ses yeux étaient susceptibles de voir plus de couleurs' ['man would be [...] capable of higher flights of poetry, if his eyes were able to perceive more colours, his nostrils to distinguish more scents'].²⁸ Rather, Proust stresses the discriminatory capabilities of the perceiving artist, rather than an innate aesthetic merit resident within the object(s) perceived and translated through the medium of text: 'le génie consistant dans le pouvoir réfléchissant et non dans la

²⁸ Proust, VI, p. 282; Proust, 'The Captive', II, p. 21.

qualité intrinsèque du spectacle reflété' (*A L'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, I, p. 117) ['genius [...] [consists] in the reflective power of the writer and not in the intrinsic quality of the scene reflected' (*Within A Budding Grove*, p. 423)].

Consequently, the novel contends, the writer's credibility hinges upon his ability to locate a viable linguistic analogue for non-verbal experiences, a representational problem demonstrated by the narrator's early taxonomy of odours in *A la recherche*:

odeurs naturelles encore, certes, et couleur du temps comme celles de la campagne voisine, mais déjà casanières, humaines et renfermées, gelée exquisite industrielle et limpide de tous les fruits de l'année qui ont quitté le verger pour l'armoire; saisonnières, mais mobilières et domestiques, corrigeant le piquant de la gelée blanche par la douceur du pain chaud, oisives et ponctuelles comme une horloge de village. (*Du côté de chez Swann*, II, p. 50)

[smells natural enough indeed, and coloured by circumstances as are those of the neighbouring countryside, but already humanised, domesticated, confined, an exquisite, skilful, limpid jelly, blending all the fruits of the season which have left the orchard for the store-room, smells changing with the year, but plenishing, domestic smells, which compensate for the sharpness of hoar frost with the sweet savour of warm bread, smells lazy and punctual as a village clock. (*Swann's Way*, p. 38)]

The narrator's description – and segregation – of the childhood odours associated with Combray highlights a rhetorical divergence between English and French. The word 'smell' occurs once in the quoted French text, whereas the term is deployed

repeatedly in Moncrieff's translation, a difference which hinges upon the syntactical particularities of Proust's narrative and provides a local example of a non-translatable, evanescent quality resident within a source text. The French text does not anchor each evocation of odour with the term 'smell', but instead groups multiple classes of odour under a plural heading – 'odeurs naturelles'. By contrast, Moncrieff's translation is conspicuous in its efforts to thread odours together with their descriptors: 'smells changing with the year [...] domestic smells [...] smells lazy and punctual'.

The ambiguity suggested by the recitation of odours contained within the French text – a troubling absence of clarification – is implicitly addressed by Moncrieff's translation and its insistent repetition of 'smell'. In turn, this action alludes to the wider, restive nature of the olfactory when corralled by the innately visual medium of text, an opposition identified within, and offered context by, the field of neuroscience. As the psychologist Trygg Engen observes, language – exemplified for the purposes of our present discussion by the text of *A la recherche* – is always immediately disadvantaged in its efforts to resuscitate the experience of the olfactory. 'One does not retrieve an odor episode with words' he states, 'but with odor. The strength of the association is weak from odor to name and nearly zero from name to odor'.²⁹ The immediately ensuing narrative of *A la recherche* rehearses this dilemma, demonstrated by the narrator's efforts to materialise the odorous, to grant reassuring solidity to the ethereal and vaporous. I will return to this rhetorical strategy in the final chapter of my thesis, in relation to the writing of Joyce, which demonstrates a comparable desire to confer substantiality upon that which is impalpable. In the case of *A la recherche*, odour becomes 'grumeleux' (*Du*

²⁹ Trygg Engen, 'Remembering Odors and Their Names', *American Scientist*, 75.5 (1987), 497–503 (p. 501) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/27854791>>.

côté de chez Swann, I, p. 51) [‘clotted’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 38)], coalescing into an ‘invisible et palpable gâteau provincial’ (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 51) [‘invisible though not impalpable country cake’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 51)], a narrative device demonstrated throughout *A la recherche* as a means of enforcing contact with the atmospheric and intangible. To condense the vaporous, to extend Proust’s chemically-accented terminology, offers a means of particularising the presence of odour within a text, a strategy illustrated by the narrator’s description of his childhood bedroom at Combray: ‘saupoudrées d’une atmosphère grenue, pollinisée’ (*Du côté de chez Swann*, III, p. 347) [‘thickly powdered with the motes of an atmosphere granular, pollenous’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 293)].³⁰ Encoded within the text’s representation of the diaphanous and atmospheric is the tacit presence of the visual, which serves to authorise the narrative’s rendering of odour. The narrator’s gaze becomes microscopic in emphasis, a shift which also offers veridical security, a technique for visualising (and naming) the perceptually holistic which is also recruited in *Sodome et Gomorrhe*. The narrator, on hearing Albertine’s laughter, notes that it ‘évoquait aussi les roses carnations, les parois parfumées contre lesquelles il semblait qu’il vînt de se frotter’ [‘suggested the rosy flesh, the fragrant portals between which it had just made its way’], a harnessing of metaphor to suggest an auditory, and intangible – invisible – event. Perfume acquires traction, suggested by the French text’s use of ‘frotter’ (to rub), through its association with Albertine’s mouth.³¹ The text seeks refuge, once again, within visuality, ‘aerosolising’ her laughter to make it apparent to the narrative gaze through a floral

³⁰ Comparably, Joyce suggests the granularity of odour in *Ulysses*, when describing the dispersal of perfume in ‘Nausicaa’: ‘Suppose it’s ever so many millions of tiny grains blown across’ (*Ulysses*, p. 307).

³¹ Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu, Sodome et Gomorrhe, I* (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1922), v, p. 8; Marcel Proust, ‘Cities of the Plain’, in *Remembrance Of Things Past*, trans. by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff and F. A. Blossom (New York: Random House, 1932), II, 3–378 (p. 141).

analogy.³² It becomes, the narrator observes, seemingly as ‘sensuel et révélateur comme une odeur de géranium, il semblait transporter avec lui quelques particules presque pondérables, irritantes et secrètes’ (p. 8) [‘strong, sensual and revealing as the scent of geraniums, to carry with it some microscopic particles of their substance, irritant and secret’ (p. 141)].

This drive to ascribe odour a comforting solidity more readily accessible to intellectual scrutiny and placement within the structure of narrative, reaches its apogee within *A la recherche* through the petrification of odour-induced memories, a conceit which confers visual and haptic presence upon the intangible. The coalescence of memories – formative and odour-inspired – becomes legible, receptive to interpretation, through the metaphor of geology: ‘ces veinures, ces bigarrures de coloration, qui dans certaines roches, dans certains marbres, révèlent des différences d’origine, d’âge, de formation’ (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 147) [‘those veins, those streaks of colour which in certain rocks, in certain marbles, point to differences of origin, age, and formation’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 143)]. Yet the ostensible clarity offered by analogue is offset by the narrative’s self-reflexive admission of its own shortcomings as a medium of signification, a reproach encoded in the text’s assertion that ‘phrases mêmes des livres’ [‘sentences themselves’] act as an impediment to representation, an inadequate approximation of the entirety of recall provoked by memory: ‘celles-ci [sentences] gênent parfois comme ces photographies d’un être devant lesquelles on se le rappelle moins bien qu’en se contentant de penser à lui’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 35) [‘[Sentences] are

³² The tangibility accorded to air by Proust, in particular the former’s capacity to act as an irritant, prompts reference to Benjamin’s essay ‘The Image of Proust’, which identifies a link between the syntax of *A la recherche* and the biographical detail of Proust’s chronic asthma (Walter Benjamin, ‘The Image of Proust’, in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zorn (London: Pimlico, 1999), pp. 197–210.

sometimes a hindrance, like photographs of a person, which prevent one from recalling him as well as if one were satisfied merely to think about him' (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1006)].

I argue that Proust's positing of the sentence (and by implication, all text) as an interference, as much as a source of enlightenment, when contrasted with the objects (material and abstract) which it seeks to represent, is strongly consonant with the formal properties of odour. This assumption of affinity, rather than difference, is in evident contrast to the equally powerful and dissenting antithetical relationship of odour and language which I have hitherto described, embodied in the restricted vocabulary available to communicate olfactory experiences, and the interrelated ubiquity of odour's metaphorical value in signifying the incommunicable. However, a further attribute of olfaction is described by the philosopher Clare Batty: 'I do not distinguish the place in the scene before my nose at which the property is instantiated from the place at which it is not. I simply smell that it is instantiated'.³³ Batty's questioning of the representational capacities of odour entail a sundering of the odour from the object with which it is associated.³⁴ Put simply, Batty contends, when we smell an object, we are encountering a quality with which it is *associated*, and not the object itself, comparable to Proust's assertion that text is an analogue of the objects it seeks to represent – it is not, and cannot be, the objects themselves. The odour detected by the smelling subject is therefore, by extension, non-veridical, because it cannot be definitively assigned an origin, marking an additional point of

³³ Clare Batty, 'A Representational Account of Olfactory Experience', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 40.4 (2010), 511–38 (p. 522) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/cjp.2010.0020>>.

³⁴ The disassociation of odours from their odour objects is noted by David Chalmers, who, in describing the 'rich, intangible, indescribable nature of smell sensations' rehearses the vocabulary of evanescence with which the olfactory is associated: 'Smell has little in the way of apparent structure and often floats free of any apparent object' (David John Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 8).

difference from olfaction's apparent *bona fides* as an unambiguous marker of reality, a quality described in the first two chapters of this thesis. By contrast, as Batty notes: 'if we had on hand enough of the odorant the object produces, it would be possible to replicate the same experience with no source object present at all' ('A Representational Account of Olfactory Experience', p. 522). Conversely, the visual apprehension of an object is, Batty continues, characterised by the observer's ability to distinguish it from its immediate surroundings. For example, a vase of flowers will be assumed to be present if they are placed on a table, but the odours with which they are associated cannot be definitively assigned. We would not be able to ascertain their reality as material objects, Batty contends, without the corroboration of vision. Accordingly, she states, an optical illusion is a viable proposition – our eyes can be deceived into thinking a material object is present when it is not – but the looseness of association between odours and odour objects diminishes the possibility of such an illusion within the domain of olfaction: the odour of flowers or madeleines could be released into a room without creating the assumption that these objects were indeed present.

Following the logic of this argument, odour is always already significant, rather than veridical – a sign only incidentally yoked to the object(s) which it signifies, representative of an original conflict between language and the olfactory described by Engen: 'the linking of names and odors is inherently weak' ('Remembering Odours and Their Names', p. 498). Batty's disconnection of odour from the – presumed – object(s) from which it originates is implicitly reductive, a point she acknowledges: 'the experiences of the sense modalities combine in some sense to form an overall representation of the world' ('A Representational Account of Olfactory Experience', p. 534).

Similarly, the animating aesthetic of *A la recherche* rejects the isolation (and relegation) of odour within the hierarchy of the senses, signalled by the inaugural significance of the madeleine within the novel, which, as noted, is framed as a combination of percepts. The narrator's early description of the experience of the madeleine not only foregrounds the text's preoccupation with the metonymic quality of odours, but also echoes the dialectical relationship between odour and language which emerges as a focal preoccupation of the novel, and indeed, is a central theme of this study:

l'odeur et la saveur restent encore longtemps, comme des âmes, à se rappeler, à attendre, à espérer, sur la ruine de tout le reste, à porter sans fléchir, sur leur gouttelette presque impalpable, l'édifice immense du souvenir. (*Du côté de chez Swann*, II, p. 48)

[the smell and taste of things remain poised a long time, like souls, ready to remind us, waiting and hoping for their moment, amid the ruins of all the rest; and bear unfaltering, in the tiny and almost impalpable drop of their essence, the vast structure of recollection. (*Swann's Way*, p. 36)]

Proust ascribes multi-significance to odour; a discrete olfactory episode exerts an influence wholly disproportionate to its perceived relevance at the time of first encounter. The significance of the madeleine, like that of the olfactory encounter, is in this instance relational. Both are evocative of a network of associative connections, cognate with an attribute of lexis described by Saussure: 'A word can always evoke everything that can be associated with it [...] A particular word is like the center of a constellation; it is the point of convergence of an indefinite number of

co-ordinated terms'.³⁵ Within the context of *A la recherche*, this plurality of signification is always informed by the text's repeated emphasis upon subjectivity – the plethora of associations summoned by taste and olfaction (particularised by the madeleine), are unique to the narrator. The particularity of olfactory associations is noted by Engen, who suggests 'people do categorize odors, but not with semantically cohesive general nouns [...] Verbal responses to odors tend to be personal, referring to objects with which a person has had experience' ('Remembering Odours and Their Names', p. 500). Importantly, given the dialectic relationship of language and olfaction advanced by *A la recherche*, is odour's breadth of signification, comparable, as I will argue, to that exhibited by language, and co-existent with the difficulty of finding a satisfactory textual analogue when describing the experience of olfaction. In the context of the novel, the idiosyncratic nature of these associations in turn encourages recourse to specific narrative strategies to suggest the highly-individualised interrelationship between the madeleine's 'l'odeur et la saveur' and the 'l'édifice immense', of which metaphor is a key example.

The metaphoricity at the heart of the association between the taste of the madeleine and the past experience of Combray is noted by Deleuze in his examination of involuntary memory in *A la recherche*: 'involuntary memory [is the] analogue of metaphor: it takes "two different objects," the madeline with its flavor, Combray with its qualities of color and temperature; it envelops the one in the other, and makes their relation into something internal'.³⁶ Deleuze's identification of the role of metaphor in uniting disparate domains is demonstrated throughout *A la recherche*, enacted through the initial, inexplicable influence of the madeleine –

³⁵ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. by Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), p. 126.

³⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs: The Complete Text* (London: Athlone, 2000), p. 60.

‘D’où venait-elle? Que signifiait-elle?’ – and formally articulated as an aesthetic principle at the close of the novel:

[The artist] rapprochant une qualité commune à deux sensations, il dégagera leur essence en les réunissant l’une et l’autre pour les soustraire aux contingences du temps, dans une métaphore, et les enchaînera par le lien indescriptible d’une alliance de mots. (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 40)

[[The artist] comparing similar qualities in two sensations [...] makes their essential nature stand out clearly by joining them in a metaphor, in order to remove them from the contingencies of time, and links them together with the indescribable bond of an alliance of words. (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1009)]

Metaphor, states the narrator, offers conceptual clarity by comparing objects and sensations with that which they are *not*, enhancing the representative capabilities of narrative more effectively than ‘la littérature de notations’ (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 47) [‘documentary realism’ (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1009)] rejected later in the novel. The action of metaphor in a text addresses a perceived deficiency in the representative resources of narrative; it creatively enables discourse by providing a means of communicating, through the linking of separate objects, that which was previously incommunicable.

Despite the illuminative influence of metaphor, Proust’s valuation still projects the presence of the numinous and evaporative. Even in asserting the descriptive power of analogy, the narrative notes that the fusion of words which unites distinct objects remains ‘indescriptible’. A nucleus of signification is apparent, but is resistant to analysis based upon reduction or the disassembly of metaphor into

its constituent elements, a contention which echoes the indissolubility of the art object advanced by Eliot and H. D.. Tellingly, in the context of the narrative's phenomenological grounding, the operation of metaphor is rooted (in this instance) in the commingling of sensations, an endorsement of holism signalled by Proust which can be described as synaesthesiac in character (that is to say, evocative of the operation of one sense modality through the agency of another).³⁷

In turn, 'synaesthesia' would appear to offer a means of usefully categorising the array of sensory coalescences examined earlier in this study. I have noted, for example, Marinetti's endorsement of perceptual holism through the aggregation of disparate, yet contributory sense modalities in my previous chapter. This aggregation, epitomised by the attempted incorporation of odour in the literary and graphic products of Italian Futurism, would appear to rehearse the apparently 'synaesthesiac' aspirations of Proust's aesthetic. It should be cautioned, however, that explicit references to synaesthesia are apparently absent from *A la recherche*. Given that Proust's commingling of sensations is, as I will demonstrate, unmistakably synaesthesiac in emphasis, and his attested familiarity with neuroscientific discourse, this omission is puzzling. Furthermore, I argue that the apparent appeal of 'synaesthesia' as a unitary construct urges additional critical caution, a consequence of the term's migration from a (disputable) clinical phenomenon to a more general applicability: 'the term synaesthesia is in common

³⁷ It is, of course, necessary to acknowledge the precursive influence of Symbolism on modernist conceptions of synaesthesia, epitomised by the poetry of Charles Baudelaire ('Correspondances' (1857)) and Arthur Rimbaud ('Le Sonnet des Voyelles' (1871)). As Kevin T. Dann suggests, 'synaesthesia was ultimate holism [...] offering a unified sensory grounding for all human perception' (*Bright Colors Falsely Seen: Synaesthesia and the Search for Transcendental Knowledge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 42).

currency in describing any artwork which attempts to cross sensory boundaries'.³⁸

While this transformation may be valid – in the sense that it is comparable to the assimilation of Proust into popular consciousness identified by Benhaïm earlier in the chapter – it sidesteps the debated nature of synaesthesia as an object of study within psychological science. This contestation, as I will demonstrate, is epitomised by the disputed status of synaesthesia as a real or imagined manifestation.

That the synaestheliac might be coterminous with the metaphoric emerges as a point of anxious contention within the neuroscientific literature of the early twentieth century. This disquiet is characterised by a desire to establish a distinction between synaesthesia as a clinically verifiable phenomenon – the synaestheliac subject *literally* smells colours, or hears shapes – and the co-option of synaesthesia as a metaphoric resource. In the latter case, the concept is recruited towards an imaginative end, with consequent 'synaestheliac' associations the product of invention, rather than an objectively established psychological condition. Here, synaesthesia operates as an 'imagistic mnemonic device' in the service of aesthetics, a qualification which, as I will presently discuss, leads to the assertion of synaesthesia as a meritorious attribute, 'most likely to occur in people above the average in mental powers, education, and culture'.³⁹

The challenge of differentiating between real synaesthesia, a condition identified by applying the methodology of medical science, and metaphorically-

³⁸ Malcolm Cook, 'Visual Music in Film, 1921-1924: Richter, Eggeling, Ruttman', in *Music and Modernism, C. 1849-1950*, ed. by Charlotte De Mille (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), pp. 206–28 (p. 208).

³⁹ John Harrison and Simon Baron-Cohen, 'Synaesthesia: An Account of Coloured Hearing', *Leonardo*, 27.4 (1994), 343–46 (p. 343) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1576010>>; Anon, 'Smelling By Ear and Tasting By Eye', *The Literary Digest*, 7 December 1929, 34 (p. 34) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LiteraryDigest-1929dec07-00034a02:28>> [accessed 22 February 2016].

inflected, ‘illegitimate’ synaesthesia, *imagined* by the synaesthete, is described by Arthur H. Pierce in ‘Gustatory Audition; A Hitherto Undescribed Variety of Synaesthesia’ (1907). Pierce recounts the case of a young woman who reported an ability to taste words. Pierce’s paper offers a list of 150 words provided by the unnamed subject of his investigation, consisting of common nouns and proper names, with which a specific flavour was associated.⁴⁰

However, informing the text’s formal status as methodologically-inspired, rather than fanciful discourse – an ambition signalled by its categorisation as a formal scientific paper – is Pierce’s foregrounding of fallibility, an admission initially suggested through a depreciation of his paper’s relevance in relation to psychiatric science. Noting the history of prior reports of synaesthesia, he observes: ‘such accounts do not reveal any facts of profound import for psychology’ (p. 341). Synaesthesia is implicitly devalued as an (unverifiable) area of scientific study – a resistance to segregation as an objective medical condition lends the phenomenon an interest which is clearly general in its appeal – it obtains a ‘distinct value in impressing us with the myriadfold divergencies of human nature’ (p. 341).

Pierce’s diminution of his paper’s claims to significance finds cognate expression in his irresolution in relation to the real/imagined dichotomy at the heart of synaesthesia. Pierce asks: ‘what evidence have we that an actual case of synaesthesia is here being reported, and not a case of artificial association due to a lively dramatic fancy?’ (p. 349) Admitting the possibility that ‘such phenomena are essentially ungenue’ (p. 349), the product of imaginative association, rather than an innate aspect of a subject’s psychopathology, Pierce offers the integrity of the

⁴⁰ Arthur H. Pierce, ‘Gustatory Audition; A Hitherto Undescribed Variety of Synaesthesia’, *The American Journal of Psychology*, 18.3 (1907), 341 (pp. 343–45) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1412597>>.

synaesthete as a reliable assessor of their own condition, as evidence of the genuine nature of the synaesthesia described by his paper, describing her as ‘an accurate, careful and discriminating person’ (p. 349). This investment of authority accordingly enables Pierce’s assertion that the experience of synaesthesia presented throughout the text is presented as absent from the influence of the synaesthete – although intimately associated with the subject, it is equally framed as exogamous, ‘*found*, not manufactured’ (p. 349). The presence of synaesthesia, in this instance is (logically) dependent upon the articulatory capacities of the medical subject, yet is simultaneously cast as removed from the taint of fictional embellishment – as the text notes, it is the product of ‘accurate’ recitation.

The problematic nature of Pierce’s identification of synaesthesia – it is announced as disassociated from ‘fancy’, but remains dependent upon subjective testimony – in turn generates an inconclusive ambiguity which further contributes to the destabilisation of scientific objectivity which permeates the text. Synaesthesia, suggests the paper, occupies an interstitial position, neither strictly the product of the imagination, nor a conclusive and verifiable physiological reaction: ‘The subject testifies that the experience has a character intermediate between the reality of sensation and the unreality of fancy’ (p. 350).

