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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

She told me the story.

She did not tell it to me all at once, and she did not tell it straight through, from the beginning to the end. She told me different parts of the story at different times. The story itself...was mostly about the dream.

...It was a story that one had to see, somehow, and even if she could write it, she said it would be impossible to write it properly.

(The Sword Went out to Sea, 254)

As a reader of HD, I often feel as though she is trying to tell me a story the form of which never completely satisfies her. The re-tellings, the repetitions, the revisions: these all seem to me refinings, refocusing, revolutions, re-examinations, re-interpretations, many-wayed investigations into memory, time, and the significance of objects, words, places, sensations in their materiality—the grappling of an artist with the elusive concreteness of reality and the fact that all art is abstract, a falling short of the fullness of things, people, experience. But HD persists. The attempts are worth something:

so what good are your scribblings?
this—we take them with us

beyond death; Mercury, Hermes, Thoth
invented the script, letters, palette;

indicated flute or lyre-notes
on papyrus or parchment

are magic, indelibly stamped
on the atmosphere somewhere,

forever...

(Trilogy, The Walls Do Not Fall [10])

GOODS OR GODS: The Place for Spirit in the Life of the Mind, I I

While doing research for a one-woman show about the life of Hilda Doolittle an issue arose that grabbed but, unfortunately, had no place in the play. The show would be set on Freud's couch and the tantalizing issue was their vehement disagreements over God. Fascinating though this argument was it lacked dramatic thrust. I could not wed this theme to theater. I also couldn't leave it alone - H.D. and Freud, in conflict over this topic, is a powerful concentration of intellectual, spiritual, and poetic energy.

Hilda Doolittle and Sigmund Freud “argued till day-break” according to her poetic account in “The Master,”¹ and one thing they could not see eye-to-eye on was God.

Their conflict was really over *different concepts* of God. It misses too much nuance to label their disagreement “Atheism versus Spirituality” or “Poet versus Scientist.” These polemical postures, the clichés of our current atheism debates, are the pencil work of a caricaturist; the writings of H.D. and Freud on the human spirit and its purposes are, by comparison, art.

Freud's concept of God is a social convention (like Money or The Law), and is not to be confused with the metaphysical entity that created the universe, or that we meet when we die. An argument against a metaphysical being basically says that in any true inventory of the furniture of the universe, God the King doesn't appear on the list. The argument against a social construct is fundamentally different: it claims that the idea of God is a con job maintained by theocrats, or it's the hubris of an anthropocentric mankind, or it's a mistake based on ignorance of the workings of nature, something like that.

Freud followed the dictum “not to mock, lament, or execrate, but to understand.”² With the resources of psychoanalysis he sought answers to why religious faith persisted, more precisely to understand why it could not, like certain pathological symptoms, be shed. He sought the motives and the mechanisms behind the perpetuation of our collective delusions.³ Freud wanted to explain, to explain away: to plant firmly our spiritual lives in our misunderstood, mortal, bodily life. Where he found religious sentiment or religious thinking he dug down to find their “real” psychic roots.

In general, Freud deciphers: psychic content has “manifest” and “latent” dimensions.⁴ H.D. doesn't: when she roots around the spirit, what she's looking for is

¹ “The Master” in *Collected Poems, 1912-1944* (New York: New Directions, 1986) p. 454-455.

² Benedict de Spinoza, *Tractatus Politicus*, Chap 1, pt. 4, in *Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza*, vol. 1, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (George Bell and Sons, 1909) p. 288.

³ See part 1 of this essay, *HD's Web*, number 5 (Winter 2009).

<http://www.imagists.org/hd/hdsweb/winter2009.pdf>

⁴ “Manifest” – the dream image as it appears to the dreamer who recounts it, prior to psychoanalytic investigation. “Latent” – the wish(es) encoded in the dream narrative revealed by successfully completed analysis. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1973), pp. 235 and 243.

spirit. One can not exchange or discard the image in a poem, dream, or vision once one has found (or believes one has found) what it symbolizes. The narrator of *Helen in Egypt* says:

*It is not necessary to "read" the riddle. The pattern in itself is sufficient and it is beautiful.*⁵

Try the sentence again to feel the heft on those scare quotes – *It is not necessary to "read" the riddle*. Clearly, for her, manifest content in and of itself demands attention, from us and from herself.