The urge to circumvent the idiosyncrasy associated with synaesthesia and contain its plurality within the confines of a unifying theory finds expression in the condition’s identification by psychologists as representative of an early stage of human development. Accordingly, synaesthesia becomes a universally applicable phenomenon, a lost source of unitary meaning which recalls Proust’s suggestion of ‘mots oubliés’ recuperable through the intervention of the artist. The subsequent reduction in synaesthesiac capabilities enforced by adulthood is posited as culturally,

as much as neurologically, determined. Societal pressures – operating through the agency of language – force the developing child (proponents of the theory contend) to unlearn an original synaesthiac unity of the senses which is cast as inimical to the construct of language. Lorrin A. Riggs and Theodore Karowski, writing in ‘Synaesthesia’ (1934), suggest that ‘ideational synaesthesia [...] may also deteriorate as a result of the substitution of language symbols as more adaptable to the prevailing culture’.⁴¹ Their paper suggests that prior to the acquisition of language and its attendant restrictions, unitary perception is the norm, in which the hierarchy of the senses – typified by the dominance of the visual over the olfactory – is absent. Instead, all sense modalities enjoy equal input and legitimacy in the construction of a subject’s ontogenesis: ‘there is primitive, undifferentiated sensory experience before the senses have begun to operate independently’ (‘Synaesthesia’, p. 40).

However, Riggs and Karowski’s confident proposal of a universally-applicable law, echoing Proust’s identification of the unitary coherence – ‘laws’ – underlying science and art, is offset by the ineluctably subjective nature of synaesthesia. In particular, ‘Synaesthesia’ identifies a difference between adult recitations of synaesthiac experiences, cast (in this instance) as – ‘strikingly consistent and logical [...] easy to observe and to describe’ (p. 29) – and the greater variability typical of juvenile reports of synaesthesia: ‘vague and ephemeral, and consequently less striking as peculiar phenomena’ (p. 29). Accounts of synaesthesia elicited from children, this comparison suggests, represent a mode of discourse tolerant of illogicality, of narrative irresolution – ‘illogical’, at least in accordance with the antithetical model of ‘logical’ adult descriptions of synaesthesia.

⁴¹ Lorrin A. Riggs and Theodore Karowski, ‘Synaesthesia’, *British Journal of Psychology. General Section*, 25.1 (1934), 29–41 (p. 40) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8295.1934.tb00722.x>>.

This decoupling of juvenile synaesthesia from the protocols governing the construction of putatively linear, objective narrative offers a correspondent coded endorsement of *non-linear* language. That is to say, a narrative mode characterised by its use of metaphorical or allusive, rather than transparently utilitarian language. The synaesthesia identified by Riggs and Karowski as central to perception throughout childhood is framed as non-utilitarian, indicative of an associative freedom – glossed by the paper as ‘fanciful brainwork’ – and manifested by ‘new imaginary inter-modal connections’ (p. 37). The experience of synaesthesia in this instance becomes suggestive of innovation or the exercise of the imagination, an attribute which offers coded support for synaesthesia’s debated interrelationship with the field of aesthetics. The segregation of the sensorium into distinct percepts is described by Riggs and Karowski as a restrictive enterprise, evocative of the curtailment of creative possibilities:

These ephemeral images or ideas usually have no survival value, and are soon displaced by the more logical and systematic ideas supplied by a formal education and contact with the outside world of fact. This is the normal course of mental development, during which our minds become ‘older and stiffjointed.’ (p. 37)

Although the abandonment of synaesthiac perception is presented in this instance as an ostensibly natural and necessary development – it is legitimised as an inevitable, ‘normal’ consequence of ageing – it is equally coterminous with a disabling inflexibility of consciousness. This implicit valorisation of childhood as a creatively-enabled stage of human development enacted within ‘Synaesthesia’ resonates with the wider modern association of childhood with aesthetic integrity, an affiliation explicitly articulated by Freud in his essay ‘Writers and Day-Dreaming’,

in which the child and the creating adult are presented as coterminous figures: ‘The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of phantasy which he takes very seriously – that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion – while separating it sharply from reality’.⁴² Although Proust does not explicitly identify synaesthiac perception as a pre-adult endowment, *A la recherche* is unambiguously implicated by the influence of childhood, which is promoted by Proust as a repository of influential memories upon which the creation of the artist’s psyche is dependent. Such memories, Proust contends, constitute ‘des gisements profonds de mon sol mental, comme aux terrains résistants sur lesquels je m’appuie encore’ (*Du côté de chez Swann*, I, p. 170) [‘the deepest layer of my mental soil, as firm sites on which I still may build’ (*Swann’s Way*, p. 141)].

In the case of Freud, the child represents a prelapsarian state, prior to the closure of ludic – creative – possibilities signified by accession to adulthood, a cycle which recalls the ossification of imaginative faculties suggested by ‘Synaesthesia’. Maturity, while conferring significant benefits through its enforced adherence to civilised, normative behaviour, is equally, Freud suggests, a restrictive process: ‘As people grow up [...] they cease to play, and then seem to give up the yield of pleasure which they gained from playing’ (‘Writers and Day-Dreaming’, p. 145). The normative assumptions of Freud’s argument are suggestive – ‘people’ are suggested as the aesthetically-impoverished majority, in contradistinction to the artist. Aesthetic production is reified within ‘Writers and Day-Dreaming’ as an activity only accessible to those who have retained the juvenile attribute of creative play. Collusively, Freud suggests ‘We laymen have always been intensely curious to

⁴² Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Vintage; The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 2001), IX, p. 144.

know [...] from what sources that strange being, the creative writer, draws his material' (p. 143). The suggestion of a creative incapacity attending the civilised subject is offset by the hope of artistic recuperation, of retrieving (via the example of the child and its unfettered imagination), that which has been lost, or at least a revenant or analogue of it: 'If we could at least discover in ourselves or in people like ourselves an activity which was in some way akin to creative writing' ('Writers and Day-Dreaming', p. 143). The child is emblematic of a pre-segregated state, in which all children are endowed with creative capabilities, prior to the later disassociation of 'laymen' from 'creative writers'. Accordingly, the presentation of synaesthesia within psychological literature as an original and universal phase of human development, characterised by an associative freedom, and as a dissident mode of perception, suggests a particular framing of the adult synaesthete as aesthetically enabled, 'closely associated with intelligence, imagination and sensitivity' in contrast to those who lack a holistic mode of perception.⁴³

As noted earlier, a signature synaesthetic conceit offered by Proust is the linkage of music and odour as interrelated entities, epitomised by the music of Vinteuil and its diffusion of 'ramifications de son parfum'. Again, it is necessary to observe that Proust's attribution of odour to the experience of musical appreciation is not explicitly identified as a synaesthetic mode of perception in *A la recherche*. Conversely, critical commentary on Scriabin's alleged synaesthesia rehearses the broader, ambiguous categorisation of synaesthesia within modern culture – tentatively asserted as a genuine psychological phenomenon, yet simultaneously evocative of 'fancy'. In particular Charles Myers, writing in 'Two Cases Of Synaesthesia' (1914), and John F. Runciman in 'Noises, Smells and Colours' (1915)

⁴³ Otto Ortmann, 'Theories of Synesthesia in the Light of a Case of Color Hearing', *Human Biology*, 5 (1933), 155–211 (p. 205) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/925370>. 00>.

offer divergent assessments of Scriabin's declared ambition of augmenting musical performances with appropriate chromatic and odorous effects. In turn, these varying responses to Scriabin's aesthetic can be fruitfully contrasted with Proust's commingling of sensory domains.

Myers' approach is diagnostic, demonstrated by his use of 'chromaesthesia' to describe the correlation of music and colour endorsed by Scriabin. Comparably, music is invested with chromatic, as well as odorous significance in *A la recherche*. The narrator notes 'les rumeurs claires, les bruyantes couleurs que Vinteuil nous envoyait du monde où il composait' (*La Prisonnière*, III, p. 235) ['clear sounds, the blazing colours which Vinteuil sent to us from the world in which he composed' (*The Captive*, pp. 642-643)]. Here, a synaesthetic response to Vinteuil's music is implicitly restricted to the private sphere of the narrator/auditor; there is no suggestion that such an interpretation is in response to a calculated strategy intended for mass effect. By contrast, 'Two Cases of Synaesthesia' suggests that 'Colours form for Scriabin so important a part of the total effect of sounds that he desires his *Prometheus* to be performed to the accompaniment of concealed lamps which shall flood the concert-hall with a light of ever-changing colour'.⁴⁴ In this instance, synaesthesia becomes suggestive of a deliberate and mutually supportive structuring of the sensorium, which is (at least notionally) inclusive of other sense modalities: 'the music of his [Scriabin's] *Mystery*, when completed, will be presented with a similar play of colours, and with odours' ('Two Cases of Synaesthesia', p. 112). The role assigned to synaesthesia by Scriabin is affirmative, an inter-modal relationship which recalls Proust's casting of metaphor as a unifying and mediatory influence operating between two sensations, which serves to 'dégagera leur essence', their

⁴⁴ Charles S. Myers, 'Two Cases Of Synaesthesia', *British Journal of Psychology*, 1904-1920, 7.1 (1914), 112-17 (p. 112) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8295.1914.tb00246.x>>.

essential quality. In the case of Vinteuil's music, the unitary value ascribed to metaphor by *A la recherche* shifts in emphasis throughout the novel, from the comparison of distinct categories, in the form of odours and music, to the apprehension of music as an olfactory percept. Tellingly, olfaction is recruited to address the conceptual challenge embodied by music, and its appeal to the irrational and emotional, rather than the ratiocinative. Accordingly, the narrator, struggling to fully evoke 'les rumeurs claires, les bruyantes couleurs' typical of Vinteuil's music, deploys an olfactory and haptic analogy. Such music is, the narrator contends, 'quelque chose que je pourrais comparer à la soierie embaumée d'un géranium' (*La Prisonnière*, III, p. 235) ['something which I might compare to the perfumed silkiness of a geranium' (*The Captive*, p. 643)].

The synaesthesiac capacity to experience a heightening of a sense modality through the intermediary agency of another additionally prompts comparison with Benjamin's postulation of individually disparate languages operating in concert – supplementing one another, to adopt the terminology of 'The Task of the Translator' – to contribute to a universally accessible system of communication. The prospect of an analogous universal intelligibility informing Scriabin's system of chromatic notation is alluded to by the text's identification of consensus with regard to the relationship between certain colours and notes. A more general relationship between colour and music is described in *A la recherche*; the text evokes 'la nuance écarlate' and 'les éclats aux cassures écarlates' (*La Prisonnière*, II, p. 65, p. 235) ['the scarlet tinge' and 'scarlet-flashing rifts' (*The Captive*, p. 554, p. 643) characteristic of Vinteuil's music, but this analogy lacks the specificity of a chromatic scale.

Conversely, Scriabin, reports Myers, first became aware of his chromaesthesia while attending a concert in Paris, accompanied by Rimsky-Korsakov. Myer's paper notes

that ‘he [Scriabin] remarked that the piece to which they were listening (in D major) seemed to him yellow; whereupon his neighbour [Rimsky-Korsakov] replied that to him, too, the colour seemed golden’ (‘Two Cases Of Synaesthesia’, p. 112). In this instance, the possibility of an arbitrary connection between the colour yellow and D major is discounted through its apparently unprompted shared recognition by both composers, with the correspondent suggestion of an underlying, innate relationship between distinct sensory domains rather than a deliberate, imaginatively-motivated linkage. In other words, Scriabin’s inaugural synaestheliac experience – insofar as it is presented as such by the text – is suggested as *found*, rather than manufactured. Subsequent comparisons drawn by Scriabin and his fellow composers on the colour associations evoked by other musical keys, the paper confirms, offer broad confirmation of a commonly-held chromatic code correspondent to different pitches.⁴⁵ Scriabin, Myers observes, ‘believes a general agreement to exist in this respect’ (‘Two Cases Of Synaesthesia’, p. 112).

By contrast, Runciman’s assessment of Scriabin’s ‘chromaesthesia’ is resolutely sceptical, rehearsing the intolerance of aesthetic innovation exemplified by the ‘Initial Manifesto of the ‘Fatuists’ to the Public’. Indeed, Futurism is cited by ‘Noises, Smells and Colours’ as one of an array of illegitimate artistic movements, including Cubism, Post-impressionism and Imagism, all of which are united their striving for meretricious innovation. ‘The desire to be original, startling, astonishing, at all costs’, suggests Runciman, ‘is a symptom common to all the arts at the present

⁴⁵ However, other contemporaneous cases of chromaesthesia contradict the coding of coloured audition denoted by Scriabin. For example, Herbert Sidney Langfield, writing in 1914 describes the colours associated with various tones by ‘a young talented woman musician and composer’, which diverge from those proposed – and tacitly asserted as universal – by Scriabin. As noted, D major conform to a yellow or golden hue for Scriabin and Rimsky Korsakov – Langfield’s subject describes D as suggestive of ‘violet’ (Herbert Sidney Langfeld, ‘Discussion: Note on a Case of Chromasthesia’, *Psychological Bulletin*, 11 (1914), 113–114 (p.113) <doi:10.1037/h0065718>).

day'.⁴⁶ Comparably, *A la recherche* reifies of the artist as the articulator of universal meaning, rather than the critically modish or self-consciously outré. The figure of the writer championed by the text exists in sympathy with 'la vie instinctive du public' (*Le Temps retrouvé*, II, p. 46) ['the instinctive life of the people' (*The Past Recaptured*, p. 1012)], an appeal to a timeless (and legitimising) generality, which contrasts with the cycle of literary criticism decried by Proust as the emanation of 'demi-esprits' ['half-wits']: 'Leur logomachie se renouvelle de dix ans en dix ans' (p. 46) ['Their battle of words begins all over again every ten years' (p. 1012)]. As I have described, the synaesthiac mode of perception endorsed by *A la recherche* is not formally articulated as a recommended aesthetic practice. It is enacted, rather than announced as an artistic activity. By contrast, Scriabin's synaesthesia is, Runciman suggests, a deliberate and sensationalist manoeuvre, and is accordingly dismissed as derivative, signalling the conscious adherence to a cultural trend, rather than an irresistible psychological predisposition. 'Have they not', enquires Runciman, speaking of modernist composers, 'simply closely followed the example of the painters who will paint, and of the poets who will write, anything that occurs to them, provided only that it has not been used before?' ('Noises, Smells and Colours', p. 159).

However, this depreciation of Scriabin's attempt to identify an interconnection between rival sense modalities achieves its greatest emphasis through Runciman's questioning of the aesthetic legitimacy of odour. In the case of Myers, the prospect of a unifying notation of odours and musical tonalities is

⁴⁶ John F. Runciman, 'Noises, Smells and Colours', *The Musical Quarterly*, 1.2 (1915), 149–61 (p. 159) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/737841>> [accessed 27 February 2013].

admitted, but remains unaddressed.⁴⁷ A structured synaesthesiac correlation remains confined to the dominant sense modalities of vision and hearing, although the text does offer an isolated instance of colour, odour and audition operating in synaesthesiac harmony: ‘For him [Scriabin] the (red) key of C relates to matter, and is redolent with the odour of the soil’ (‘Two Cases Of Synaesthesia’, p. 115). The affective power of olfaction and its value in augmenting the reception of a musical score by auditors is admitted, through Scriabin’s projected future use of a range of odours in support of ‘Mystery’, but remains unfulfilled. Runciman, however, isolates the recruitment of olfaction in support of musical performance as a signature example of the untenability of Scriabin’s commingling of sense modalities: ‘the whole idea is preposterous, a dream, not, from the artistic point of view, worth the pains of trying to realise’ (‘Noises, Smells and Colours’, p. 157).

On one hand, Runciman’s critique of olfactory art is derived from the lack of an appropriate technology for the manipulation of odour for mass effect. As he notes, ‘The smelling machine has not yet been invented’ (p. 159). Once again, the recording and transmission of olfactory experience remains confined to a future, yet unattainable realisation. However, Runciman’s pessimism also invites comparison with the experimental perfume concerts of Hartmann, cited in my previous chapter. Although, as noted, Hartmann’s attempt to harness odour for performative purposes ‘proved a complete failure’, the technology enabling such a venture is meticulously recorded: ‘atomizers with air pressure attachment [...] steam evaporizers (such as are

⁴⁷ Although, as noted in my previous chapter, Piesse suggests a comparability between odours and musical tonalities: ‘Dr. Piesse composed a scale of odors corresponding to the musical scale. The heavy odors are assigned to the low notes and the sharp, pungent odors to the high notes’ (Anon, ‘Symphonies of Perfume’, *The Literary Digest*, 27 May 1922, 22 (p. 22) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/LiteraryDigest-1922may27-00022a02:16>> [accessed 1 June 2016]). ‘Symphonies of Perfume’ further reports: ‘The perfume of rose on this scale corresponds to middle C, and from it the treble clef continues with Re, violet; Mi, Cassia’ (p. 22).

used for medical inhaling) [...] sponges steeped in odoriferous substances' ('In Perfume Land', p. 219). By contrast, the engineering challenge embodied by the diffusion of odour is dismissed *a priori* by Runciman as an irrelevance masking the underlying issue of the aesthetic legitimacy of olfaction, and the propriety of its use as a mode of artistic production ('Noises, Smells and Colours', p. 157).

I have previously described the arguments for and against the tenability of olfactory art; of more immediate relevance, in the context of *A la recherche*, is the congruence between language and odour encoded in Runciman's criticism of Scriabin. Whereas Hartmann attributes the failure of his perfume concert to the lack of olfactory discrimination exhibited by an unreceptive audience, Runciman's commentary draws attention to the innate variability of olfactory experiences, and in doing so, glosses the grand theme of Proust's narrative manipulation of odour, by noting 'One virtue odours possess, that of recalling by association past experiences' ('Noises, Smells and Colours', p. 156). The idiosyncrasy of odour-inspired memories is, 'Noises, Smells and Colours' suggests, the primary obstacle to their consideration as an aesthetic resource, a point of difference within the standardisation offered by musical notation or chromatic classification, but which further enforces my earlier assertion of language and olfaction as interrelated entities. Runciman's depreciation of odour as characterised by semiological instability is suggestively Saussurean in emphasis: 'The aesthetic value of a smell – if aesthetic it can be called – is purely arbitrary' (p. 157). Here, Batty's pairing of an odour object and its (presumed) attendant odour is compounded by the looseness of affiliation between an odour and the repertory of memories it inspires, a relationship exemplified by the 'l'édifice immense du souvenir' accessible through Proust's madeleine.

The variability of these associative qualities is, in the case of Benjamin, framed as a disabling attribute of language, exemplified by its diversification into rival linguistic systems which screens, he suggests, a desired transcendent meaning: ‘The imperfection of languages consists in their plurality, the supreme one is lacking’ (‘Task of the Translator’, p. 78). Conversely, language’s lack of linear signification is praised, for example, by Lawrence. ‘Pornography and Obscenity’, as noted earlier in this thesis, echoes Proust’s valuation of language as determined, in part, by individual usage, but also parallels the recollective properties of olfaction and its appeal to individuation. Lawrence’s particular framing of language is worth reiterating in full: ‘the word [...] will take you to the ends of time and space, and far-off down avenues of memory [it] will take the individual off on his own journey, and its meaning will be his own meaning, based on his own genuine imaginative reactions’ (‘Pornography and Obscenity’, p. 237). Here, Lawrence’s endorsement of ‘genuine imaginative reactions’ suggests that which is unforced and spontaneous, comparable to the ‘pell-mell’ of subjective impressions accorded central narrative significance in *A la recherche*, but also proposes the action of the imagination as an appropriate and inevitable response to language. When reading Lawrence’s remarks in the context of Proust’s writing, the former’s assertion of the validity of a personal, rather than received understanding of language, expressed through a contrast of ‘mob-meanings’ and ‘imaginative individual responses’ (p. 238), recalls the negotiation between the demands of intelligibility required in the creation of a universally-intelligible text, and the preservation of individually-derived meanings and percepts central to *A la recherche*. This process, the novel contends, is dependent upon a process of analogy, the means by which language offers a correlative – a ‘universal language’ – for subjective experience, a problem

compounded, in the case of odour, by an original lack of satisfactory descriptors for olfactory impressions.

Within the domain of aesthetics, as I have argued, the intransigence of odour as an object of representation is further exacerbated by its perceived inadmissibility as a legitimate mode of artistic expression. To attempt to recuperate odour for the purposes of art is, as Runciman's polemic demonstrates, to risk ridicule. Yet, as 'Noises, Smells and Colours' suggests, this suspicion is offset by a recognition of odour's emotive significance. The text, while equating the prospect of odour's technological mastery with an untenable modernist desire for novelty, remains alive to the consequences of achieving a consensus on the meaning of individual odours. Runciman, while noting that 'thoughts and emotions aroused in the brain by any one odour [...] are not the same in any two cases', concedes that 'If they were, or ever had been, music would never have been invented' ('Noises, Smells and Colours', p. 157).

Central to the simultaneous denigration and appreciation of odour in 'Noises, Smells and Colours' is Runciman's insistence upon the segregation of disparate aesthetic modes as a means of safeguarding their validity. Olfaction is tolerated, even valued, provided it does not impinge upon established musical orthodoxies. This resistance to the commingling of rival artistic media – and their appeal to distinct sense modalities – is extended by the text to deny an 'ultra-modern' reported link between the painting of Kandinsky and music. Both are united, the text reports, in their shared attempt to communicate a spurious 'pure emotion' or quality independent of artistic form ('Noises, Smells and Colours', p. 160). This, contends Runciman, is an unsound proposition: 'I submit that it cannot be done, need not be

done, and should not be done; that the result of an attempt to do it can be no other than *the absolute negation of art* [emphasis in original]' (p. 160).

By contrast, the synaesthesiac emerges in *A la recherche* as a creative response to the novel's self-declared ambition of representing the totality of subjective experience. Thus, Vinteuil's music is ascribed not only fragrance by the narrator of *Du côté de chez Swann*, but following further analysis, additional spatial and visual qualities: 'les notes que nous entendons alors, tendent déjà selon leur hauteur et leur quantité, à couvrir devant nos yeux des surfaces de dimensions variées, à tracer des arabesques' (*Du côté de chez Swann*, II, pp. 193-194) ['the notes which we hear at such moments tend to spread out before our eyes, over surfaces greater or smaller according to their pitch and volume; to trace arabesque designs' (*Swann's Way*, p. 160)]. Art, suggests Proust, is not apprehended through a single sense modality. Rather, in the case of *A la recherche*, the reception of aesthetic experience encourages the recruitment of the entire sensorium, comparable to the broader holistic perception identified by the novel. The narrator, upon meeting Gilberte Swann, observes: 'Tout à coup, je m'arrêtai, je ne pus plus bouger, comme il arrive quand une vision ne s'adresse pas seulement à nos regards, mais requiert des perceptions plus profondes et dispose de notre être tout entier' (*Du côté de chez Swann*, II, p. 131) ['Suddenly I stood still, unable to move, as happens when something appears that requires not only our eyes to take it in, but involves a deeper kind of perception and takes possession of the whole of our being' (*Swann's Way*, p. 108)]. Implicit in this description is a questioning of the Western hierarchy of the senses. Visuality is diminished, subordinated, as a superficial perception incapable of registering the full significance of an object, an action which requires the activity of 'perceptions plus profondes', a signature example of which is odour, and its

metaphorical congruency with the ‘zone d’évaporation’ identified by Proust as impeding direct access to external realities. Indeed, the example of Proust, allied with other, consonant representations cited in the preceding chapters of this thesis, allows us to argue that olfaction – at least within the context of modernism – serves as a master-signifier of that which lies beyond the remit of textual evocation, a contention which I will duly consider further in relation to the writing of Joyce.

Yet, while odour serves as a dominant literary conceit for a recognisable, yet incommunicable quality at the heart of subjective and aesthetic experience in *A la recherche*, the acuity of its effect is reliant upon its interrelationship with other, associated sense modalities, of which the narrator’s foundational – canonical – encounter with the madeleine is a conspicuous example. Consequently, I argue, the formal congruency of odour/odour object with the binary unit of sign and object not only underscores the (dis)similarities between odours and lexical items which I have proposed in this chapter, but also alludes to a wider network of associations between the sensorium and language as cognate semiological systems, a linkage supported by Proust’s interconnection of writing and translation as analogous activities. Language, particularly poetic language, as Jakobson proposes, is partly defined as a process of combination, in which intelligibility is derived through the placement of words in relation to each other.⁴⁸ Cognately, asserts Merleau-Ponty, an object is only perceived as real if it is apprehended by a synthesis of the senses: ‘If a phenomenon—for example, a reflection or a light gust of wind—strikes only one of my senses, it is a mere phantom, and it will come near to real existence only if, by some chance, it becomes capable of speaking to my other senses’ (*Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 318). This appreciation of perception as an aggregate of sense

⁴⁸ Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings: Word and Language* (The Hague, N.L.: Mouton, 1971), II, p. 704.

modalities is exemplified by the narrator's encounter with Gilberte Swann in *A la recherche*. In this instance, vision becomes synaesthiac, a conduit for the expression of other percepts, a proxy for the immediacy of touch and other associated sentiences. The narrator describes 'ce regard qui n'est pas que le porteparole des yeux, mais à la fenêtre duquel se penchent tous les sens' (*Du côté de chez Swann*, II, p. 132) ['that gaze which is not merely a messenger from the eyes, but in whose window all the senses assemble and lean out' (*Swann's Way*, p. 108)]. Proust's evocation of the sensorium as a cooperative and integrated system – exhibiting a 'génie de synthèse' 'a genius for synthesis' (*A L'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, II, p. 174) [*Within a Budding Grove*, p. 669] – tells against his popular and critical designation as a writer intent upon privileging olfaction – while, as noted, remaining alive to the similetic properties of odour as a means of signalling the difficulty of seeking a textual analogue for percepts. It is to this point – that is, the operation of odour in relation to other, associated sense modalities – to which I will return in my following and final chapter, by considering the influence of Joyce's postulated visual deficiency on the representation of odour throughout his writing.

Chapter Five

A ‘passion for foul-smelling things’: blindness, olfactory ontology and the ambiguities of odour in Joyce

Although Joyce and Proust are aligned through their shared critical designation as central to literary modernism’s engagement with odour, their linkage does not automatically signal a shared olfactory aesthetic. It is necessary therefore, to acknowledge the evident differences between their respective encodings of odour, as well as their congruities. Accordingly, I will foreground the final chapter of this study by initially emphasising a fundamental similarity – a critical tendency to identify the fictional perceptions depicted by both writers as directly indicative of underlying authorial sensory capabilities and proclivities – and an equally compelling divergence in relation to the odorous phenomena addressed throughout their writing. The connection of these two attributes – the invocation of biographical material as a prevalent critical response to Joyce and Proust, and the dissimilar approaches adopted by these writers to odour – will in turn ground my reading of Joyce’s olfactory aesthetic, and of his interrelated engagement with other, rival sense modalities as objects of literary concern.

Broadly speaking, the olfactory representations of Joyce and Proust rehearse the foundational binary division between pleasant and unpleasant odours. Proust’s oeuvre is conspicuously lacking in references to malodour – the olfactory aesthetic of *A la recherche* is almost exclusively fragrant, a characteristic which supports Joyce’s contention of a mutual, socially-inspired incompatibility following their

meeting in 1922: ‘Proust,’ Joyce reported to Jacques Mercanton, ‘would only talk about duchesses, while I was more concerned with their chambermaids’.¹ Yet *A la recherche* does not entirely ignore the existence of less refined odours – those considered more evocative of chambermaids than duchesses. The Baron de Charlus, attacking the perceived vulgarity of the phrase ‘je vous paierai le thé’ [‘I’ll stand you a tea’], describes it as an ‘expression fétide’ [‘fetid expression’] (*La Prisonnière*, II, p. 59) [*The Captive*, p. 408]. Such impropriety, he asserts, suggests the ‘odeur de vidanges jusqu’à mes royales narines’ (p. 59) [the ‘stench of sewage to my regal nostrils’] (p. 408). However, even the Baron’s concluding pronouncement, which compares the use of ‘I’ll stand you a tea’ to rewarding a violin solo with a fart, is vastly outweighed by the novel’s fascination with appealing odours, as noted in my previous chapter. Furthermore, while the Baron’s outburst suggests an escalating olfactory outrage – the logic of which suggests flatulence as the epitome of malodour – his crowning analogy of odour-informed disgust additionally suggests acoustic offensiveness, subverting its categorisation as an exclusively malodorous image.

I will return to the sonic and odorous properties of flatus later, in relation to Joyce’s scatological correspondence of 1909. Of more direct relevance is the distinction between Joyce and Proust suggested by critical reactions to their varying areas of olfactory interest. Early assessments of *A Portrait*, for example, locate a perceived preoccupation with foetor as a troubling characteristic of the text. H. G. Wells, reviewing *A Portrait* in 1917, famously lamented Joyce’s ‘cloacal obsession’.² Wells’s review of the novel is framed by a commentary upon the text’s creator – a pre-existent authorial ‘cloacal obsession’ is judged to achieve expression

¹ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 509.

² H. G. Wells, ‘James Joyce’, *The New Republic*, 10 March 1917, 158–60 (p. 159) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/NewRepublic-1917mar10-00158>> [accessed 15 April 2014].

in the novel. The assertion of a biographical, as much as a literary fascination with odour recurs throughout ‘James Joyce’, a tendency demonstrated in the intermingling of Joyce and Stephen as objects of critical enquiry. Joyce, states Wells, notes ‘at several points how his hero Stephen is swayed and shocked and disgusted by harsh and loud sounds [...] but no sort of smell offends him like that’ (p. 86). As Wells’s critique progresses, the distinction between Joyce and Stephen, writer and protagonist, is effaced. Consequently, Stephen’s olfactory predilections become coterminous with those of Joyce, a confluence signalled through the text’s indeterminate ‘him’: ‘But no sort of smell offends him like that. He finds olfactory sensations interesting or aesthetically displeasing, but they do not make him sick or excited as sounds do’ (p. 86).

The categorisation of *A Portrait* as symptomatic of a prevalent, underlying authorial fixation with the foetid and malodorous is a well-rehearsed trope of Joyce criticism, rehearsing the more general censure directed by D. H. Lawrence at the sordor exemplified by the ‘very modern novel’, described in Chapter Two of this study. Joyce’s writing is persistently identified as cathected with an infatuation with filth, a desire typically framed as pathological or juvenile in character.³ ‘E. H. L.’, commenting on *A Portrait* for *The Manchester Guardian* in 1917, observes the ‘passion for foul-smelling things’ characteristic of Stephen (and by extension, Joyce) in a review which medicalises the novel’s portrayal of odour as evidence of a dissident and marginalised psychopathology: ‘A doctor could put a definite name to

³ The often-cited critical animus directed at Joyce by D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf exemplifies the relegation of Joyce’s fiction (particularised by *Ulysses*) as puerile or morbidly-inspired. Lawrence’s dismissal of Joyce – applauded by Leavis – is frequently invoked to epitomise an aesthetic discordancy between the two writers (*Letters*, VI, p. 508). Similarly, Woolf’s attested dislike of *Ulysses* is granted rhetorical emphasis through the recruitment of physical disgust; the novel is castigated as the work of a ‘queasy undergraduate scratching his pimples’ (Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1980), II, pp. 188–89).

this disease, not an interesting one to the general reader, though Mr. Joyce by his insistence on it seems to think the contrary'.⁴

This is not, of course, to suggest that Joyce's writing is exclusively preoccupied with malodour. More recent criticism has expanded the designation of Joyce as an olfactorily-preoccupied modernist to address pleasurable odours – typified by perfume – as objects of representation within Joycean texts, as well as foul. Laura Frost, for example, offers a reading of 'Nausicaa' through the 'structural grammar of perfume' (*The Problem with Pleasure*, p. 52). Frost recognises the presence of stench within Joyce's writing, but primarily stresses the significance of hedonic, rather than disagreeable odours: 'James Joyce deploys scent, and particularly perfume, as a means of expanding the conventional boundaries of what is "scentually" appealing' (p. 34). 'Nausicaa' has also attracted the interest of Hugh Davis, who provides a detailed reading of the erotic significance of perfume (and other, associated odours) in the chapter.⁵ The appeal of perfume as an object of scholarly consideration in relation to Joyce is further signalled by Jacques Derrida in 'Ulysses Gramophone'. Here, Derrida suggests the utility of perfume, and its ambiguous semiological status, as a means of critically illuminating Molly Bloom's repeated 'yeses' at the conclusion of *Ulysses*. Accordingly, Derrida contends, 'I could (and I thought about it for awhile) have turned this paper into a treatise on perfumes [...] I could have called it "Of the perfumative in Ulysses"'.⁶

⁴ E. H. L., 'New Novels: A Sensitivist', *The Manchester Guardian*, 2 March 1917, p. 3 (p. 3) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/476054885?accountid=14664>> [accessed 16 April 2014].

⁵ Hugh Davis, "'How Do You Sniff?': Havelock Ellis and Olfactory Representation in "Nausicaa"", *James Joyce Quarterly*, 41.3 (2004), 421–40 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25478069>> [accessed 5 October 2015].

⁶ Jacques Derrida, 'Ulysses Gramophone: Hear Say Yes in Joyce', in *James Joyce: The Augmented Ninth: Proceedings of the Ninth International James Joyce Symposium*,

While acknowledging the undeniable validity of perfume as a focus of scholarly concern throughout Joyce's writing, I argue that an emphasis upon fragrance, rather than foetor, sidesteps the earlier, influential critical institution of Joyce as an exemplar of the evocation of malodour. While I will address Joyce's treatment of perfume as a (contested) marker of individual identity later this chapter, I want to initially read his representation of odour through the critical designation offered by Wells. In turn, this inaugural casting offers an implicit commentary upon the perceived propriety of particular modes of olfactory representation within literary modernism. Ezra Pound, offering editorial guidance on *Ulysses* prior to the novel's publication, recommended the deletion of a range of faecal references from the text, and cautioned against succumbing to 'obsessions arseore-ial, cloacal [emphasis in original]'.⁷ Such impulses, he counsels, 'shd. be very carefully considered before being turned loose' (*Pound/Joyce*, p. 158). The aesthetic integrity of *Ulysses*, Pound tacitly asserts, is threatened by the contaminating influence of extra-literary authorial urges. Similar restraint is urged by Stanislaus Joyce, who, in a letter of 1922 to his brother, advises the exclusion of scatological preoccupations from *Ulysses*. 'Isn't your art', he asks rhetorically, 'in danger of becoming a sanitary science'.⁸ Echoing Pound, the letter further suggests that Joyce's representation of 'stinkpots' is prompted by deviant authorial obsessions rather than purely aesthetic considerations: 'Everything dirty seems to have the same irresistable [sic] attraction for you that cow-dung has for flies' (*Letters*, III, p. 58). Here, it is a perceived transgressive fixation with the mephitic, rather than the aromatic, which informs the elision of

Frankfurt, 1984, ed. by Bernard Benstock, Irish Studies (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1988), pp. 27–75 (p. 64).

⁷ Ezra Pound and James Joyce, *Pound/Joyce; the Letters of Ezra Pound to James Joyce, with Pound's Essays on Joyce.*, ed. by Forrest Read (New York: New Directions, 1967), p. 158.

⁸ James Joyce, *Letters of James Joyce*, ed. by Richard Ellmann (New York: The Viking Press, 1966), III, p. 58.

Joyce with his subject matter. The olfactory preferences exhibited by Joyce's protagonists are, this line of criticism contends, demonstrative of abnormal authorial sensory idiosyncrasies, an ascription equally relevant to Proust. Although, as noted, *A la recherche* explicitly discounts the prerequisite of heightened sense modalities to enable the creation of art, appraisals of Proust have pathologised his endorsement of perception. A. B. Walkley, writing in 1922, describes Proust's alleged 'hyperæsthesia': 'a heightened sensibility for everything, the perception and accurate notation of innumerable details in thought and feeling', an attribution consonant with Pound's identification of Joyce's 'Abnormal keenness of insight' (*Pound/Joyce*, p. 158).⁹ Contrasting Proust with 'a normal observer', Walkley suggests a link between an authorial psychopathology and the novel's perceived endorsement of heightened sense modalities: 'you cannot read a page without seeing that it must have been written by someone who was anything but a normal, healthy human being' ('Marcel Proust', p. 10).

Comparably, Valentine Cunningham, writing on *Ulysses* in *The Oxford Handbook of English Literature and Theology*, offers a commingling of author and protagonist which is all the more suggestive for its apparent lack of contentiousness, given the assumption that a handbook offers a compendium of generally-accepted critical opinion: 'Bloom is, as was Joyce, a coprophiliac'.¹⁰ Cunningham's authoritative statement appropriates the language of psychoanalytic discourse, clinically contextualising Joyce, a strategy demonstrated by a diverse spectrum of

⁹ A. B. Walkley, 'Marcel Proust', *The Times*, 29 November 1922, p. 10 (p. 10) <<http://0-find.galegroup.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/ttda/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=leedsuni&tabID=T003&docPage=article&searchType=AdvancedSearchForm&docId=CS167973757&type=multipage&contentSet=LTO&version=1.0>> [accessed 9 January 2014].

¹⁰ Valentine Cunningham, 'James Joyce', in *The Oxford Handbook of English Literature and Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 499–522 (p. 507).

critics. Richard Brown, writing in *James Joyce and Sexuality*, identifies coprophilia as a common attribute of Joyce and Bloom.¹¹ Similarly, Frances Devlin-Glass, reading ‘Circe’, provides a detailed litany of dissident sexual behaviour, in which coprophilia is featured.¹² In this instance Joyce’s letters and *Ulysses* are mutually supportive, providing a diagnostic function; the text becomes case history, reading its creator, a dialectic demonstrated by David Cotter: ‘Joyce’s coprophilia is apparent in his letters to Nora’.¹³

This identification of an aberrant psychology common to Joyce and Proust, epitomised by a heightening or skewing of sense modalities, invites reference to the wider critical legacy of both writers as the focus of medico-literary scrutiny. For example, Vike Martina Plock provides a detailed commentary on the medical subtexts resident within Joyce’s oeuvre in *Joyce, Medicine, and Modernity*. Her analysis accrues biographical resonance in the light of Joyce’s medical training, and his consequent assimilation of medical terminology and the rhetorical structures characteristic of medical case studies. These discursive acquisitions, she notes, operate in concert with an array of biographically-attested ailments: ‘In Joyce’s case, art and debility continually overlapped’.¹⁴ Similarly, Proust’s deployment of medically-inspired metaphors throughout *A la recherche* has been critically noted; Virginia Woolf suggests that ‘there must be a volume or two about disease scattered through the pages’ of the novel.¹⁵ Interrelatedly, Julien Bogousslavsky also suggests

¹¹ Richard Brown, *James Joyce and Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 87, p. 88.

¹² Frances Devlin-Glass, ‘Writing in the Slipstream of the Wildean Trauma: Joyce, Buck Mulligan and Homophobia Reconsidered’, *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 31.2 (2005), 27–33 (p. 27) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/25515592>>.

¹³ David Cotter, *James Joyce & the Perverse Ideal* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 167.

¹⁴ Vike Martina Plock, *Joyce, Medicine, and Modernity* (Gainesville, FL.: University Press of Florida, 2012), p. 1.

¹⁵ Virginia Woolf, ‘On Being Ill’, *The New Criterion*, 4.1 (1926), 32–45 (p. 32).

the importance of medical discourse as an influence on Proust's writing, noting that as the son and brother of famous doctors, Proust was conversant with the medical intelligentsia of Paris, both socially, and as a patient. In addition, Bogousslavsky records an array of 'medical and personal peculiarities' characteristic of Proust, which included 'homosexuality, asthma, sleep disturbances [and] largely self-administered drug therapy'.¹⁶ An awareness of these idiosyncrasies – their 'neurological itinerary', to borrow Bogousslavsky's phrase – is therefore posited as 'critical for an understanding of his [Proust's] literary work' (p. 89). However, Bogousslavsky's paper moves beyond a consideration of the interplay of medicine and literature as mutually support constructs, to assume a diagnostic function, demonstrated in his speculative attribution of 'chronic asthmatic dyspnea' and 'hypothalamic dysfunction' to Proust (p. 97).

Cognately, Joyce has also attracted the attention of clinicians and biographers eager to offer a speculative, retrospective diagnosis of his physical infirmities, epitomised by the well-documented decline of his eyesight.¹⁷ This was, as Adam Watt and Benjamin Taylor observe, a debility which also afflicted Proust.¹⁸ Commentary on the exact aetiology of Joyce's condition – which required a series of surgical interventions in the form of repeated iridectomies throughout his lifetime – has additionally proposed a venereal origin for his infirmity, a contention refuted by Joyce. This underlying cause is asserted by the *British Medical Journal*: 'From the age of 25 he [Joyce] had recurrent attacks of iritis followed by the late development

¹⁶ Julien Bogousslavsky, 'Marcel Proust's Diseases and Doctors: The Neurological Story of a Life', in *Neurological Disorders in Famous Artists, Part II*, Frontiers of Neurology and Neuroscience (Basel, Switzerland: Karger, 2007), XXII, 89–104 (p. 89).

¹⁷ See Francisco J. Ascaso and Jan L. Velze, 'Was James Joyce Myopic or Hyperopic?', *BMJ*, 343 (2011), d7464–d7464 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.d7464>>, for a discussion of the allegedly mistaken attribution of myopia to Joyce by his biographer Richard Ellmann.

¹⁸ Adam Andrew Watt, *Marcel Proust* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), p. 173; Benjamin Taylor, *Proust: The Search* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2015), p. 137.

of glaucoma with disastrous results for his vision. [...] Such a background suggests late congenital syphilis'.¹⁹ The attribution of syphilis to Joyce remains conjectural, and has divided critical opinion. The suggestion that Joyce was a syphilitic is refuted by the medical historian J. B. Lyons, who draws a distinction between the syphilitic as an object of interest within Joyce's oeuvre, and the authenticity of its presence as a condition afflicting the historical James Joyce. Lyons dismisses 'those who [...] seem determined to prove that Joyce suffered either from congenital or acquired syphilis, or preferably both [...] I am glad to say he had neither'.²⁰ Conversely, Kathleen Ferris proposes that Joyce was a chronic syphilitic, and that the disease operates as a governing theme within *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. These texts are 'autobiographical and confessional in nature', Ferris asserts.²¹

A detailed examination of the postulated interplay of Joyce's debilities and their influence upon his writing lies beyond the remit of this thesis. Rather, I want to assert the utility of this critical model in reading the representation of odour throughout Joyce's oeuvre. Of particular significance, I argue, is the apparently unremarked link between the diminution of Joyce's eyesight to the critically-identified preoccupation with odour – particularly malodour – characteristic of his writing, and interrelatedly, of his depiction of the experience of blindness.²² That is

¹⁹ F. R. Walsh, 'Points from Letters: James Joyce – a Case History', *BMJ*, 1.6002 (1976), 157–157 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.1.6002.157-e>>.

²⁰ J. B. Lyons, 'Thrust Syphilis Down to Hell', in *James Joyce: The Centennial Symposium*, ed. by Morris Beja (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), pp. 173–84 (p. 173).

²¹ Kathleen Ferris, *James Joyce and the Burden of Disease* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), p.8.