The narrator in that sentence is describing the hieroglyphs on the wall of a great, long-abandoned temple. When one reads spiritual or religious words does one necessarily need to "read"? And if we reject the goal of discovering a true hidden meaning, if we simply "skate on surfaces" (Emerson's advice)⁶, if we refuse or fail to translate the hieroglyphs into comprehensible, plain language, what wisdom do we achieve? H.D.'s surprising claim is Helen has no "actual intellectual knowledge of the temple-symbols. But she is nearer to them than the instructed scribe...*She herself is the writing.*"⁷

I can only half follow H.D. here. Perhaps that failure to follow puts me in the same position Freud was in. "My intuition challenges the Professor, though not in words. That intuition cannot really be translated into words." Maybe Freud was "always right", she writes, but:

...my form of rightness [italics mine], my intuition, sometimes functioned by the split-second (that makes all the difference in spiritual time-computations) the quicker. I was swifter in some intuitive instances, and sometimes a small tendril of a root from that great common Tree of Knowledge went deeper into the sub-soil...'We'll show him,' retorts the invisible intuitive rootlet...⁸

Does "invisible rootlet" = missing phallus of a bisexual poetess? Or does "throwing a tendril into the subsoil of human knowledge" make some purely spiritual or intellectual sense?

Readers of this journal will be far more conversant than I about the limits of applying the manifest/latent distinction (the more familiar lit-crit expression is "sign/signified") to H.D.'s work. Who, familiar with her books, background, and goals, will try to unlock her poems with a single key? Sophisticated readers will casually remind us that it is too simple to say that a literary symbol "stands for" something.

⁵ H.D., *Helen in Egypt* (New York: New Directions, 1961) p. 32.

⁶ "We live amid surfaces, and the true art of life is to skate well on them." Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Experience" in *Essays: Second Series* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1903) p. 59. (Originally published 1844.)

⁷ *Helen in Egypt*, p. 22. Emphasis H.D.'s.

⁸ *Tribute to Freud*, (New York: New Directions, 1974) pp. 98-99.

But really: who among us can avoid their pet (often reductive) interpretations? We should remain mindful of how difficult and unnatural it is to suspend the impulse to discover a true meaning, or read what's on the page without our intellectual autopilots on. When I read H.D.'s poems I frequently have to beat back the urge to conclude "this is what the poem is about." As many times as multiple, unexpected, or even referent-defying passages come up, my mind still cannot suppress the reflex to decode: "oh – poppy seed equals Love, so the poem means..." In fact, I just did it about 10 minutes ago: *Now my right hand, / now my left hand // clutch your curled fleece* sounded to me like an unconscious reference to masturbation. Perhaps it's because I have Freud on the brain for this article, but I certainly don't think that indicates a "good" understanding of §22 of *The Walls Do Not Fall*.⁹ How sincerely can we voice Blake's prayer: "...twofold Always / May God us keep / From Single Vision..."?¹⁰

H.D.'s attitude, her urge to draw our attention to surface aspects, is vindicated by much contemporary literary theory (by contrast, psychoanalytic interpretations are seen less and less - like black and white TV sets, they were common in my childhood). We find H.D.'s "direct treatment of the thing"¹¹ approach comfortable as a reaction to excesses of nineteenth-century poetry, but it plays differently in the key of religion and the psyche.

.....

H.D.'s concept of god(s and goddesses – gender is an issue) is the metaphysical one. H.D. doesn't (in the thousand or so pages I've read) once ask if God exists. That's as obvious to her as Freud's metaphysical atheism is to him: "to us / is small wisdom, / but great enough / to know God everywhere."¹²

"God everywhere" – consequently, we must look at the complicated, moving parts of human/divine interaction, and human/human interaction on divine subjects. Look, not manhandle (in the debunking manner of twentieth-century thought). Ultimately, the task of confronting the divine is a challenge to herself, and we, as empathetic readers of her self-dialogue, are asked to take up the task.

We fundamentally hunger for spiritual sustenance or closeness to The Presence; then we back away, because we lack the capacity for prolonged exposure. That's a plausible reading of the logopœia of §4 of *The Walls Do Not Fall*,¹³ which describes the

⁹ H.D., *Trilogy* (New York: New Directions, 1998) p. 31.