²² Links between Joyce's deteriorating eyesight and a consequent assertion of rival sense modalities have been suggested by critics, but, I argue, the dyad of blindness and olfaction remains neglected within Joyce scholarship. For example, Valérie Bénéjam draws attention to the prominence with which audition is accorded within *Ulysses*, an emphasis which, she asserts, is attributable to the decline in Joyce's visual capabilities: 'Equipped with a sensorium wherein sight was progressively more restricted and unreliable [...] he must have been – somehow like Bloom – knowledgeable enough to make precise, technical notations about the sounds he heard around him' (Valérie Bénéjam, 'The Acoustic Space of Ulysses',

to say, the imaginative recreation of an ontology based upon olfaction, tactility and audition, unseating the visual as a dominant sense modality. An attractive structural simplicity suggests itself: the waning of ocular acuity would be, in the case of Joyce's literary career, presumably paralleled by a gradual assertion of the perceptive value of odour.²³ Accordingly, the erosion of Joyce's eyesight would be representative of – would *enact* – a shift in the modernist appropriation of the olfactory towards an aesthetic end. This transition can in turn be offered medical credence through contemporaneous psychoanalytic literature in which an enhanced or exaggerated preoccupation with odour is identified as representative of a specific and deviant psychopathology, a discrete *type*, in addition to the broader associations between odour and psychological dysfunction advanced by psychoanalytic science, and exemplified by the theories of Freud described earlier in this study. In particular, Alfred Binet, writing in 1888, explicitly names those preoccupied with the olfactory as the focus of psychoanalytic interest: 'L'amant de l'odeur présente au psychologue un intérêt tout particulier, car ce genre de fétichisme se rattache intimement à l'existence d'un type sensorial: l'olfactif' [The lover of odour is of particular interest

in *Making Space in the Works of James Joyce*, ed. by Valérie Bénéjam and John Bishop (New York: Routledge, 2011), pp. 55–69 (p. 59)).

²³ This is not, however, to suggest that blindness and olfaction are automatically linked throughout literary modernism. For example, Lawrence's short story 'The Blind Man' proposes touch as the primary sense modality recruited to occupy the role usually assigned to vision. The haptic, in this instance, becomes suggestive of an unwonted intimacy, demonstrated by the response of Bertie, after being touched by the blind protagonist Maurice: 'He [Bertie] could not bear it that he had been touched by the blind man, his insane reserve broken in' (D. H. Lawrence, 'The Blind Man', in *England, My England and Other Stories*, ed. by Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 46–64 (p. 63)). Although Wells credits the blind with enhanced olfactory abilities in *The Country of the Blind*, this acuity co-exists with other 'marvellously acute' senses recruited in the absence of vision (H. G. Wells, *The Country of the Blind* (London: Golden Cockerel Press, 1939), p. 23).

to the psychologist, because this kind of fetish is intimately connected to the existence of a sensory type: the olfactif' [my translation]].²⁴

More directly relevant, when read against Joyce's ocular degeneration and his alleged intoxication with foetidity, is A. A. Brill's contention of a link between blindness and olfactorily-inflected sexual deviancy: 'The role of the sense of smell may become particularly enhanced and sexualized, when as a result of an organic determinant the individual lacks the sense of sight' ('The Sense of Smell in the Neuroses and Psychoses', p. 22). Central to the eroticisation of odour, Brill argues, is the negation of rival, dominant sense modalities, epitomised by vision: 'It is quite obvious that normal sexual development must depend on the existence of an unimpaired sensorium' (p. 15). In support of his argument, Brill recounts the case study of blind patient who confessed he was 'obsessed by the idea of killing someone in order to get a dead body. He liked very much the smells of perfumes, of grass, of flowers, and of soil, chiefly because these smells stimulated his appetite for dead bodies' (p. 23). The subject, reports Brill, was also an habitual coprophiliac and was additionally coprophagic. Speculating on the origin of the patient's paraphilia, Brill suggests a failure to subjugate the sense of olfaction as a consequence of congenital blindness led to a retardation of the senses, in which the primacy of the genital was denied in favour of childish urges: 'What he actually craved was not genitality, but gratification of the olfactory, gustatory, and tactile senses' (p. 25).

However, aligning Brill's shift in sensory emphasis as a consequence of blindness with the biographically-attested deterioration of Joyce's eyesight is problematic. The corollary of such an association would suggest an increasing emphasis upon the signifying power of the olfactory throughout the chronology of

²⁴ Alfred Binet, *Études de Psychologie Expérimentale* (Paris: Octave Doin, 1888), p. 28.

Joyce's writing. Accordingly, *Finnegans Wake* would be expected to represent the apogee of odour as an object of literary concern. By contrast, *A Portrait* and *Ulysses* represent high points in Joyce's deployment of odour, the relative paucity of odour references in *Finnegans Wake* suggests a retreat from the extended engagement with olfaction characteristic of Joyce's earlier writing, which offers at least circumstantial support to the linkage of the degeneration of Joyce's eyesight with the development of an olfactory aesthetic within his oeuvre.²⁵ *Chamber Music* (1907), Joyce's first published book, is entirely lacking in odour references; the olfactory receives scant attention within *Stephen Hero* – a sensory lacuna addressed comprehensively through the text's subsequent recasting as *A Portrait*.

In addition, my assertion of a correspondence between Joyce's representation of odour and his visual impairment is dependent upon a presumption of sensory augmentation – that is to say, the disabling of a sense modality is rectified by the enhancement of a compensatory contributory sense. Thus, in this instance, the sensorium functions as a co-operative system, recalling Proust's endorsement of holistic, synaesthesiac perception discussed in my previous chapter. The prospect of a realignment of Joycean sense modalities in the face of incipient blindness is offered support by a biographical sketch of Joyce by Elliott Paul published in 1932, which suggests that as a consequence of 'an almost continual series of operations',

²⁵ And, logically, with a growing anxiety directed at blindness or the loss of vision *per se*. Joyce described himself as 'puur blind Jemmy', a self-identification noted by biographers (James Joyce, 'From a Banned Writer to a Banned Singer', in *The Critical Writings Of James Joyce*, ed. by Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), pp. 258–68 (p. 263)). Richard Ellmann interprets Joyce's refusal to wear glasses while a student at University College as an idiosyncratic gesture, expressive of personality as much as a physical deficiency: 'His nearsightedness was becoming part of his personality, for rather than stare myopically, or wear glasses, he assumed a look of indifference' (*James Joyce*, p. 64). Later, Ellmann reports, Joyce's indifference modulates into the ironic – and apotropaic – naming of his daughter Lucia after the patron saint of eyesight (p. 262).

‘his [Joyce’s] hearing and his memory have developed abnormally’.²⁶ Accordingly, Paul accords central significance to Joyce’s near-cecity as a biographical and aesthetic influence: ‘This physical misfortune affords the key to much of his life and his work’ (‘Farthest North’, p. 156). However, the assertion that blindness is productive of a sharpening of the remaining sensorium is described as largely unproven and contentious – a ‘generally controversial idea’ – by Morton A. Heller and Soledad Ballesteros, who suggest that changes within the structure of the brain may occur as a consequence of blindness. Accordingly, they speculate, ‘it is possible that locations in the cerebral cortex take on new sensory roles as a function of experience, and visual centers may wind up being used to process input from touch’.²⁷

Particularly pertinent, when viewed in the context of Joyce’s visual impairment as an influencing factor in his representation of the olfactory is the figure of Helen Keller. Born in 1880, Keller was capable of normal vision and hearing until she contracted an unidentified illness at the age of 19 months, which rendered her deaf and blind.²⁸ Despite her multiple disabilities, Keller learned to communicate through her teacher Anne Sullivan, and subsequently became the first deaf-blind person to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree.²⁹ Her autobiography, *The World I Live In* (1908), offers not only an assertion of the augmentative capabilities of odour in the absence of vision, but of odour as productive of ontogenesis, as a preeminent

²⁶ Elliott Paul, ‘Farthest North: A Study of James Joyce’, *The Bookman*, May 1932, 156–63 (p. 156) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Bookman-1932may-00156>> [accessed 1 May 2014].

²⁷ *Touch and Blindness: Psychology and Neuroscience*, ed. by Morton A. Heller and Soledad Ballesteros (Mahwah, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), p. 212.

²⁸ The nature of Keller’s illness remains a matter of conjecture. Rachel A. Koestler-Grack suggests ‘Some modern doctors believe Helen’s symptoms could also have been caused by meningitis’ (Rachel A. Koestler-Grack, *Helen Keller: Activist* (New York: Chelsea House, 2009), p. 14).

²⁹ Dorothy Herrmann, *Helen Keller: A Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 137.

mode of apprehension. ‘In my experience’, Keller states, ‘smell is most important’.³⁰ The hierarchy of the sensorium described by Keller, in which a plurality of olfactory impressions is valued, is accompanied by a contrasting auditory sensitivity. She does not record, as a matter of personal preference, an aversion to any particular odour, but confesses to a dislike of discordancy, an attribute shared with Stephen in *A Portrait* and, reportedly, Proust.³¹ Keller remarks: ‘I am exceedingly sensitive to the harshness of noises like grinding, scraping, and the hoarse creak of rusty locks’ (*The World I Live In*, p. 55). Her comments recall Stephen’s striving for a mortification of the flesh through a deliberate exposure to unpleasant percepts, of which audition, as Joyce notes, is prodigal with sounds productive of ‘painful nervous irritation’.³² These include ‘the sharpening of knives on the knifeboard, the gathering of cinders on the fireshovel and the twigging of the carpet’ (*Portrait*, p. 144).

Adjudicating between rival sense modalities, Keller describes an episode of anosmia as comparable with the onset of blindness within a visually-enabled subject: ‘I was once without the sense of smell and taste for several days [...] The feeling was probably similar [...] to that of one who first loses sight’ (*The World I Live In*, p. 78). The text’s analogy offers a tacit reification of the visual; Keller’s comparison normalises the preeminence of seeing. This optically-inspired analogy – the narrative assumes the interpretative presence of a *seeing* reader – establishes a precondition which in turn affirms the status of the text (and by extension, all texts) as representative of an inescapably visual medium.³³ This framing of language – and of

³⁰ Helen Keller, *The World I Live In* (New York: The Century Co., 1908), p. 65.

³¹ Neil C. Arvin, ‘Marcel Proust’, *The Modern Language Journal*, 8.4 (1924), 231–37 (p. 231) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/313399>> [accessed 14 March 2016].

³² James Joyce, *A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), p. 144.

³³ Conversely, the primacy of the visual within Joycean aesthetics is de-emphasised by Cordell D. K. Yee: ‘The medium of Joyce’s art [...] is primarily temporal in mode. Joyce

text – as predominantly manifestations of visual culture is recognised by Keller, demonstrated in her observation of the ubiquity of the phrase ‘to see’, and its capacity to signal encounter or intellection. Keller notes that as a child she was taken to ‘see a woman who was blind and paralyzed’ (*The World I Live In*, p. 22). A footnote to the text provides a qualification which affirms the insistent presence of the visual as a property of language – embedded in commonplace metaphorical or rhetorical conceits, or in the etymology of specific words – even when recruited by a subject entirely lacking eyesight. As Keller states: ‘The excellent proof-reader has put a query to my use of the word “see.” If I had said “visit,” he would have asked no questions, yet what does “visit” mean but “see” (*visitare*) [emphasis in original]?’ (p. 22).

However, in comparing Joyce and Keller as visually-deprived subjects, it is necessary to note a qualitative difference. Joyce’s experience of blindness was incremental, rather than manifested as an early and total erasure of vision. This distinction does not, I argue, negate the influential nature of blindness in relation to Joycean texts, but does, in relation to Joyce’s representation of blind protagonists, invite the assertion of a subtle point of difference with the severity of blindness described by Keller. Joyce, a visually enabled – albeit to a limited degree– author

himself recognised this, and his conception of language might be termed *phonocentric*’ (Cordell D. K. Yee, *The Word According to James Joyce: Reconstructing Representation* (Cranbury, N. J.: Associated University Presses, 1997), p. 25). In addition, William Martin highlights the presence of metrical structures with *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce’s reading of ‘Anna Livia Plurabelle’, recorded by C. K. Ogden in 1929, grants full expression, Martin contends, to the rhythmic attributes of the narrative: ‘A brief analysis of Joyce’s oral performance as preserved in the recording of *ALP* will reveal that the author followed a number of metrical rules that enabled the “polyrhythmic” dimensions of the text to be heard’ (William Martin, *Joyce and the Science of Rhythm* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 194).

writes *about*, and speaks *for*, a disabled subject, personified by Keller.³⁴ Implicit within this distinction is a framing of cecity within Joyce's writing as an empathetic imagining, rather than authorised as directly representative of the lived experience of total and pre-established blindness. By contrast, Keller's experience of blindness tacitly validates the narrative of *The World I Live In*, at least in relation to the text's wider cultural dissemination as evocative of an heroic struggle with a profound disability.³⁵

The success of Keller's autobiography, and of her institutionalisation as an exemplar of the experience of blindness, is rooted in the disparity between a normative, visually-oriented culture, and its negotiation by a visually-deprived subject. This characteristic grounds Joyce's depiction of cecity, notably in the case the blind stripling portrayed in the 'Lestrygonians' episode of *Ulysses*. Bloom's encounter with the youth tacitly reaffirms the ubiquity of vision by presenting the experience of blindness as inimical to the understanding of the seeing subject, comparable with, as I will presently discuss, the difficulty of comprehending an ontology based upon olfaction. Blindness, in this instance, is representative of a cognitive gulf which the narrative – particularised by Bloom's imaginative speculation – fills with textual detail, through its deliberate presentation in the novel *as* surmise, rather than implicitly authorised as the testimony of a visually-disabled

³⁴ The spectrum of blindness displayed by both writers, from minimal to non-existent vision invites examination of the societal designation of blindness. Shelley Kinash, writing in *Seeing Beyond Blindness* draws attention to the arbitrary, constructed nature of the rules and practices definitive of (for example) legal blindness, and cognately, of the placement of the blind within a visually-normative culture: 'Blindness is epistemologically subjective' (Shelley Kinash, *Seeing Beyond Blindness* (Greenwich, Conn.: IAP-Information Age Publishing, 2006), p. 22).

³⁵ The appeal of Keller as representative of particular narrative trope is noted by Nigel Starck, citing the comments of the *New York Times* chief obituary writer Alden Whitman: 'In writing of Helen Keller, Whitman offered too a prime example of its [the obituary's] capacity to depict triumph over adversity' (Nigel Starck, *Life After Death: The Art of the Obituary* (Carlton, Vic., Australia: Melbourne University Press, 2006), p. 188).

subject. Consequently, the blind stripling is denied self-representation within the text in the form of interior monologue – the reader is dependent upon Bloom as a mediating, interpretative influence – a narrative manoeuvre which absolves Joyce of a tendentious assumption of authority, of speaking on behalf of the disabled subject. The initial encounter between Bloom and the stripling is denoted as a stymied attempt at dialogue. Bloom's interrogation of the youth is met with silence, a persistent non-utterance which is in turn mimetic of the narrative lacuna represented by blindness, and the challenge signalled by Bloom's attempts – and by extension, those of the 'typical' reader – to reconstruct the ontology of blindness.

Bloom addresses three questions to the blind stripling, culminating in 'Do you want to go to Molesworth street?', before finally receiving a conspicuously terse response: 'Yes, the stripling answered' (*Ulysses*, p. 148). The taciturnity of the stripling is offset by Bloom's ensuing flood of conjecture and reiteration of preconceptions surrounding the experience of blindness. Accordingly, the youth is de-individualised and becomes representative of a subset of disabled subjects. 'He', becomes connotative of 'they', through Bloom's observation that 'They [the blind] mistrust what you tell them' (p. 148). This erasure of individual identity is extended to nomenclature as Bloom ponders 'Wonder if he [the stripling] has a name' (p. 148). The text's teasing refusal to substantiate Bloom's speculation on the stripling's name rehearses the suggestive zone of non-signification evoked by blindness. In addition, the text's denial of an enabling navigatory aspect of a narrative, the assignation of a character's name, also reiterates the practical navigational difficulties played out within the episode, exemplified by the stripling's daily negotiation of the cityscape in the absence of vision: 'Queer idea of Dublin he must have,' Bloom suggests, 'tapping his way round by the stones' (p. 149).

The stripling, initially presented axiomatically as an object of pity – ‘Poor young fellow!’ (p. 148) – accordingly provokes an urge to represent, addressed by the exercise of imaginative empathy. This impulse is signalled by the shift in Bloom’s cogitation from the observation of external details – the stripling’s ‘thin elbow’ and ‘limp hand’ (p. 148) – to an attempted conjuration of the stripling’s consciousness and the ontological ‘idea of Dublin’ created by the youth’s visually-deficient sensorium. The desire to represent blindness within the narrative space is framed by an accompanying mystification. A contrast is offered between Bloom’s suggestion of the apparently near-miraculous perception of the stripling – demonstrated by the latter’s navigational ability – and the text’s subsequent efforts to rationalise or explain these percepts, a project which underscores the narrative’s visually-dependent status. Bloom marvels ‘How on earth did he [the stripling] know that van was there?’, highlighting a gap in knowledge which the narrative instantly strives to rectify, but which founders upon ambiguity: ‘Must have felt it’ (p. 148). However, the lack of closure implied by ‘felt’ grants flexibility within the text, admitting a plurality of interpretations, which in this instance inspire recourse to a reiteration of the allegedly inexplicable sensory capacities of the blind. Bloom credits the youth’s navigational abilities as an unconventional and inexplicable sense modality, which is nonetheless granted expression through the rhetoric of visuality: ‘See things in their forehead perhaps: kind of sense of volume. Weight or size of it, something blacker than the dark’ (pp. 148-149).

The text’s association of blindness with an unaccountable mode of apprehension is reinforced by Bloom’s language of approximation – ‘perhaps’, ‘kind of’ – and reiterates a broader predisposition within visual culture to mystify the perceptions of the blind as inimical to understanding. Keller, for example, notes a

tendency among the visually-capable to ‘ascribe to me a preternatural sixth sense’ (*The World I Live In*, p. 30), an observation which invites reference to modern culture’s wider attribution of inexplicable sensory abilities to the blind. In 1922, *The New York Times* reported the case of Willetta Huggins, a 17 year-old, who despite being deaf and blind, was allegedly ‘able to distinguish colors through the sense of smell, read newspaper headlines, tell the denomination of paper money by touch and to hear perfectly through vibration’.³⁶ While the perceptive abilities claimed by Huggins exceed those recorded by Keller, the difficulty of distinguishing charlatanry from truth is demonstrated by the figure of Kuda Bux, a performative fakir who achieved notoriety in the 1930s for his fire-walking exploits and, more significantly, for his professed facility for reading through his nose. ‘This faculty he ascribes’, reports *The Manchester Guardian*, ‘to success with the yoga aphorisms and exercises which he has practised for nine years’.³⁷ A detailed enquiry into the tenability of eyeless sight was published by Jules Romain in 1919, yet despite the claims advanced by *Vision Extra-Rétinienne* for the existence of such phenomena, subsequent scientific investigations have reacted more sceptically: ‘The truth is that claims of eyeless vision turn up with about the same regularity as sea serpents’.³⁸

However, whereas Keller identifies an explanatory ‘sixth sense’ under which her mysterious sensory abilities are aggregated, Bloom lapses into non-articulation, sliding into literal obscurity through the text’s dissolution of descriptive detail into

³⁶ Anon, ‘Proves Girl Smells Color’, *The New York Times*, 21 November 1922, p. 9 (p. 9) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/98600451?accountid=14664>> [accessed 12 April 2016].

³⁷ Anon, “‘Seeing’ By Smell: Strange Performance in Manchester”, *The Manchester Guardian*, 22 October 1935, p. 2 (p. 2) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/483903863?accountid=14664>> [accessed 12 April 2016].

³⁸ Martin Gardner, ‘Dermo-Optical Perception: A Peek Down the Nose’, *Science*, 151.3711 (1966), 654–57 (p. 656) <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1717530>> [accessed 21 March 2015].

‘something blacker than the dark’.³⁹ Bloom’s inability to authoritatively identify the source of the stripling’s orientative abilities points to a discrepancy between a sign – ‘something’ – and an indeterminate referent, that which is ‘blacker than the dark’. In attempting to understand – to ‘see’ – the world from the perspective of blindness, narrative detail is occluded, swallowed in undifferentiated blackness. This lapse in narrative authority is addressed through the text’s identification of olfaction as an augmentative, navigational sense modality, an ascription supported by Bloom’s suggestion that elevated olfactory perception is axiomatic among the blind: ‘Sense of smell must be stronger too’ (*Ulysses*, p. 149). Accordingly, the odourscape accessible to the visually-disabled subject is congested with odour, an agglomeration defined through spatiality, as the text notes ‘Smells on all sides, bunched together’ (p. 149).

The narrative’s linkage of space and odour – or more accurately, of the spatial distribution of disparate odours in relation to each other – offers a further expression of the text’s identification of the ‘Ineluctable modality of the visible’ as a dominant and inevitable ontological influence (*Ulysses*, p. 31). As I am now in a position to argue, a reliance upon correlatives supplied by other, rival sense modalities to evoke olfactory experience is a persistent feature of the modernist representation of odour. In the context of odour’s varied presence within the city space, the association of odour and spatiality suggests the viability of olfactory cartography, a prospect alluded to through Bloom’s observation ‘Each street different smell’ (p. 149). Bloom’s assertion of an exaggerated olfactory prowess

³⁹ Keller describes her ‘sixth sense’ as an inherited repository of visual and auditory memories. Such a resource, Keller suggests, is comparable to a sixth sense, but is explicable and therefore not preternatural in character: ‘This inherited capacity is a sort of sixth sense – a soul-sense which sees, hears, feels, all in one’ (Helen Keller, *The Story Of My Life* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1905), p. 122).

typical of the blind is illustrated by the prospect of mapping Dublin according to the characteristic odours of each street. Yet, while the viability of such an enterprise is signalled by the text, it is not accorded narrative space, an omission which further emphasises the conceptual challenge represented by blindness – and olfaction – to the visually-enabled. Bloom can recognise the possibility of an organisation of urban space based upon odorous properties, but speculation is not substantiated with detail. *Ulysses* does offer examples of the association of an idiosyncratic odour with a particular area of the city, notably in ‘Eumaeus’; the novel places Stephen and Bloom at a specific location in Dublin, between Store street and Beresford Place. The former, cerebrally, dwells upon Ibsen, whereas Bloom, preoccupied with somatic matters, notes ‘with internal satisfaction the smell of James Rourke’s city bakery, situated quite close to where they were’ (p. 502). However, the assignation of an odour typical of a particular area of Dublin is suggestive of environmental ambience, rather than indicative of the strict demarcation of olfactory zones. Here, odours commingle for general effect, a feature rehearsed in *Giacomo Joyce*, in which an undifferentiated catalogue of aromas – ‘aniseed, damp sawdust, hot dough of bread’ – constitute the olfactory signature of ‘morning Paris’.⁴⁰

The olfactory navigation credited to the blind stripling by Bloom invites consideration of other, cognate efforts throughout the early twentieth-century to represent a city’s physical space through the medium of olfaction, notably those informed by the experience of blindness.⁴¹ In particular, a 1911 article in *The New York Times* records the journey of a blind man, formerly ‘one of the prominent

⁴⁰ James Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce* (New York: Viking Press, 1968), p. 10.

⁴¹ Jean-Noël Hallé, the first holder of the chair of public hygiene in Paris, notes Corbin, attempted to construct what was apparently the first smell-map of the city in the 1790s. Accordingly, the ‘meticulous record of their walk of more than ten kilometers provides an accurate picture of the variety of odors’ (*The Foul and the Fragrant*, p. 1).

merchants of New York', across Manhattan and the city's contiguous boroughs.⁴² The text's description of the city's aggregation of diverse odours echoes the 'bunched' character of olfactory impressions noted by Bloom. 'I never realized before', the innominate blind man comments, 'that there were so many smells in New York [...] And no one would, unless he travelled around like this. One seems banked up against another' ('Mapping out New York', p. 8). However, the text's ostensible validation of a non-visually-determined apprehension of New York is offset by the conditions of possibility which inform its creation. Olfactory navigation is dependent upon visual guidance as the blind man is chauffeured across New York. Consequently, the prospect of an entirely osmic mode of navigation is subverted by the mediating necessity of vision. Here, the blind subject is capable of discriminating between distinct urban zones based upon their odorous attributes, but this enterprise requires the assistance of a seeing driver. Comparably, the subsequent recording of New York's olfactory signature is reliant upon the visual medium of text, a stipulation which generates a narrative rich in odour objects such as leather, perfume, coffee, gasoline and industrial chemicals rather than extended descriptions of odours *per se*. Moreover, the text's declared intention of mapping a city through odour is destabilised by the narrative's admission of a pre-established, foundational difficulty in relation to communicating olfactory experience. Accordingly, while the narrator is able to assign a specific location to the odour of malt emanating from New York's brewery district – 'Forty-second to Fifty-seventh Street, from Third Avenue down to the East River' – this surety founders when attempting to evoke the odour itself ('Mapping out New York', p. 8). This aroma, the text asserts, 'has a quality to the

⁴² Anon, 'Mapping out New York by the Sense of Smell: A Blind Man, with an Auto's Help, Performs a Successful Experiment', *The New York Times*, 19 November 1911, p. 8 (p. 8) <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/97186741?accountid=14664>> [accessed 21 May 2014].

nostrils all its own, that you can't describe but instantly recognize and remember' (p. 8). In addition, the linkage of blindness and enhanced olfactory capabilities provided by the *New York Times* tacitly suggests the universal accessibility of experiencing a city through olfactory sense impressions. No-one, the blind man declares, would guess the wealth of odours characteristic of New York, 'unless he travelled around like this', the corollary of which is to suggest that blindness is not a precondition for such an olfactory mapping; the blind and visually-enabled alike, his words imply, are capable of enjoying such an experience (p. 8).

By contrast, Bloom's empathetic imagining of the blind stripling's olfactorily-informed navigation through the streets of Dublin is suggested initially through an entomological analogy, as representative of that which is inaccessible to 'normal' humans. Bloom wonders whether the stripling could 'walk in a beeline if he hadn't that cane?' (*Ulysses*, p. 149) The text's deliberate deployment of an apian reference resonates with the novel's later affirmation of the intensified – sexually-motivated – olfactory prowess of insects. As Virag Lipoti notes in 'Circe': 'Insects of the day spend their brief existence in reiterated coition, lured by the smell of the inferiorly pulchritudinous female' (p. 420). Comparably, Bloom's ascription of heightened olfactory capabilities to the blind stripling progresses from a consideration of the value of odour as an aide to navigation, to an assertion of an erotic liberation sanctioned by the exclusion of vision. Pudeur, suggests Bloom, is optically inspired. Conversely, the absence of sight offers freedom from normative sexual protocols: 'More shameless not seeing' (p. 149). However, Bloom correspondently suggests 'Also smoke in the dark they say get no pleasure', and 'They say you can't taste wines with your eyes shut', assertions which serve to accentuate the visually-determined nature of the narrative which contains his

observations; the pleasure of smoking, Bloom contends, is dependent upon the corroborative, pervasive influence of vision (p. 149). To put it simply, the text acknowledges – plays out – the difficulty of meaningfully encoding that which denies it presence, and that to which it is powerless to grant narrative space, the negating power of ‘something blacker than the dark’, a thwarting of the visual which accordingly challenges the inscriptive presence of text.

Joyce’s articulation of the representational problem embodied by olfaction, as that which can be *signalled* but resists articulation, accords with Proust’s postulated ‘zone of evaporation’ denying the apprehending consciousness full contact with extrinsic objects. Moreover, although darkness and intangibility suggest an area of indeterminacy unavailable to the representative capabilities of text, it is telling that Joyce and Proust offer a simultaneous recuperation of the signifiatory possibilities provided by language. As noted, *A la recherche* suggests that the realities suggested by sensory perception are always already linguistically-inflected. The task of the writer is, the narrator asserts, to decipher and record the ‘the subjective book of these strange signs’. Consonantly, *Ulysses*, at least in the context of Bloom’s encounter with the blind stripling, suggests that the externalities encountered by perception are similarly textually-implicated. The narrative’s evocation of the youth’s tactile encounter with a passing girl cleaves to the security offered by the imagery of text, even when ostensibly offering narrative space to the possibility of haptic apprehension. Bloom envisions ‘His [the stripling’s] hands on her hair, for instance. Say it was black, for instance. Good. We call it black. Then passing over her white skin. Different feel perhaps. Feeling of white’ (p. 149).

However, the text’s apparent encoding of a range of tactile percepts is subverted by the insistent, interposing influence of the visual, a problem embodied in

part by the narrative's reiteration of the cognitive gulf between seeing and non-seeing subjects. That which the stripling feels, by touching the girl's hair, is normatively, visually, designated as 'black'. This signification is readily accessible to Bloom and the putative reader – 'We call it black [my emphasis]' – but logically incomprehensible to an individual deprived of the faculty of vision from birth. Joyce's deliberate opposition of black hair and white skin suggests a conscious conceit in which the girl and text are conflated, and consequently, of the touch of the stripling as an encoded process of reading. In this instance, the narrative deploys a rhetorical device which recruits the power of metaphor to suggest a tactile (and by extension, olfactory) acuity alien to the understanding of a sighted reader. At the same time, its evident status as literary contrivance underscores the text's creative co-option of similitude to signal a sensory reconfiguration which it cannot directly communicate, a manoeuvre which rehearses the broader recruitment of metaphoricity to encode olfactory perception.

Bloom's reliance upon ineluctably visual analogies when imagining the experience of blindness is sanctioned by his status as a seeing subject. To habitually think in optical terms is, Joyce suggests, the logical outcome of the primacy of vision. By contrast, Keller, writing in *The World I Live In*, explicitly notes the incongruity of her use of visually-inspired analogies as a deaf and blind writer: 'I know these are metaphors. Still, I must prove with them, since there is nothing in our language to replace them' (p. 126). Her recognition of the embedded nature of metaphoricity as a fundamental constituent of language can be granted context with reference to C. K. Ogden's *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923), which accords a similar inevitability to metaphor's recruitment as an aide to conceptual clarity: 'A normal mind [...] requires the aid of instances, analogies and metaphors' (p. 114). However,

Keller's account of the visually-dependent nature of language simultaneously rejects an expansion of the signifiatory possibilities of metaphor. The option to bypass current analogies, to address their inadequacy through a – literary – process of reinvention remains unrealised, a narrative shortfall highlighted by the text's failure to apply an enabling metaphoricity to descriptions of odour.

On one hand, the subordination of odour within the sensorium is deplored by Keller: 'For some inexplicable reason the sense of smell does not hold the high position it deserves among its sisters' (p. 64). Yet the value with which olfaction is freighted within *The World I Live In* is offset by the text's inability to extend the categorisation of variegated odours as either foul or fragrant, or to extend the limited vocabulary available to evoke the experience of olfaction, a deficiency rooted within, and legitimised by, philosophical precedent, as noted in the introduction to this study. This binary opposition is noted by Keller, and grounds the textual rendering of the olfactory throughout *The World I Live In*. Those odours designated as pleasant, the narrative states, are 'admitted frankly to our discourse' (p. 64). However, she continues, those odours categorised as foul are deemed unworthy of consideration: 'But when [odour] gives us warning of something noxious in our vicinity, it is treated as if the demon had got the upper hand of the angel, and is relegated to outer darkness' (p. 64).

Despite the text's ostensible ambition of offering a 'dignified and truthful' rendering of odour, the presence of the 'noxious' remains unrealised within the narrative (p. 65). This omission invites comparison with the apparently undifferentiated nature of olfactory experience in *A Portrait*. Recoiling from acoustic discordance, Stephen does not offer a comparable designation of odour as either pleasant or unpleasant. As the text notes: 'To mortify his smell was more difficult as

he found in himself no instinctive repugnance to bad odours' (*Portrait*, p. 144). The identification of foul odours, the narrative suggests, is culturally determined, a constructed and contingent antipathy, rather than representative of an instinctive – and, by extension neurologically-ordained – response. Furthermore, I argue that the novel's description of Stephen's attempt at olfactory mortification – a passage frequently cited in critical examinations of Joyce's allegedly transgressive representation of odour – is noteworthy because of what it does *not* say. Laura Frost suggests that the significance accorded to malodour in *A Portrait* functions as a sensory support for Stephen's apostasy. He is, she contends, 'viscerally soothed by rank odors; they pacify him by reflecting his fallen nature: a sensual creature, driven by bodily and blasphemous desire' (*The Problem with Pleasure*, p. 45). The novel presents Stephen's body as a crucible of odorous experimentation; he has, the narrative notes, 'made many curious comparisons and experiments' between those ostensibly abhorrent odours emanating from his own body, and those derived from the external world, a process of enquiry into the sensorium which anticipates the later, Aristotelian consideration of vision and hearing by Stephen Dedalus in the 'Proteus' chapter of *Ulysses* (*Portrait*, p. 145).

However, of interest in this instance is the discrepancy between that which is signalled, with reference to odour, and that which is specifically enunciated. A plurality of odour experiences and episodes is asserted by the text, indicative of a rich dialectic between external odours and those derived from the body, but the novel does not offer extensive narrative space to these 'curious comparisons and experiments'. Moreover, the result of Stephen's odour-inspired research, the identification of a transcendent unpleasant odour – 'a certain stale fishy stink like that of longstanding urine' – is simultaneously suggestive of a definitive

identification, but also of an absence of full disclosure (*Portrait*, p. 145). The text ascribes particularity; the stink is not representative of a general class of odours, rather, Stephen is revolted by a ‘certain’ stench. Yet the text’s attempt to adequately represent a highly significant olfactory percept – the only stench to disgust Stephen – is reliant upon analogical language. The odour is ‘*like* that of longstanding urine [my emphasis]’, a qualification which underscores the presence of similitude. The source from which the ‘fishy stink’ is derived remains screened, denied an explicit encoding within the text, an ambiguity asserted within the narrative prior to the qualifying influence of ‘*like*’. The stale odour which inspires repugnance in Stephen is framed, adjectivally, as ‘fishy’, a feature which underscores the text’s periphrastic encoding of odour. The ‘stink’ resembles or is evocative of ‘fish’, but it is not (and cannot be) ‘fish’ itself.

This limitation recalls my earlier citation of Clare Batty, and her questioning of the representational properties of odour, an interrogation which, as noted, can be fruitfully compared with the unstable pairing of sign and object as a foundational attribute of language. However, in seeking to apply this comparability to Joyce’s writing, it is important to initially acknowledge a further point of difference with Proust. While *A la recherche* primarily contends with the odour of objects – epitomised by the madeleine, the novel’s dominant odorous conceit – rather than human beings, Joyce fully engages the utility of the body as a source of odours. In turn, this strategy reinforces the centrality of the perceiving subject as a focal point of narrative interest by highlighting not only the presence of individual odours, but self-reflexively, of the subject’s awareness of their own odours – of the protagonist/narrator *as* an odour object, invested with an accompanying olfactory signature.

Congruently, *The World I Live In* notes the idiosyncrasy of human scent signatures as an aide to recognition in the absence of visual and auditory clues to identity: ‘human odors are as varied and capable of recognition as hands and faces’ (p. 73). Keller’s selection of manual and facial analogues to signify the variability and unique character of an individual’s attendant odour contrasts with a desired classificatory rigour absent in olfaction’s interrelationship with language. In addition, Keller’s valuation of personal odours as a guide to identification invites comparison with other, associated technologies created to aid the collection of biometric data. For example, the amenability of hands to systemisation is demonstrated by the nineteenth-century discovery of unique patterns found in an individual’s fingerprints. This attribute was subjected to statistical analysis by Francis Galton in his book *Fingerprints* (1892), which recommended their use as an aide to forensic science. Pivotal to the credibility and value of fingerprints as an embedded aspect of criminal investigations is their capacity to offer apparently irrefutable corroboration of individual identity, a property noted in a 1909 article lauding their adoption by the New York Police: ‘It has been estimated that not once in ten thousand years, among the entire population of the world, would the finger-tip patterns of one person be duplicated. It is apparent that evidence of this character is almost as perfect as evidence can be’.⁴³ This confident assertion of the near-infallible nature of fingerprints as a signifier of individuality implicitly validates the authority of the contemporaneous criminal justice system. Fingerprints, the article implies, are scientifically legitimised as a consequence of their statistical distribution; they cannot misidentify a suspect. In addition, however, the individuated nature of

⁴³ Jay Hambridge, ‘Finger-Prints: Their Use by the Police’, *The Century Magazine*, October 1909, 916–20 (p. 921) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Century-1909oct-00916>> [accessed 30 April 2014].

fingerprints supports the assertion of individual identity; dactyloscopy accordingly enables the articulation *of* the individual as a valid social constituent.

This valuation of fingerprints as an apparently stable source of signification prompts reference to the anthropometry of Alphonse Bertillon, and his attempt to offer a means of comprehensively mapping (and stabilising) individual variations of the human body. Bertillon's system, which gained currency in France in the 1880s, was, as Martine Kaluszynski notes, dependent upon an acceptance of the unalterable and fixed nature of the human body as a marker of identity: 'Bertillon started from the observations that the human bone structure was more or less absolutely fixed by the age of twenty'.⁴⁴ The classificatory system announced by Bertillon was, Kaluszynski further observes, highly prescriptive. Police officers and clerks responsible for recording the details of suspects were, following the rubric provided by Bertillon, unable to offer subjective assessments of those held in custody. Rather, Bertillon strove to provide the French legal system with a morphological vocabulary to cover every conceivable permutation of the human body, a process enforced by the use of a card equipped with relevant fields for information. Accordingly, provision was made for recording:

descriptions of the prisoner's eyes, ears, lips, beard, hair color, skin color, ethnicity, forehead, nose, build, chin, general contour of head, hair growth pattern, eyebrows, eyeball and orbit, mouth, physiognomic expression, neck,

⁴⁴ Martine Kaluszynski, 'Republican Identity: Bertillonage as Government Technique', in *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World*, ed. by Jane Caplan and John Torpey (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 123–38 (p. 125).

inclination of shoulders, attitude, general demeanor, voice and language, and habiliments.⁴⁵

However, absent in the exhaustive list of metrics provided by Bertillon is any provision for recording a suspect's idiosyncratic odour as an identifying attribute, despite the scientifically-attested value of olfaction in determining identity: 'An odour constitutes a more effective characterisation of persons, [...] than a verbal description'.⁴⁶ Anthropometry was unable to exploit a stable repertory of olfactory terms, and was equally denied recourse to mechanical agency in the recording of odours. The technological capture of an individual's likeness was, of course, epitomised by the use of photography, and the medium's capacity to offer an ostensibly objective visual record of an individual's appearance.⁴⁷ Central to this process – as with the written tabulation of a suspect's particularities – was the attempted erasure of aesthetic subjectivity through the development of a specific style of photography, described by Bertillon as 'photographie signalétique', or descriptive photography, designed to fulfil a judicial, rather than an artistic function (*Republican Identity*, p. 126). As Kaluszynski reports, the product of such photography was designated as 'an objective and impartial document – not a "portrait" in the artistic or usual sense of the term – the photograph was intended to be a perfectly consistent medium of representation' (p. 126).

⁴⁵ Simon A. Cole, *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 37.

⁴⁶ John H. Kenneth, 'Odours and the Sense of Smell', *Nature*, 117.2947 (1926), 591–92 (p. 592) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/117591a0>>.

⁴⁷ Logically, an ambition to record an individual's idiosyncratic odour would assume the existence of a system of olfactory notation, and/or a technology capable of capturing and storing odours. The absence of a mechanical means for recording odours – at least in the service of anthropometrical measurement – may appear self-evident. However, I argue that the absence of such a notation and technology as an *a priori* underscores the gulf between the recognisable character of personal odours as an individual property, and the challenge of accurately transcribing or recording such odours, or more accurately, odour complexes.

However, photography's reliance upon visuality necessarily skewed the record of a suspect to embody that which could be seen, rather than heard or smelled.⁴⁸ Despite the protocols regulating descriptive photography, such as stipulating the angle at which the subject's face was captured on film and the size of the resultant image, the veridical ambitions of Bertillon's system are compromised by the inclusion of apparent intangibilities and attributes extrinsic to the physical body. These in turn invite an interpretative, subjective response from those charged with their transcription. The admissibility of recording 'general demeanor' and 'habiliments' as anthropometric observations further underscores the system's non-recognition of odour as a noteworthy idiosyncrasy, a disregard which can be contrasted with contemporaneous accounts of the significance attached to the olfactory within the field of criminology. For example, Lombroso, writing in *La donna delinquente, la prostituta e la donna normale* (1893), explicitly identifies olfaction – or more accurately, anosmia – as indicate of predisposition towards criminality. 'Dullness of the olfactory sense', Lombroso suggests, 'turned out to be three times greater in criminals (occurring in 6 percent) than normal women (2 percent)'.⁴⁹ Lombroso goes on to state that 'Nineteen percent of born prostitutes lack a sense of smell' (p. 168). The lack of significance accorded to olfaction within jurisprudence is lamented by Hans Gross, who, writing in 1911, suggests: 'The sense of smell would be of great importance for legal consideration if it could get the study it deserves'.⁵⁰ Gross substantiates his claims for the judicial value of olfaction by

⁴⁸ Thomas Edison created a working phonograph in 1877 for recording and reproducing sound. Therefore, in theory, Bertillon's system of measurement could have been augmented with recordings of suspects' voices.

⁴⁹ Cesare Lombroso and Guglielmo Ferrero, *Criminal Woman, the Prostitute, and the Normal Woman*, trans. by Nicole Hahn Rafter and Mary Gibson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 168.

⁵⁰ Hans Gross, *Criminal Psychology: A Manual for Judges, Practitioners, and Students*, trans. by Horace M. Kallen (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, and Company, 1911), p. 213.

claiming an association between a specific odour and the presence of a – criminalised – nomadic social group. ‘I remember’, he states, ‘that one time when I had in court to deal almost exclusively with gypsies, I could immediately smell whether any gypsies had been brought here during the night’ (*Criminal Psychology*, p. 214). Here, odour is recruited once again as a contentious marker of racial identity, recalling this study’s earlier consideration of the role of olfaction in framing the colonial encounter. However, in this instance, I want to emphasise the failure of Gross to address the question of whether the allegedly criminal odour of gypsies, or more generally, the characteristic odour attributed to any social or ethnic group, is inherent, or environmentally derived. The ambiguity implied by the latter position – *anyone* can acquire a ‘gypsy’ odour if exposed to the appropriate olfactory determinants – subverts odour’s asserted credibility as a marker of individual identity comparable to that of fingerprints. A personal odour can be arbitrarily assumed, recalling the broader comparability of odour and language as cognate semiological systems – whereas fingerprints cannot.