¹⁰ "And twofold Always. May God us keep / From Single vision & Newton's sleep!" From a letter to Thomas Butt, 22 November 1802, *The Letters of William Blake*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (New York: Macmillan, 1956) p. 79.

¹¹ One of the three principles of writing poetry agreed upon by H.D., Ezra Pound, and Richard Aldington in 1912: "Direct treatment of the 'thing' whether subjective or objective." "A Retrospect" in Ezra Pound, *Literary Essays*, ed. and intro. by T. S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, 1968) p. 3.

¹² *Collected Poems*, (New York: New Directions, 1986) p.452.

¹³ *Trilogy*, pp. 8-9.

reactions of a “flabby hermit” inside the shell, which functions as its house, temple and shrine:

*prompted by hunger,
it opens to the tide-flow:*

*but infinity? no,
of nothing-too-much:*

*I sense my own limit,
my shell-jaws snap shut*

at the invasion of the limitless

Resisting the “invasion of the limitless” but feeling “the lure of the invisible,”¹⁴ the reaction is to put it all into words (this is a chatty flabby hermit), to “realize the transcendental in material terms.”¹⁵ The “material terms” are the prayers, the rituals, the stories, objects of worship and devotion: Freud’s Goods.

The wandering and achievement of the soul found in art and myth is a serious study for her. Her research into architecture¹⁶; her writings about sculpture¹⁷; her translations; not just the breadth but the profundity of her mythological, biblical and esoteric references demonstrates this. H.D. is not only aware of, she’s sensitive to religious thought and expression regardless of the civilization or era in which it originates. H.D. seems to have accepted the spiritual project trumpeted by Whitman: “*Enclosing worship ancient and modern / and all between ancient and modern.*”¹⁸

There is a cliché – “God is in the details.” Her hermetic and spiritual poems demonstrate the depth of the cliché. There, details of myth and worship are ropes thrown down from the sky for us to climb. Details: the divine roles and responsibilities (*Hermes Trismegistus / is a patron of alchemists; // his province is thought*¹⁹); the ways they are called or invoked (*Hatshepsut’s name is still circled / with what they call the cartouche*²⁰); their qualities and characteristics; their jobs (*Thoth / with a feather // ...weigh[s] the souls / of the dead*²¹); their attire (*wear the winged head-dress // of horns, as the butterfly / antennae, // or the erect king-cobra crest*²²); even their modes of

¹⁴ *Helen in Egypt* p. 21.

¹⁵ *Helen in Egypt* p 11.

¹⁶ I thank Lisa Simon for drawing my attention to this.

¹⁷ E.g., in *Asphodel* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1992) p. 19, she compares contemplation of a Venus de Milo to authentic prayer.

¹⁸ Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, sec. 43.

¹⁹ *Trilogy*, p. 63.

²⁰ *Trilogy*, p. 16.

²¹ *Trilogy*, p. 99.

²² *Trilogy*, p. 13.

transportation (*the original great-mother, / who drove // harnessed scorpions*²³). The poems relish the rhythms and pronunciation of divine names:

entreat Hest,

*Aset, Isis, the great enchantress,
in her attribute of Serget*²⁴

Mere wordplay or the key to the knowledge that their names contain everything, the beauty of nature and our most sublime thoughts: *what has the word done? / you include but in small grandeur, / the whole circle of the sun.*²⁵ Even "*the grasshopper says / Amen, Amen, Amen.*"²⁶

She smashes divine identities together:

*Some call that deep-deep bell
Zadkiel, the righteousness of God,*

*he is regent of Jupiter
or Zeus-pater or Theus-pater,*

*Theus, God ; God-the-father, father god
or the Angel god-father*²⁷

She finds no genuine source of tension between this syncretistic pantheon and the monotheism of her Moravian Brotherhood upbringing: "were all one texture."²⁸

you may think I invoke or recall

a series of multiple gods

...

how can you understand

...

He is One, yet the many

*manifest separately; He may manifest
as a jackal and hound you to death?
or is He changeable like air,*

²³ *Trilogy*, p. 47.

²⁴ *Trilogy*, p. 47.

²⁵ H.D., *Hermetic Definition* (New York: New Directions, 1972) p. 46.

²⁶ *Trilogy*, p. 32.