The problem of distinguishing between odour as a cultural or physiological phenomenon, as an acquired or innate property is described in *Ulysses*. Bloom notes the characteristic odour of Blazes Boylan’s breath in ‘Calypso’: ‘Is that Boylan well off? He has money. Why? I noticed he had a good rich smell off his breath dancing’ (p. 57). Odour, in this instance, acquires deductive power, substantiating Bloom’s attribution of economic capital to Boylan. Wealth – suggestive of a particular structuring of social relations – is linked with a characteristic odour, which although immediately recognisable and culturally intelligible as significant of ownership nevertheless resists an exhaustive exegesis. The precise nature of the ‘good rich smell’ attributed to Boylan by Bloom remains ambiguous. It is suggestive of an

associative relationship – Boylan has money, *ergo* the odour of his breath is that of a wealthy man – or alternatively, it is indicative of physical agency; that which Boylan has consumed – food, alcohol or tobacco suggest themselves as obvious candidates – has lent his breath a ‘good rich smell’. Later in the novel, Bloom recognises that the aggregation of such odours creates an arbitrary, rather than innately-derived olfactory signature – ‘What you eat and drink gives you that’ – yet the exact nature of a postulated universal ‘Mansmell’ offered by the text remains fugitive and consequently unarticulated, screened by interposing odours (p. 307). A consonant identification of a characteristically male aroma is also offered by Keller, who suggests that ‘Masculine exhalations are as a rule stronger, more vivid, more widely differentiated than those of women’ (*The World I Live In*, p. 75).

While acknowledging the significance of Bloom and Keller’s assertion of odour’s utility in demarcating gender differences as an area for future investigation, I want to stress the broader dialogic relationship of olfaction and individuality. The difficulty of disassociating the acquired from the innate in relation to an individual’s signature odour, and therefore of distinguishing the presence of odour as a valid constituent of individuality, is admitted by Keller. *The World I Live In* offers an explicit articulation of this challenge, the recognition of which further emphasises the intractability of odour in relation to language. As she notes: ‘It is difficult to put into words the thing itself, the elusive person-odor’ (p. 74). Here, Keller’s observation suggests a signficatory lag. Despite her attested enhanced appreciation of the olfactory as a primary, rather than an incidental sense modality, the asynchronous relationship between language and odour remains intact; olfaction resists a migration into textual analogue. Comparably, *Dubliners* frames odour as a highly personalised attribute which is simultaneously resistant to analysis. ‘Grace’

offers an odour-inspired counterpart to the aphasia at the heart of the story; the non-articulation of Tom Kernan is complemented by the cognate lack of substantiation accorded to the gnomic ‘personal odour’ with which his bedroom is ‘impregnated’.⁵¹

Keller admits the lack of an adequate linguistic correlative to enable an authoritative representation of personal odour. It is always already encoded as ‘elusive’, a problematic status which tacitly undermines the (putative) credibility of language as a linear means of communication. This slippage between a sign and its referent is further signalled by the text’s admission of an unsatisfactorily proximal relationship with odour. ‘I must fall back’, Keller states, ‘on approximate phrase and metaphor’ (*The World I Live In*, p. 74). Accordingly, the narrative’s efforts to illustrate examples of ‘person-odor’ are dogged by a limited repertoire of descriptive terms, a rhetorical liability which, in this instance, additionally underscores the debated status of odour as personally or culturally derived, with the latter traceable to the acquired externalities noted in *Ulysses*, such as perfumes, unguents, food or clothing.⁵² Keller recalls the idiosyncratic, mnemonic odour of a woman who once kissed her in a crowded railway station: ‘she left a scent with her kiss which gave me a glimpse of her [...] her odor is fresh in my memory’ (*The World I Live In*, p. 74). In this instance, the interpretation of the text hinges upon the word ‘scent’, and the term’s capacity to equally signify a general odorous property, or alternatively, an artificial (and consequently arbitrarily-selected) perfume. Here, the equivalence of ‘scent’ and ‘perfume’ implicitly undermine the credibility of the odour noted by Keller as a uniquely personal, rather than an assumed characteristic. As noted earlier in this study, the representation of olfaction in the dystopias of Gloag and Huxley is

⁵¹ James Joyce, *Dubliners* (St Albans: Triad, 1977), p. 144.

⁵² The cultural contingency of odour is suggested by Stephen in ‘Circe’, an assertion which negates the ascription of pasigraphic value to olfaction: ‘gesture, not music not odour, would be a universal language’ (*Ulysses*, p.353).

characterised in part by a denial of the human body as a source of odours.

Accordingly, in the case of *Brave New World*, artificial odours abound, supplanting a vanished and notionally innate human body odour. That which is mass-produced obtains currency as an ostensible marker of individuality, demonstrated by John's confusion of Lenina's ersatz perfume for Lenina herself: 'He [John] opened the green suit-case; and all at once he was breathing Lenina's perfume, filling his lungs with her essential being' (*Brave New World*, p. 124). Odour, in this instance, signals an apparent and illusory underlying essentiality, a property rooted in the persistent recruitment of the olfactory to suggest the veridical. Interrelatedly, in *Lady Chatterley*, Connie recognises the mnemonic power of olfaction, as an apparently reliable signifier of her identity, but simultaneously offers a negation of the odour of her own body. Her (presumed) idiosyncratic odour is effaced by the scent of Coty's Wood-Violet, a synthetic product which is identified with her by association, through its acquisition as a commodity. Her decision to perfume Mellor's handkerchiefs with her scent marks the signification of her absence – the scent, deposited 'out of childishness', occupies the status of a sign filled with metonymic possibilities in lieu of its owner's physical presence (*Lady Chatterley*, p. 264).

The interrelationship of perfume and personal identity provides a particularly apposite example of odour's comparability with language, a point to which I will return at the close of this chapter. For the moment, as stated earlier, I want to route my examination of Joyce as an odour-inspired modernist through his (deserving or otherwise) critical assignation as a literary exemplar of malodour. As I have demonstrated, this categorisation can be fruitfully read against Joyce's wider significance as a source of medical and psychiatric speculation. Therefore, I argue, the discordancy between sign and object, odour and object, is, in the case of Joyce,

productively addressed by considering his infamous correspondence of 1909. Critical discussions of Joyce's exchanges with Nora have noted his evident celebration of the eroticism of flatus, or eproctophilia.⁵³ This attribute, suggests Brenda Maddox, lends the letters miasmatic palpability: 'The stream of his [Joyce's] associations [...] farts spluttering out of her [Nora's] backside – is almost unreadable in its exaltation of fetid odor'.⁵⁴ Maddox's commentary rehearses the established critical identification of Joyce's obsession with coprophilia, an interest which, as noted, elides biography and literature and lends credence to Joyce's interrelated designation as an *olfactif*. Such an ascription invites a detour through psychoanalytic discourse, exemplified by the significance accorded to anality within Freudian theory, in which a fascination with bodily wastes – faecal and urinary – is described as a formative and transitory phase in the development of an adult human being, a paradigm noted in my second chapter.

While acknowledging the validity of reading Joyce's putative paraphilia within the theoretical framework provided by Freudian psychoanalysis, I want to emphasise the applicability of a particular aspect of the 1909 letters in relation to odour's semiological properties. The gloss of Joyce's correspondence provided by Maddox attaches primary importance to the ostensibly malodorous nature of the content of the letter(s); textually-encoded odour provokes a physical reaction of disgust. However, an examination of the texts reveals a surprisingly sparsity of odour-related terms which belies the foetidity identified by Maddox. The content of the letters is undeniably flatulent, but in this instance the fart is encoded primarily as a sonic, rather than an osmic entity, a casting supported by the multiple varieties of

⁵³ Anil Aggrawal, *Forensic and Medico-Legal Aspects of Sexual Crimes and Unusual Sexual Practices* (Boca Raton, FL.: CRC Press, 2009), p. 373.

⁵⁴ Brenda Maddox, *Nora: The Real Life of Molly Bloom* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), p. 104.

flatus delineated by Joyce: ‘You had an arse full of farts [...] big fat fellows, long windy ones, quick little merry cracks and a lot of tiny little naughty farties ending in a long gush from your hole’.⁵⁵ Joyce’s taxonomy of flatus does not, however, provide a differentiation based upon odorous characteristics. Rather, the characteristic intangibility of the fart as a gaseous emanation is offset by the narrative’s ascription of spatial and auditory properties which enable the encoding of flatulence within the text. Farts are granted proportion, (‘big fat fellows’), duration (‘long windy ones’) and even jocosity and mischievousness (‘little merry cracks [...] tiny little naughty farties’). Yet, the text remains conspicuously silent in relation to their presumed attendant odour, a treatment which prompts reference to the wider contemporaneous framing of the deodorised, audible fart as an object of cultural concern.⁵⁶ Joyce’s recognition of the acoustic value of the fart – in tacit contrast to its presumed and attendant odour – is located within a broader tradition of the recruitment of flatulence in the service of entertainment, exemplified by the *braigetóirí*, the professional flatulists of medieval Ireland, which, as Valerie Allen notes, were legitimised as court performers, comparable with king’s jesters, hornblowers and jugglers.⁵⁷

However, a closer parallel with the non-odorous plethora of farts meticulously described by Joyce is offered by the example of Josef Pujol, more

⁵⁵ James Joyce, *Selected Letters of James Joyce*, ed. by Richard Ellmann (London: Faber & Faber, 1992), p. 185.

⁵⁶ The disposition of flatulence towards an aesthetic end is sketchily represented within modernist literature. Samuel Beckett offers a detailed tabulation of farts within *Molloy*, after noting the ‘never-failing toughness and impermeability’ of the *Times Literary Supplement* in relation to a volley of unwilling flatus: ‘Three hundred and fifteen farts in nineteen hours, or an average of over sixteen farts an hour’ (Samuel Beckett, *Molloy*, ed. by Shane Weller (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), p. 28).

⁵⁷ Valerie Allen, *On Farting: Language and Laughter in the Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 164.

familiarly known by his stage name of Le Pétomane.⁵⁸ Pujol was employed by the Moulin Rouge as a professional flatulist during the 1890s, and earned popular acclaim (and notoriety) as a consequence of his ability to voluntarily inhale air through his anus before expelling it at will. The reported range of Pujol's repertoire is remarkable. Highlights of his act included extinguishing a lit cigarette, a rendition of 'Au clair de la lune', and the impersonation of guns, thunder, and tearing calico.⁵⁹ Central to the successful reception of Le Pétomane – of the viability of flatulence as a performative medium – was his act's disassociation of odour from farting, of Pujol's insistence upon a sonic, rather than olfactory reception of his flatus, an emphasis supportive of the mimesis at the heart of his performance. Flatulence, in this instance, becomes viable as a comedic resource precisely because of its imitative potentialities, an attribute amenable to audition, but inimical to odour. Le Pétomane may have been able to mimic specific sounds, but an attempt to mobilise the odorous properties of flatus for impersonatory effect would have foundered on the fact that the characteristic odour of intestinal gas is an innate and unchangeable property – farts are always already predestined to smell *of* farts. Viewed in this way, *pétomanie* offers a realignment of flatulence *per se*, in this instance as a phenomenon susceptible to conscious control, rather than suggestive of the uncontrolled processes of the body's digestive system. Flatulence, in this instance, becomes locutionary and premeditated; a carefully rehearsed sequence of effects, rather than representative of

⁵⁸ E. Brandon Kershner suggests a 'dialogical interplay' between the virtuoso flatulence demonstrated by Le Pétomane, and Bloom's 'Prrrpfrrppffff' at the conclusion of 'Sirens' (R. Brandon Kershner, *The Culture of Joyce's Ulysses* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 15). However, while acknowledging the validity of Le Pétomane as a 'contextual allusion' in relation to Joyce, I argue that the latter's 1909 letters provide a more convincing parallel. The letters are unambiguously preoccupied with farts, whereas 'Prrrpfrrppffff' is ambiguous, suggestive of eructation and flatulence, but inconclusively determined as either.

⁵⁹ F. Caradec and Jean Nohain, *Le Petomane*, trans. by Warren Tute (London: Sphere, 1971), p. 23.

a spontaneous outburst.⁶⁰ The prospect of reproducibility pivotal to Pujol's performance offers a further point of difference between sonic and osmic flatus – the former is amendable to mechanical recording and transmission, the latter, echoing the limitations of Bertillon's system of anthropometrical measurement, is not.⁶¹

Joyce's emphasis upon the auditory component of Nora's flatulence offers an interrogation of the fart as a dually odorous and acoustic phenomenon, but equally invites consideration of a vaginal origin for the 'spluttering' volley of farts which form the basis of his erotic reminiscences. Certainly, Joyce's enthusiastic description of the mechanics of sexual intercourse suggest a gradual, piston-like inflation of his female partner which finds orgasmic relief through noisy decompression: 'It is wonderful to fuck a farting woman when every fuck drives one out of her' (*Selected Letters*, p. 185).⁶² However, the viability of a vaginal, rather than anal derivation for the flatulence recorded by Joyce is compromised by the text's counter-indicative yearning for a proximal relationship with the site of flatulent issue. This desire for a closure of distance sees the sonic properties of the fart negated in favour of an odour-informed apprehension: 'I hope Nora will let off no end of her farts in my face so that I may know their smell also' (p. 185). The eproctophilic fantasy outlined by

⁶⁰ The volitional nature of Pujol's flatulence invites reference to another, earlier letter of Joyce, which offers a rejection of the humorous potential of flatus when deliberate, rather than unwilling. Writing to Stanislaus Joyce in 1906, Joyce notes the 'chief pastime and joke' of Roman citizens, of 'breaking of wind rearward' (*Selected Letters*, p. 135). Such examples of flatus, Joyce suggests are untenable – productive of ennui – because of their lack of spontaneity: 'This kind of mechanical obscenity is damnably tiresome' (p. 135).

⁶¹ No extant recordings of Le Pétomane's act are available, although such a recording, as Robert R. Provine notes, was technically feasible using the technology of the late nineteenth century: 'Sadly, we cannot experience Le Pétomane's artistry because recordings of his act are unavailable, although one wax cylinder recording is rumored to exist' (Robert R. Provine, *Curious Behavior: Yawning, Laughing, Hiccups, and Beyond* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 191).

⁶² Puzzlingly, references to vaginal flatulence, either in passing or as a matter of extended consideration, are apparently absent from the writings of contemporaneous sexologists such as Havelock Ellis and Iwan Bloch; the all-encompassing surveys of sexual behaviour undertaken by both authors do not suggest prudery as the reason for this omission.

Joyce offers the prospect of odour as a future source of erotic fulfilment. This action reaffirms the letter's disjunction between flatulence as an auditory, rather than an odorous manifestation, but also offers an inversion of the bodily hierarchy of the face/behind, through the text's placement of the anus within kissing distance.

The fulfilment of this ano-facial fantasy, deferred within the letters, is realised in *Ulysses* through the text's description of the head to tail sleeping arrangement adopted by Bloom, an unorthodox preference recounted with disapproval by Molly: 'I suppose there isn't in all creation another man with the habits he has look at the way he's sleeping at the foot of the bed' (*Ulysses*, p. 634). The erotic potentialities latent in this configuration materialise in 'Ithaca', as Bloom embraces Molly, kissing the 'plump mellow yellow smellow melons of her rump, on each plump melanous hemisphere, in their mellow yellow furrow' (p. 604). However, the prodigal flatulence evoked within the letters is, in this instance, absent. The aroma of Molly's behind – Bloom's final olfactory impression in *Ulysses* – is alluded to through the conflation of 'smell' and 'yellow' offered by 'smellow', but the primary sense modalities through which Bloom apprehends Molly's buttocks are those of touch and sight, rather than olfaction. Similarly, the anus, the source of flatulence, is screened within the text, signalled through Joyce's use of 'melonous'. The congruity of Joyce's neologism with 'melanous' – olive complexioned and dark-haired – implies not only an oblique reference to Molly's colouring as a 'Spanish type. Quite dark, regular brunette, black', but also the presence of darkly pigmented pubic hair (p. 520). In turn, 'melonous' suggests a coded erotic tribute to anality through the word's elision of 'mel' – honeyed – and 'anus'.

The subversion of the established hierarchy of the face and anus gains additional influence through the attribution of vocal capacity to the rectum, which

achieves gnomic, punning expression within *Finnegans Wake*. The washerwomen's efforts to discriminate between a 'pinny and a surplice' entails the recruitment of odour for deductive purposes – the laundry is not redolent of a 'vesdre benediction smell'.⁶³ Rather, the novel offers an elision of flatus and perfume, which evokes diametrically opposed odour-objects, while avoiding a definitive assignation of odour identity: 'I can tell from here by their *eau de Colo* and the scent of her oder they're Mrs Magrath's' (p. 204). Eau de Cologne, in this instance, becomes suggestive of colonic emanations, while the 'oder', the text suggests, becomes evocative of the 'other', the unseen counterpart to the visuality characteristic of the face, 'the place that is signally not under one's own ocular control', as described by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick.⁶⁴ A comparable, punning inversion is offered earlier in *Finnegans Wake*, through Issy's recollection of the 'the first night he smelled powder and I coloured beneath my fan', with 'pouder' simultaneously suggestive of face powder and *puda*, a contraction of *puenda* (p. 147). This opposition is in turn framed by Octavio Paz as central to the project of psychoanalysis. Paz notes 'the conflict between the face and the ass, the (repressive) reality principle and the (explosive) pleasure principle'.⁶⁵ The binary opposition of the face and rectum derives force, Paz suggests, through metaphoricity, an attribute which underlines an uneasy congruence between the polar extremes of the body, while reinforcing their

⁶³ James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964), p. 204.

⁶⁴ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 199. Joyce's conflation of the colon and cologne as sources of odour additionally underscores the originally cloacal derivation of a particular ingredient of perfume. Musk – prior to the accidental discovery of an artificial substitute by Albert Baur in 1888 – was extracted from the anal glands of the musk deer and the civet cat (Charles S. Sell, *The Chemistry of Fragrances: From Perfumer to Consumer* (Cambridge: Royal Society of Chemistry, 2007), p. 96). The propinquity of fragrance and foetidity is identified by Bloom when he notes the use of odour derived from muskrat preputial glands – 'Bag under their tails' – in the manufacture of perfume (*Ulysses*, p. 307).

⁶⁵ Octavio Paz, *Conjunctions and Disjunctions* (New York: Arcade Publishing Inc., 1990), p. 4.

dissimilarity: ‘At first, the metaphor uncovers a similarity; the, immediately afterward, it covers it up again, either because the first term absorbs the second, or vice versa. In any case, the similarity disappears and the opposition between ass and face reappears, in a form that is now even stronger than before’ (*Conjunctions and Disjunctions*, p. 4).

However, within the context of Joyce’s letter(s), the oscillatory and unstable nature of the metaphorical coupling of face/anus described by Paz is offset by the narrative’s insistence upon the veridical nature of Nora’s flatulence. The fart, suggests the text(s), obtains authority as an unambiguous marker of identity, a foetid counterpart to the ‘musky dust’ of Lenina’s perfume (*Brave New World*, p.169), or Connie’s libation of Wood-Violet. However, in the case of Nora’s farts, their utility as an *aide memoire* is dependent upon the discriminatory powers of the eproctophilic. ‘I think I would know Nora’s fart anywhere’, Joyce confidently declares; ‘I think I could pick hers out in a roomful of farting women’ (*Selected Letters*, p. 185). This sentiment is echoed by Bloom when, dwelling upon Molly’s characteristic odour, he remarks ‘Know her smell in a thousand’ (*Ulysses*, p. 307). Unlike perfume, flatus, in this instance, becomes indicative of individual identity, as an unmistakably bodily emanation, rather than as an appurtenance of culture or an aggregation of ambient environmental odours, although the precise means of identification employed by Joyce – audition or olfaction – remains ambiguous.

However, while the narrative of the letter(s) articulates the appeal of the odorous component of flatus, these texts remain frustratingly circumscribed in their attempt to evoke the idiosyncratic aroma of Nora’s farts. This deficiency is signalled by Joyce’s (in this instance) limited vocabulary of odour, a restriction which recalls the comparative lack of narrative detail accorded to Stephen’s odorous experiments

and their conclusion in *A Portrait*. Joyce notes the ‘heavy smell’ of Nora’s behind, and anticipates a ‘bad smell slowly curling up out of your [Nora’s] backside’ (*Selected Letters*, p. 184), a limited evocation signified by Joyce’s repeated and unremarkable use of the word ‘smell’ which suggests a desire to accord tangibility to a fugitive odour, a narrative device comparable to Proust’s suggestion of a ‘clotted’ aroma in *A la recherche*, cited in my previous chapter. In the case of Joyce, the diffusion of a gas is transposed into the realm of visibility – the smell ‘curls’, acquires a palpability hitherto denied as a consequence of the representational restrictions of language (p. 184). This chemically-accented approach to flatulence is also demonstrated in *Giacomo Joyce*, through the text’s evocation of ‘foul phosphorescent farts’, a description which literally illuminates the presence of malodour by ascribing it photoluminescent properties (*Giacomo Joyce*, p. 12). As Laura Frost notes, Joyce’s visualisation of flatus occurs within a more extensive catalogue of odours generated by an audience attending an opera. While it is worth noting, in passing, the comparability of Joyce’s ‘symphony of smells’ (p. 12) to other, cognate juxtapositions of music and odour described previously in this thesis, I want to respond to Frost’s assertion that Joyce’s ‘strange odors [...] are aimed less at evoking the senses than at displaying the author’s linguistic virtuosity and playful imagination’ (*The Problem with Pleasure*, p. 61). While agreeing that Joyce’s representation of odour is undeniably ludic, I contend that in the instance of his 1909 letters, there is a powerful and evident desire to render odour inscriptible, an ambition supported by Joyce’s repeated injunction to transmute the presence of flatulence into a visible sign. The text notes the erotic appeal of ‘a little brown stain on the seat of your [Nora’s] white drawers’, an observation which modulates into an

explicit instruction to buy ‘whorish drawers’ in a subsequent letter, and to ‘discolour them just a little behind’ (*Selected Letters*, p. 184, p. 185).

The narrative’s longing for a visual signification of odour is additionally suggested through the assertion of an associative, proximal relationship between text and the source of flatus. Joyce offers formal guidance on enhancing the erotic effect of his correspondence with Nora through stylistic emphases (which also, usefully, render the text amenable to reception and decoding by a visually-impaired subject). ‘Write the dirty words big and underline them’, Joyce advises, but his stipulations also suggest that the circumscribed ability of text to encode odour can be counterbalanced by a literal juxtaposition of sign and object; Nora, after composing a narrative of ‘dirty words’ is instructed to ‘pull up your dress a moment and hold them in under your dear little farting bum’ (*Selected Letters*, p. 186).

The contiguity of anus and paper, odour and sign, sought by Joyce is offered a more explicit articulation within *Ulysses*. Contact between the two contributes to the catalogue of Bloom’s ‘sins of the past’ catalogued within ‘Circe’: ‘Did he not he [Bloom] lie in bed, the gross boar, gloating over a nauseous fragment of wellused toilet paper presented to him by a nasty harlot’ (*Ulysses*, p. 438). In addition, however, the novel’s evocation of non-odorous correspondence, exemplified by Bloom’s receipt of a tentatively erotic letter from Martha Clifford in ‘The Lotus Eaters’, can be fruitfully compared with the prospect of impregnating Nora’s letters with the aroma of flatulence. Martha’s letter rehearses the narrative particularities demonstrated by Joyce’s 1909 correspondence – a deliberate and provocative identification of a putative ‘naughtiness’, coupled with entreaties for an erotic proliferation of text; Joyce and Martha are united in their desire for a prompt and detailed response. Yet, the odour-enhanced narrative endorsed in Joyce’s letters

remains unrealised in this instance, despite the assertion of the olfactory as a source of interest within the letter, a preoccupation signalled by Martha's parting request: 'Do tell me what kind of perfume does your wife use. I want to know' (*Ulysses*, p. 64). The letter's reiteration of perfume – odour – as a mark of individuation and erotic identity – is subverted by the near-odourless character of the flower enclosed by Martha, as noted by Bloom: 'He [Bloom] tore the flower gravely from its pinhold smelt its almost no smell and placed it in his heart pocket' (p. 64). Bloom's bloom – the (ostensibly) fragrant counterpart to the Joyce's erotically-cathected odour of flatulence – is eloquent of a specific florally-inspired symbolism, a 'Language of flowers', as Bloom observes (p. 64). Yet, in this context the flower signals a schism between an anticipated, aromatic sign, and the material object with which it is associated – we *expect* flowers to disseminate a characteristic scent (p. 64).

The disaccord between sign and referent embodied by Martha's flower poses a representational and interpretative challenge, particularised by the lack of descriptive detail surrounding its diminished odour, which is evidently identifiable, but is not accorded a full narrative encoding. Bloom's interpretation of her letter recruits the 'Language of flowers' as a guiding rubric to address the signifiatory gap generated by the troubling odour/non-odour of the innominate flower, which remains resistant to Bloom's deductive capabilities: 'A flower. I think it's a. A yellow flower with flattened petals' (p. 63). However, the prospect of an authoritative reading of the text is deferred, problematised, by Bloom's re-encoding of her letter: 'Angry tulips with you darling manflower punish your cactus if you don't please poor forgetmenot how I long violets to dear roses when we soon anemone meet all naughty nightstalk' (p. 64). The fugitive symbolism denoted by 'yellow flower' is obscured by a proliferation of florally-inspired metaphoricity, which reflects the

erotic preoccupations of its recipient through a fusion of the floral and genital, suggested by Bloom's 'manflower' or 'nightstalk'. This commingling finds cognate expression later in the novel, as Bloom reclines in the bath and notes his 'floating hair of the stream around the limp father of thousands, a languid floating flower' (p. 71).⁶⁶

Martha's frustrated attempt to offer a decodable odorous sign to Bloom in her letter resonates with the urge to generate a visually-accessible inscription of odour suggested in Joyce's correspondence with Nora. Both texts employ interrelated strategies of closely associating an odour-inflected narrative with an odour object, whether a flower enclosed within a love letter, or a letter impregnated with the odour of flatulence. In both instances, this coupling is evocative of a desire to diminish the signifiatory gap between sign and object, and – following the logic of such a position – to negate the inherent arbitrariness of the sign. Put simply, if the text, as a material object, is physically saturated with the odour which it encodes, then it no longer merely suggests the presence of an odour – it *is* the odour object. However, attempts to co-opt odour as a means of actualising that which is denoted through text are compromised by an inevitable disjunction between text and olfaction. An odorous substance and a text may be yoked together for narrative effect, as Joyce demonstrates, but the two are never coterminous. A physical odour may pervade the material object of a text – a love letter, for example – but such an effect is ambient, rather than indicative of a precise alignment between that which is apprehended through olfaction and that which is being described. One cannot be the other, a

⁶⁶ Joyce's aestheticisation of Bloom's genitals invites comparison with Havelock Ellis's contrasting opinion of the unlovely appearance of human reproductive organs. Genitalia, suggests Ellis, are relegated in significance within artistic depictions of the human body because they 'are not aesthetically beautiful'. (Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis, 1914), IV, p. 11.)

mutual exclusivity of signification which is mirrored by early twentieth-century neuroscientific investigations into the process of olfaction, which anticipate Batty's later commentary on the discrepancy between the *sign* of an odour and the object that it apparently represents.

While it is true that such enquiries do not explicitly identify the comparability of language and odour, they offer useful theoretical support for such a pairing, which, as noted, is a central assertion of this thesis. In turn, this similarity tells against the habitual categorisation of language as innately visually-implicated, as demonstrated in Keller's frustration with the repertory of ocular, rather than olfactorily-derived analogies available to the non-seeing subject, and in Joyce's framing of cognition as routed through the visually-dependent experience of reading a text, embodied in Bloom's imagined encounter of the blind stripling and the passing girl in 'Lestrygonians'. However, as noted in my previous chapter, this formal congruence between language and olfaction is at odds with odour's equally influential placement as alienated from linguistic representation, and consequently, the utility of olfaction as a master-signifier for the ineffable, typified by the notionally transcendent qualities of art.

The suggestion that odour, rather than acting as an exemplar of authenticity, instead reiterates the pairing of sign and object characteristic of language, is described by Walter Bromberg and Paul Schilder, in 'Olfactory Imagination and Olfactory Hallucinations' (1934). Their paper, echoing Proust's 'zone of evaporation', accords a penumbral presence to odour: 'The object is perceived as surrounded by smell; i.e., the smell is coming off the object and the substance in

question is “odorous.”⁶⁷ The mechanics of olfaction described by Bromberg and Schilder ascribe spatiality to odour. It exists – is presumed to exist – at a specific location, prior to transmission, and subsequently traverses physical space, prior to reception by the olfactive subject: ‘The smell, then, goes from the object to the nose and is perceived as being in the nose. When the odor has left the smelling object, one is concerned then only with the odor and no longer with the substance’ (‘Olfactory Imagination’, p. 470). The tenability of a secure connection between the object associated with an odorous property, and the odour subsequently apprehended, is accordingly destabilised by their spatial interrelationship, a physical gap between origin and destination which rehearses a conceptual counterpart within the field of linguistics. As Thomas Brockelman notes: ‘The gap between the signifier and signified recreates the “space” that eludes every representation’.⁶⁸ Following the logic of this association, odour and language are commonly defined (in this context) by their shared status as signs, arbitrarily interposed between the reader and/or perceiver and objects, recalling Proust’s postulation of the ‘hindrance’ of the sentence as an occluding influence in *A la recherche*, or H. D.’s identification of a fugitive and transcendent meaning screened by the mediating presence of words in *Trilogy*.

I argue that the corollary of such an ordering is to tacitly assert the autonomy of the sign; Bromberg and Schilders’ description of the physical properties of olfaction denote odour as a floating signifier, disassociated from an originating odour

⁶⁷ Walter Bromberg and Paul Schilder, ‘Olfactory Imagination and Olfactory Hallucinations: An Experimental and Clinical Study of the Sense of Smell in Normal and in Psychotic Persons’, *Archives of Neurology & Psychiatry*, 32.3 (1934), 467 (p. 470) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1001/archneurpsyc.1934.02250090002001>>.

⁶⁸ Thomas Brockelman, ‘Lacan and Modernism: Representation and Its Vicissitudes’, in *Disseminating Lacan*, ed. by David Pettigrew and François Raffoul (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), pp. 207–37 (p. 218).

object or referent: 'It [odour] is an indefinite quality of an object and as such is something objective in the outside world attached to the solid object or more or less independent of it' ('Olfactory Imagination and Olfactory Hallucinations', p. 472). Significantly, the decoupling suggested here liberates odour from a presumed reliance upon an obligatory odorous source; we might otherwise assume that an aroma cannot exist independently of a point of origin. Accordingly, to stipulate an odour's dependency upon its source, when seeking to identify and apply a linguistic analogue, suggests a particular conception of language; that is, as a means of representing external objects. Such an avowedly 'old-fashioned' approach to language in relation to odour is, for example, recommended by *The Smell of Books*: 'language is [...] a reference system to a reality outside itself' (*The Smell of Books*, p. 24). By contrast, the (dis)affinities between language and odour established by this study encourage a divergent view, a position enforced, in part, by a lack of comforting linearity between signs and objects, which, as I have argued, obtains an additional emphasis in the case of olfaction, which urges the intervention of analogy or sensorial counterpart to suggest its effects in lieu of a wealth of appropriate descriptors.

Odours, as I have demonstrated throughout this chapter, are unreliable aides to identification, exemplified by the difficulties encountered by Keller and Joyce when attempting to fix individual personas through the agency of olfaction in the absence of vision. A stable odorous signification is always already compromised, not only by an original paucity of classificatory terms, but by the free play of odours characteristic of an individual olfactory signature, which, as noted, is composed of an aggregate of aromas, all of which are only incidentally – arbitrarily – connected with their supposed origin. True, the veridical credibility accorded to farts by Joyce

is supported by their status as unmistakably personal emanations; flatulence is, as I have noted, a unique product of an individual's digestion, rather than an assumed odorous attribute. However, as stated earlier, this notional individuality, prized within Joyce's letters, is belied by the uniform aroma of flatus, an unvarying fetidity at odds with the diversity of such anthropometrical variations as fingerprints or facial characteristics. In turn, this odorous conformity inspires a recourse to analogy, demonstrated in Joyce's recitation of the sonic, rather than olfactory attributes of Nora's flatulence.

Conversely, Bloom's musings upon the varied and distinct odorous attributes of Molly and Gerty in 'Nausicaa' would appear to address the uniformity of olfactory signification demonstrated in the 1909 letters. In this instance, Bloom displays heightened powers of olfactory discrimination through his deductive reading of the constituents of Gerty's perfume: 'Heliotrope? No. Hyacinth? Hm. Roses, I think' (*Ulysses*, p. 306). Similarly, Bloom recalls the ingredients of Molly's signature preferred perfume 'opoponax [...] with a little jessamine mixed' (p. 306). Moreover, Bloom's heuristic appreciation of perfume assumes an increasingly knowledgeable tone, as the narrative deploys the rhetoric of the perfumer to evoke the appositeness of Molly's chosen fragrance. The admixture of these ingredients, rehearsing the structure of perfume as divisible into top, middle and base notes, is, Bloom proposes, accordingly suggestive of her 'high notes and her low notes' (p. 306). Comparably, as Laura Frost observes, Bloom's dismissal of Gerty's perfume – 'Sweet and cheap: soon sour' – reflects a specific social encoding, suggested by Joyce's use of the word 'cheap', and its association (at least within the context of literary modernism) with prostitution (*Ulysses*, p. 306; *The Problem with Pleasure*, p. 52). Here, the utility of perfume is extended beyond the mere acquisition of an

agreeable odour for hedonic effect. Bloom's interpretation of the grammar of perfume – what it *means*, culturally, to select a particular fragrance in preference of another – offers tacit support for odour's credibility as a marker of individual identity. The selection of a perfume accordingly indicates the susceptibility of a particular consumer to a particular brand or formulation of perfume, with the wearer consequently defined by their choice. A biologically-derived, unique personal odour is, the logic of this position implies, supplanted by an artificial olfactory signature composed of an aggregate of artificially-generated aromas, all of which are evocative of a particular set of cultural relations.

Yet to impose such a distinction between 'artificial' and 'natural' aromas, particularly in the context of Bloom's reading of the respective olfactory signatures of Gerty and Molly, ignores the alteration in a perfume's odour when applied to human skin as a personal adornment. As industrial chemists note, perfumes are modified by their chemical interaction with their wearer: 'A challenge for fragrance marketing is that every individual has a different skin chemistry, which changes the quality of the fragrance on each person'.⁶⁹ Perfumes resist linear signification; the olfactory impression generated by Molly's selection of opoponax and jessamine (or, interrelatedly, the peau d'Espagne she rejects in 'Penelope') is preordained to be different to that of any other wearer. By contrast, Gerty's selection of perfume in 'Nausicaa' attempts to deliberately isolate it from the modifying influence of her body odour. The text's observation that 'she [Gerty] always kept a piece of cottonwool scented with her favourite perfume' suggests a desire to maintain the integrity of her selected fragrance by screening it from other, competing odours

⁶⁹ Stephen J. Herman, 'Applications II: Fragrance', in *Chemistry and Technology of Flavours and Fragrances*, ed. by David Rowe (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), pp. 305–29 (p. 308).

(*Ulysses*, p. 287). In other words, Gerty is determined to enforce a particular reading of her perfume, an ambition stymied by Bloom's subsequent interpretation, and indicative of an unpredictability of signification, as noted by *Collier's* in 1929: 'Their [perfumes'] effects on other people are not always predictable. They may stimulate, intrigue, annoy, fascinate or make people absolutely sick'.⁷⁰

The odorous body is, therefore, for Joyce, an endless source of signification, in which the prospect of assigning a stable connection between an individual and their notional characteristic olfactory signature is always already deferred in the play of commingled odours. As described in *A Portrait*, Stephen's quest for the *ur* stench is dependent upon a process of 'curious comparisons'; noisome odours are identified through their differentiation from agreeable smells. This contention, that odours derive meaning through their juxtaposition as odorous *signs*, rather than their innate properties, lends support to my wider assertion of a congruence between language and olfaction. Of particular significance, when seeking to apply a model of differential, relational meaning to olfactory experience, is the relevance of the foul/fragrant binary opposition within which odours are habitually categorised; a similar centrality is accorded to oppositional differences within the field of linguistics: 'concepts are purely differential and defined not by their positive content but negatively by their relations with the other terms of the system. Their most precise characteristic is in being what the others are not'.⁷¹

Bloom's reading of the composite odours of Gerty's perfume enacts a mode of thinking which echoes the textually-influenced cognition he attributes to the blind

⁷⁰ Hazel Rawson Cades, 'Follow Your Nose', *Collier's Weekly*, 25 May 1929, 30–32 (p. 30) <<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Colliers-1929may25-00030>> [accessed 4 February 2016].

⁷¹ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. by Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), p. 117.

stripling, and which imposes structural coherence on that which is resistant to the correlatives offered by language. Throughout my preceding chapters, I have repeatedly emphasised a persistent feature of the encounter of modernist aesthetics with olfaction; a desire to grant materiality to the evanescence of odour. This urge, as I have argued in this chapter, is demonstrated throughout Joyce's writing, but is accentuated in 'Nausicaa', as the narrative self-reflexively recruits the imagery of text, a manoeuvre which elides language and odour as kindred entities. Bloom's cogitation upon the female body as a source of odour transmission reiterates a familiar desire to lend tangibility to that which is otherwise insubstantial: 'Tell you what it is. It's like a fine fine veil or web they have all over the skin, fine like what do you call it gossamer, and they're always spinning it out of them, fine as anything' (*Ulysses*, p. 307). On one hand, the odour analogy proposed by Bloom accords centrality to women as a locus of meaning, from which a network of associations, interpretations and assumptions radiates outwards. More pertinently, the 'spinning' of odours imagined by Bloom suggests the comparability of language and olfaction, a similarity supported by the derivation of 'text' from the Latin *texere*, to weave. Here, odours acquire a tentative solidity, materialising into threads which continuously weave together into an olfactory aggregate which presents a sensory and conceptual challenge. Joyce's biographically-attested osmic sensitivities, and Bloom's preoccupation with odours indicate an odourscape susceptible to the discriminatory powers of the olfactophile (or visually-deprived subject), but this deductive awareness is, insistently, routed through the medium of language and the combined creative restrictions and opportunities generated by its encounter with olfactory experience.

Conclusion

Recuperating the olfactory; reimagining the senses of modernism

This study has focused on the representation of odour within the context of European modernism. My examination of encodings of the olfactory, drawn from an array of texts and discursive domains, has been guided by two main critical considerations.

First, there is the significance of olfaction as an object of concern among modernists.

How much interest did odour command at the beginning of the twentieth century among literary modernists and throughout other interrelated cultural representations such as art, linguistics, neuroscience, psychology, philosophy and anthropology?

Second, there is the challenge of determining an idiosyncratically modernist conception of the olfactory – can a framing of odour reflective of the preoccupations and historical circumstances of modernism now be described?

The preceding chapters of this thesis have established not only the hitherto unremarked richness of the olfactory's deployment within modernist aesthetics, but also the pervasive influence of odour across a range of disciplines and cultural practices. Proust and Joyce remain indispensable writers when addressing the encounter of literary modernism with olfaction; in this sense, I have not argued for an unseating of their canonical status. However, these writers can now be viewed as protagonists in a much wider network of olfactory representations than has been previously described. In particular, the fictional and discursive writing of Lawrence has been crucial to the arguments advanced by this thesis. Lawrence, as I have demonstrated, displays not only an intense awareness of the visceral immediacy of

odour and its utility in underscoring the culturally unfamiliar, but also the significance of olfactorily-derived disgust throughout modern Western society. Such writing, as noted in my introduction, reiterates Lawrence's broader, critically-attested preoccupation with the somatic, but of equal importance is his conception of language. Lawrence urges a scrupulous handling of language, but simultaneously endorses the incommunicable, of that which lies beyond the remit of textual evocation. In turn, this paradigm and its juxtaposition of apparent incompatibilities has proved invaluable when examining the dichotomous relationship of language and olfaction, affirming the necessity of Lawrence's inclusion in future considerations of modernist representations of odour.

However, as cautioned in my introduction, my mapping of modernism's engagement with odour has (necessarily) excluded legitimate areas of interest. It may be observed that this thesis has primarily contended with male writers and artists, a feature which invites redress in a future study which more fully addresses odour's relevance within the context of gender studies. Nevertheless, a socio-historical narrative can be discerned, played out through the primary interaction of odour with technology and language, but also manifested in discrete events, such as the formation of the Smell Society in 1935, conceived partly as a response to the intolerability of the malodour of industrialisation, but also as a means of recuperating the scentual appeal of olfaction. As noted in Chapter Two, the growth of private vehicle ownership led to popular anxiety at the reconfiguration of the odourscape of cities, in which a plurality of odours, the key to the olfactory navigation proposed by Joyce in Chapter Five, was superseded by the allegedly ubiquitous stench of petrol fumes. As I have discussed in Chapter Three, this shift towards an undifferentiated urban olfactory environment was accompanied by the unprecedented

industrialisation of the manufacture of perfume, enabling the production of a bewildering heterogeneity of odours which threatened to outstrip an available repertory of brand names. Yet, the diversification of odour signalled by the expansion of perfume as an object of mass consumption was paralleled by a coincident circumscription of odour as a marker of individual identity, driven by the emergence of an olfactorily-informed bodily disgust within modern culture. This effacing of biologically-derived, personal odours tells against their persistent recruitment as uniquely individual attributes by figures as diverse as Joyce and Keller. Consequently, the socially-approved odour of the modern subject is evocative of that which is *acquired*, rather than innate, an arbitrary association which invokes the wider and crucial question of odour's semiological stability, to which I will presently return.

It is, however, necessary to qualify modernism's contribution in reconfiguring cultural conceptions of odour. It is self-evident that the engagement of modernist aesthetics with olfaction did not inspire a revolutionary inversion of the established hierarchies of the sensorium. Certainly, the basic disparity between a plurality of detectable odours and an impoverished vocabulary to evoke their presence remains intact, despite calls by the Smell Society to correct this imbalance. Western culture – the focus of this thesis – is still dominated by, and mediated through, the agencies of vision and audition. The utility of odour among the subjects of ethnographic study is proposed by anthropologists, but this contention, as I have described in Chapter One, is always already informed by olfaction's designation as a primitive sense modality, epitomised by the speculative anthropology of Freud. Yet, it is a finding of this thesis that odour's placement within modern culture sits between two axes; a retrograde past, and an odour-enhanced futurity. This is not a

uniform feature of modernity – there is an equally insistence upon a civilised progression towards a deodorised future by writers such as Bloch – but the association of odour with technological development is evident in the speculative fiction of Huxley, Glog and Stapledon, and in the radical poetics of Italian Futurism.¹ Nevertheless, olfactory experience remains excluded from mechanical capture and reproduction, at least in relation to the harnessing of odour as an accessible broadcast medium, despite modernism’s valuation of this projected technological development as an apparently inevitable innovation. The prospect of recruiting olfaction in the service of a communal entertainment comparable to cinema, envisioned by Huxley, Chaplin and Hartmann, remains unrealised. Yet, despite this apparent technological failure, modern perfumes – as I have demonstrated in Chapter Three – are closely linked with the innovations announced by cinema through their shared escapism and mutually supportive advertising strategies. Both, in the context of modernism, are contested modes of cultural production, in which the apparatus of industrialisation and wealth generation sits uneasily with claims to aesthetic legitimacy. Criticism has recognised the struggle of early cinema to achieve recognition as a valid artistic medium, but, I argue, the comparable and contested assertion of aesthetic credibility advanced by modern perfumers has been neglected, an omission which provides scope for further, more detailed research.

While perfume signals a dialectic between the asserted value of the artist/auteur and the machinery of mass production and labour, it is still pertinent to

¹ Although I have cited Velimir Khlebnikov’s predictions of an odorous form of radio in the introduction to this study, I have primarily addressed the aesthetics of Italian, rather than Russian Futurism. However, by demonstrating the significance of odour as an object of artistic concern for Marinetti *et al*, I have established grounds for a future, comparable consideration of odour’s representation throughout Russian Futurist aesthetics.

ask *why* odour's reception as an object of mass consumption was individualised, rather than collectively experienced. This study has addressed this question by being consistently mindful of odour's formal properties, attributes that inform its placement within modern culture across a range of cultural practices and institutions. These, as I have demonstrated, range from the perfume empires of Coty and Chanel, to the experimental scent concerts of Hartmann and the provocative endorsement of olfaction by Italian Futurists, but all are confronted with similar difficulties. Odour's evanescence and resistance to enclosure present a practical problem when attempting its deployment for aesthetic effect; aromas commingle and evade the structural differentiation deemed a requisite for authentic art; the interpretation of an odour is routed through the preconceptions of its recipient. As Proust reminds us, odours expand beyond linear signification to offer a complex of established associations. These frustrations are transcended in the dystopian fictions of Huxley and Glog through their appeal to an as-yet unrealised (and unattainable) technology, but remain in force within the historical conditions of modernism.

Conversely, as an object of private consumption, perfume's growing economic significance suggests a correlation between a growing range of commercially-available scents, and their selection as markers of notional individuality. Here, odour's formal attributes are unproblematic; a variability of reception is tolerated as a consequence of perfume's utility as an article of personal adornment, rather than an instrument of mass effect. Simultaneously, as my survey of the modern perfume industry reveals, the marketing of scent is constantly reliant upon linguistic analogue. Perfumes – then, as now – require an appropriate brand name to announce their presence *as* a commercial product, and to distinguish their presence from rival scents. Given the success of perfume as a commercial enterprise,

and its penetration of popular consciousness, there is an apparent and surprising sparsity of references to branded, rather than generic scents in modernist literature.² Admittedly, this study has primarily engaged with the commodification of perfume and its debated aesthetic identity, rather than its literary encoding *per se*. As my final chapter indicates, perfume's representation as an object of literary interest is an established trope of Joyce criticism, and is by no means an exhausted line of enquiry. While I have touched on the erotic significance of perfume, there is a need for future research to more comprehensively examine the wider associations between sexuality and odour exhibited throughout modern culture, particularly in relation to the proposed linkage between homosexuality and olfactory disquiet sanctioned by Bloch, Brill and Ellis. For now, I want to emphasise that the success of perfume as an economic entity is dependent upon the ascription of a sign, evocative of a drive to ascribe fixity upon that which is inherently resistant to linguistic analogue and subject to an entrenched variability of interpretation.

Interrelatedly, although my reading of the modernist representation of odour has been guided by an interdisciplinary methodology, my examination of the period's material culture and associated fields of knowledge has returned, insistently, to the interrelationship of language and olfaction. This seemingly inescapable linkage is a foundational concern of this thesis, and by exploring its implications I have moved beyond a mere restatement of the limited range of olfactory descriptors to describe a more nuanced and intriguing (dis)affinity between language and olfaction than has been previously identified. Furthermore, my assertion of

² While noting the exemplary nature of the texts surveyed by this thesis, the omission of, for example, Chanel No.5 is noteworthy, given the canonical status ascribed to the product as quintessentially modern perfume. True, Lawrence cites Coty's Wood-violet; Joyce references Santa Maria Novella's Peau d'Espagne, but given the emphasis upon commodity culture in *Ulysses*, the absence of a more extensive repertory of branded perfumes in the novel and throughout literary modernism in general urges further investigation.

language's centrality when addressing the modernist conception of odour supports the priority accorded to literary encodings of olfaction throughout this study. Who better placed to contend with the representative challenges embodied by odour, one might ask, than those directly engaged in an interrogation of the capabilities of language?

My position is that the literature and art of the early twentieth century are eloquent of an array of strategies recruited to circumvent the problem of odour's representation, while remaining alive to the creative opportunities engendered by the difficulty of this enterprise. As I have shown, the urge to represent olfactory experience is informed by an underlying – modernist – dissatisfaction with established modes of artistic production, in which the absence of a fully-articulated olfactory aesthetic resource heightens the appeal of odour as a means of supporting the veridical ambitions of art. This recruitment of the olfactory in the service of modernist literature and art is, I contend, informed by odour's lack of mechanical reproducibility. Vision and audition can be reliably manipulated for mimetic effect – these senses support an extension of what can be seen and heard through the application of technology, but more significantly, habituate their recipients to the artificiality of their production. Radio and cinema, rather than acting as passive relays of sensory information, modify the act of perception, an attribute noted by contemporaneous commentators. The stylistic innovations offered by cinematography – temporal compression and expansion, the close-up, montage – are, for example, claimed by Fernand Léger as generative of a new way of seeing, broadening the scope of what can be experienced by the perceiving subject. Writing in 1922, Léger suggests: '80 percent of the elements and objects that help us to live are only noticed by us in our everyday lives, while 20 percent are seen. From this, I

deduce the cinematographic revolution is to make us see everything that has merely been noticed [emphasis in original].³

By contrast, odour, at least within the context of modernism, remains powerfully evocative of that which is unmediated by technology, and which, therefore, is *real*. The art and literature of Italian Futurism is legitimised, becomes an enhanced mode of representation, when it is lent a provocative odorous emphasis; Joyce's eproctophilic letters enact a desire to magnify an erotic narrative through a literal impregnation with the aroma of flatulence; the shock of cross-cultural contact is, for Lawrence and Malinowski, most effectively evoked by the arresting immediacy of olfactory, rather than visual experience. Yet, despite odour's co-option as evocative of the real, or unavoidably affective, I have shown that olfaction is equally suggestive of the mimesis it is so frequently recruited to augment. As noted, ersatz mass-produced odours, typified by perfume, are assigned as markers of individual identity throughout modern culture by writers as diverse as Keller and Huxley, despite the evident artificiality of these perfumes' derivation and the arbitrariness of their selection.

At a fundamental level, the representative fallibilities of odour belie its seemingly veridical nature; when we encounter an odour, this is not necessarily evidence of an originating object. Olfaction, unlike vision, does not offer corroboration of the materiality of objects. Rather, as I have argued, odours are *signs*, and the olfactory's most obvious counterpart is language, an incongruous parallel, given the representational limitations of language in relation to odour, and

³ Fernand Léger, 'A Critical Essay on the Plastic Quality of Abel Gance's Film *The Wheel*', in *Functions of Painting*, ed. by Edward F. Fry, trans. by Alexandra Anderson (New York: Viking Press, 1973), pp. 20–23 (p. 22).

yet an indispensable comparison, given the equally compelling affinities between the two domains.

I have described the slippage in signification characteristic of literary modernism's efforts to provide a satisfactory textual analogue for the experience of olfaction, and the consequent rhetorical approaches adopted by writers when negotiating this difficulty. Such a lapse in signifiatory authority may, it can be protested, be taken to be a commonplace of language. After all, language, operating as a system of representation, can never *be* the thing it strives to represent. Yet this thesis identifies olfaction as a special case, in part because of the congruency between the unit of odour/odour object, and that the pairing of sign and object as a fundamental constituent of language. An odour does not always accurately represent its source, or by extension, may not originate from its assumed source at all. Odour is consistently diffused, modified and misinterpreted; so too with language.

Such a similarity could be dismissed as merely circumstantial, were it not for the historical context granted to modernism's engagement with the ambiguities of odour by contemporaneous developments in linguistics, and by the framing of language offered by modernist aesthetics and philosophy. For example, as I have suggested, Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916) offers a means of conceptualising odour as a comparable construct to the duality of signifier and signified expressed within the linguistic unit. As cautioned in the introduction to this thesis, my intention has not been to provide an extensive analysis of modern linguistics. Rather, I have emphasised the broad applicability of a Saussurean view of language in relation to the placement of odour throughout modern culture; a more thorough exploration of interplay of psycholinguistics with modern culture lies

within the remit of a future research project.⁴ For the purposes of our current discussion, the proposition that language is an inherently unstable entity additionally resonates with the intangibility characteristic of odour as a physical and conceptual property, but also alludes to the wider modernist questioning of the representational credentials of language. I have demonstrated that within the context of modernism – at least in relation to the texts I have surveyed – odour emerges as a singularly acute example of what language *cannot* say – and consequently, of that which can be meaningfully encoded through text.

In focusing upon the value of odour as a means of signifying the evasions and silences of language, I am conscious of the objection that such an argument signifies nothing more than a disabling vacuum of meaning. Such a counter-argument is pithily declared by Bertrand Russell in his introduction to the *Tractatus*: ‘Mr Wittgenstein manages to say a good deal about what cannot be said’ (*Tractatus*, p. xxi). However, this study has sought to counter Russell’s protest, by uncovering the persistent deployment of the olfactory within modernism as a means of indicating, metaphorically, that which is resistant to explication. Odour emerges as a pervasive metaphor for that which cannot be written about, but can only be shown, echoing the *Tractatus*, or more accurately in the case of odour, *signalled* (or smelled).

⁴ For example, odours and odour objects are evidently material phenomena. In comparing the formal properties of odour with a Saussurean model of language, I am aware that Saussure’s paradigm of signifier/signified describes the relationship between an acoustic image and a mental concept, rather than designating the signified as objects, things existing in the world (*Course in General Linguistics*, p. 66). In asserting the congruency of olfaction and language, I am accordingly concerned to emphasise a general analogical relationship, rather than an absolute accord between the sensorial and the linguistic; I am mindful of the distinction between language and odour, but am attentive to their similarities.

The prevalence of the language of odour in modernism's endorsement of the ineffable is demonstrated in the range of textual domains in which it occurs, and the varying applications of the olfactory as a textual conceit, operating across a spectrum of discursive axes. The olfactory is typically mobilised to suggest that which can be perceived, but remains beyond the remit of articulation. This is evinced, for example, by the evanescence of Benjamin's hypothetical 'pure' language or Lewis's use of odour to suggest a perceptible, yet indescribable modernity. Interrelatedly, the physical properties of odour are persistently recruited by modernist writers to signal that which is irreducible to its constituent components. In this capacity, odour's veridical credentials are repeatedly invoked in tandem with its character of indissolubility; the 'truth' of an aesthetic object is repeatedly evoked as an odorous or diaphanous property by such texts as *Trilogy* and *A la recherche*. The fugitive 'meaning' of a work of art can be recognised, but its apprehension is always already qualified by the mediating influence of odour-inflected metaphoricity required to communicate its presence. That odour – or its metaphorical properties – might be harnessed to sanction aesthetic production naturally depends upon a particular estimation of ineffability as an essential quality of art. I suggest that this position cannot have been uniform throughout modernist aesthetics; the widespread use of odour as a means of highlighting art as a conduit to non-conceptual understanding encourages a future consideration of dissenting opinions.⁵

⁵ For example, W. E. Kennick, writing in 'Art and the Ineffable', criticises the conception of art as a privileged mode of discourse, a means of communicating that which would otherwise be inexpressible: 'Works of art may serve as vehicles of illumination and enlightenment, but they do not do so by saying the unsayable, communicating the incommunicable. In so far as they say anything at all – and there is no reason why they must do so – what works of art say can be said in words' (W. E. Kennick, 'Art and the Ineffable', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 58.12 (1961), 309 (p. 320) <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2023228>>).

It might be further objected that valorising odour as a rhetorical substitute for an otherwise inexpressible ineffability is to depreciate language, by defining it as characterised by limitations, rather than illimitability. I have countered this by demonstrating the range of the olfactory's far-reaching applicability as a metaphorical resource. Odour is not deployed when language 'fails' but rather, evinces the ingenuity of language – or more accurately, that of its manipulators – in rectifying a lack of available linear signification.

Odour's utility as a repository of metaphor available to address the incommunicable, enables critical intervention into the broader modernist dialogue between metaphoricity and representation. This thesis asserts that the heightened metaphoricity characteristic of the olfactory, a product of the asymmetry between the detectable range of odours and their linguistic counterparts, accentuates the figurative liabilities haunting the desired objectivity of the language proper to the natural and social sciences. To speak of odour is to inevitably contend with its ambiguities, a tendency which, within the context of such projects as anthropology and psychoanalysis, excludes olfaction as a valid perceptual mode of empirical observation.

The scientific monograph or paper derives credibility, is legitimised, by the analysis of visual and auditory percepts – the scientist does not record olfactory impressions, because such sense datum are innately non-scientific through their enforced reliance upon analogical, metaphorical language. The disruptive potential of a determinedly irrational sense modality is accordingly mitigated within anthropological and psychoanalytic texts by its outright exclusion, or containment within an approved narrative mode. Thus, Malinowski's olfactory impressions are allowed discursive space only within the confines of the *Diary*; Freud's

reconstruction of the primal moment of olfactory renunciation is framed as an unverifiable reconstructive speculation, rather than empirical observation.

Throughout this thesis, I have confined my analysis of the associations between psychoanalysis and anthropology to social, rather than biological anthropology; further research is required to adequately examine the interplay between olfaction, Freud's imagined prehistory and seminal events in other, related anthropological fields.

This contention, that the language of odour marks a breach in 'objective' discourse – taken, for the purposes of this study, to be those narrative modes which strive for unambiguity, linearity, and the exclusion of rhetorical ornamentation – suggests the olfactory as representative of an antithetical, subjective narrative mode, exemplified by aesthetic or literary discourse. This is not, however, to suggest that this casting of odour – coupled with the widespread co-option of the olfactory as a metaphorical resource within aesthetic modernism – in turn enables a uniform designation of odour as a 'literary' sense modality.⁶ Locally, Imagism's mandate for a scientifically-inspired verbal precision tells against a reductive distinction between 'linear' and 'metaphorical' texts. Cognately, Bertrand Russell suggests that the operation of language as a means of communicating modern scientific ideas entails an inevitable process of abstraction away from the prototypical scientific idea. Scientific concepts, Russell proposes, are inevitably modified through their linguistic representation: 'The more complicated forms of belief tend to consist only of words. Often images of various kinds accompany them, but they are apt to be irrelevant, and

⁶ The segregation of metaphor as a privileged feature of communication, rather than as an embedded and inevitable feature of language is, for example, dismissed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson: 'We have found [...] that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature' (George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 3).

to form no part of what is actually believed'.⁷ Russell's remarks underscore the disparity between the ideal objectivity attending scientific discourse, and the inherent instability of language, the means by which such discourse is disseminated. More generally, the assertion of 'literary' or 'non-literary' rhetorical features demands further investigation of the constitution of 'literature' (in contrast to 'non-literary') writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, which lies beyond the scope of this study.

What *can* be determined is that within the context of aesthetic discourse – particularised by the literary texts surveyed within this study – the metaphorical properties of odour are offered space for articulation; a comparable degree of expression is forbidden within the domain of objective, scientific discourse. To describe odour – to automatically engage with the ambiguous semiology of olfaction – is to threaten the distinction of disciplinary boundaries. Once again, the formal properties of odour – diaphaneity, ethereality – inform its interrelationship with language; the olfactory diffuses through the segregation of domains of knowledge, displacing (in the case of science) their claims to objective authority.

To seek a textual analogue for the experience of odour describes the mediation of subjective experience – particularised by sense modalities – through language. Such an enterprise is, as *A la recherche* proposes, phenomenological in emphasis – the 'success' or 'failure' of language is gauged by the accuracy with which it mediates external realities, an evident source of anxiety for the enterprise of science. These ambiguities are accentuated within the field of modern neuroscience, particularly in relation to the study of synaesthesia. As Chapter Four discusses, then, as now, experimental psychologists face the difficulty of establishing whether

⁷ Bertrand Russell, *The Analysis of Mind* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1922), p. 238.

synaesthiac experiences reveal a genuine, involuntary neurological phenomenon, of whether the interoperability of senses modalities described by synaesthetes is the product of deliberate metaphorical association. This lack of closure foregrounds the psychological studies reviewed within this thesis, a difficulty intensified in the case of reports of olfactory synaesthesia; odour's evasive semiological status and metaphorical properties further stymie the will-to-objectivity governing the creation of scientific discourse. Given the congruities between synaesthesia as a metaphorically-inflected mode of perception, and olfaction as a sensory mode characteristically mediated by metaphoricity, it is surprising that instances of odorous synaesthesia appear to be heavily outweighed by those dependent upon sound and vision, such as chromatic audition. Undoubtedly, further examination of the engagement of modern neuroscience with synaesthesia is required, particularly in relation to the contested identity of synaesthesia, as a metaphorical – and therefore *invented* – construct, or alternatively, as a clinical manifestation.

The texts selected for this thesis indicate that while the latent metaphoricity of olfactory synaesthesia – and of the olfactory as a broader category – perturbs neuroscientific writing, literary modernism conversely displays an awareness and appreciation of metaphoricity as an indispensable contrivance when seeking to co-opt the sensorium in the service of aesthetics. As I am now in a position to argue, Proust's assertion of the unitary value of metaphoricity when addressing rival percepts signals a methodology prevalent throughout modernist literature and art. That is, the encoding of one sense modality through the agency of another, a strategy persistently recruited in response to the representational difficulties embodied by olfaction.

The encounter of modernist writers and artists with odour described in this study is characterised by a willingness to challenge the segregation of ostensibly discrete sense modalities. Accordingly, we are confronted with an olfactory aesthetic in which paintings, words and music are, however tendentiously, repeatedly granted an odorous dimension. This interrogation of sensory boundaries reflects the wider inclusivity recommended by modernist aesthetic practitioners, in which ostensibly competing artistic disciplines are united through their shared appeal to an underlying and universal meta-language of *Art*, rather than arts. Yet Proust's explicit articulation of this generalist position in *A la recherche* is, of course, subverted by the literary, textually-dependent context in which it occurs. The novel accords narrative space to competing aesthetic modes, but these are always already subordinate to the authoritative presence of literature, and of the text's self-reflexive awareness of its identity *as* literature. That modernist literature can be defined, in part, by this self-awareness is foregrounded in my introduction to this thesis, but obtains special relevance in relation to the textual encoding of odour, and the inescapable propinquity of language and olfaction.

A preoccupation with the instability of language as a meaning-making system is a characteristic of the literary modernists I have examined, but equally influential, I argue, is a propensity to view language and perception as analogous entities. Proust and Joyce, the 'canonical' olfactory modernists reviewed by this study, contend, in their different ways, that sense modalities are inexorably routed through the construct of language. For Proust, the act of rendering subjective experience into the medium of text is akin to translation; Bloom's conjuration of the ontology of blindness is detoured through the visually-dependent process of reading; odour becomes textualised in 'Nausicaa', supporting the designation of human

perception as an innately heuristic process. Furthermore, words and senses, *qua* Proust, are allied through their tendency to augment each other in the interests of ontological and textual coherence. The contention that a language modifies its speakers' cognition is granted theoretical context by Whorfian linguistics, and has an obvious applicability in relation to the cultural relativity of olfaction.⁸ Modern anthropological texts display an awareness of alternative valuations of olfactory perception expressed by the subjects of ethnographic study, but a full investigation of rival contemporaneous cultural encodings of odour beyond the sphere of Western modernism awaits a future study.⁹

More significant, however, when addressing the interplay of language and olfaction, is literary modernism's attribution of perceptive, ontological value to language. Language is, in effect, implicitly integrated into the sensorium *as* a percept. The implications of this position are to suggest the dissolution of the prior notional distinction between language and the sense modalities, whereby language offers a verbal/textual analogue for sensory experience. According to this paradigm, language *simply* represents – and indeed, is vigorously questioned in this capacity by the literary modernists I have examined. Yet it is also, as Joyce and Proust tacitly suggest, simultaneously assimilated as a creative resource to the point that it resists

⁸ The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis describes two contentions. The first, associated with Sapir, identifies language as the means by which our perception of the outside world is determined. Whorf offers a diluted, but nonetheless influential version of Sapir's theory, in which language is credited as an influence upon perception, but not the sole determinant: 'We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way—an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language' (Benjamin Lee Whorf, 'Science and Linguistics', in *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, ed. by John B. Carroll (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1956), pp. 207–20 (p. 213)).

⁹ While Classen and Drobnick address non-Western cultural conceptions of odour, their respective studies – unlike this thesis – do not consider these representations within the specific context of modernism.

segregation from the sensorium from which it is ostensibly distinct. In turn, the expansion of the sensorium signalled here, beyond the established Aristotelian quintet of modalities encourages future, more wide-ranging explorations of the dialectic between modern culture and the senses.¹⁰ More pertinently, the contention that language filters extrinsic realities in a manner comparable to the accepted physiological senses urges a closer inspection of formal parallels between those attributes characteristic of individual sense modalities and the formal properties of language. That language is habitually encoded through the visual medium of text is axiomatic, and is the starting point from which I have questioned modernist representations of odour throughout this study; that is, as ostensibly *a priori* alienated from language. However, in the course of this thesis, I have demonstrated that odour is, on the contrary, compellingly aligned with particularly modernist conceptions of language and aesthetics, a similarity which not only offers to recuperate odour from its subordinate placement in the sensorium, but which if accepted, additionally offers a fruitful alternative sensory position from which to consider modernism and modernity.

¹⁰ As demonstrated in the activities of the Sensory Modernism(s) research group. See Richard Brown, *From Dérèglement to Digitization: Discovering Sensory Modernisms* (Leeds, 2015) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNeR0QmJ3do>> [accessed 4 April 2016].

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