²⁷ *Trilogy*, p. 108.

²⁸ *Trilogy*, p. 25.

*and like air, invisible?
God is beyond the manifest?
He is ether and limitless space?*

*you may ask forever...
and remain unenlightened at last.²⁹*

I glean from the ungrammatical question marks that, though we can hardly be sure, the quantum God of big bangs and quarks, the Crucified God that is Love, and the bearded thunderer on Mt. Olympus all have some underlying commonality. If this offends orthodox monotheists, then they've picked up a book of poems that's too esoteric for them. Worse, they've committed themselves to a divinity that inspires acrimony: *we do not forget / Love, the Creator.*³⁰

Our religious disagreements mean something less, or other, than what we believe they mean. And who cares what we say in the final analysis? “[N]o comment can alter spiritual realities,” she says.³¹

A purer and greater conception of God implies the presence also of lesser, or corrupted ideas in circulation: “Dev-ill was after us / tricked up like Jehovah.”³² H.D. has her own version, diametrically opposed to the Freudian, of the reality/appearance distinction. Any religious criticism in her work is merely for the debased forms religion can take; the manifestations of a misguided spirit. Some innate sense allows her to distinguish. H.D.'s project is “to disentangle” the “Christos-image”

from its art-craft junk-shop
paint-and-plaster medieval jumble

of pain-worship and death-symbol³³

Put prosaically, there are genuine movements of the soul and bogus ones, real worship and put-ons, true gods and false idols. Recall, George W. Bush used God's name when he sent troops to Iraq. It's a gesture we don't pause over because we are cynical, and to accuse a world leader of hypocrisy is almost entirely trite. “Almost” until we consider the quantities of human suffering delivered after that blessing was given. H.D. understands the spiritual dimension of a presidential speech – it's an outrage, a heresy, in Biblical terms, idolatry, worse, it's a false God fed with real victims.

Perhaps God is not so much dead as tied up by Lilliputians like George Bush and Freud. He (or She or They or It) may awake and cast off His (or Her or Their or Its)

²⁹ *Helen in Egypt*, p. 78.

³⁰ *Trilogy*, p. 47.

³¹ *Trilogy*, p. 51.

³² *Trilogy*, p. 5.

³³ *Trilogy*, p. 27.

ropes, or be re-awoken by the words that express His (Her/Their/Its) True Nature, or we may open our eyes to see that God has never truly left, that God laid on the beach and waited till we stopped pretending He (She/They/It) wasn't there, or ceased defining Him (...) as narrowly as possible:

we are at a crossroads,
the tide is turning;

...

old thought, old convention;
let us go down to the sea,

gather dry sea-weed,
heap drift wood,

let us light a new fire
and in the fragrance

of burnt salt and sea-incense
chant new paeans to the new Sun

of regeneration;
we have always worshipped Him

we have always said,
*forever and ever, Amen.*³⁴

Everything, for her, depends on the tentative and difficult task of remaining attentive to the true, spiritual voice; responding to it when others speak truly; and, most critically important: remaining self-aware when we have fallen short:

dragging the forlorn
husk of self after us,

we are forced to confess to
malaise and embarrassment;

we pull at this dead shell,
struggle but we must wait

...

awkwardly, we drag this stale
old will, old volition, old habit³⁵

³⁴ *Trilogy*, p. 26.

³⁵ *Trilogy*, p. 22.

These self-confessed spiritual limitations are those of an athlete speaking to a couch-potato. This is not work for the dull-witted or prose-minded: *the philosopher's stone/ is yours if you surrender // sterile logic, trivial reason*. Timid minds (such as mine) do not dare, seek, seek further, dare more and will not therefore find themselves *lost in sea-depth, // sub-conscious ocean where Fish / move two-ways, devour; // when identity in the depth, / would merge with the best...*³⁶

These poems start to lose me. I believe she often intends to lose me. She beckons me to the meaning of these lines and mocks my habits of mind (“trivial reason”) that prevent clearer understanding of them at the same time. My honest reactions (admiration, frustration, empathy, annoyance) to these poems plug into the roles she ascribes to the society around her (not just her immediate readership); they demonstrate many of the difficulties and joys of having any serious spiritual conversation. The sad fact is that - believers and unbelievers alike - when we discuss God, much of the time we reveal all of the obtuseness and hostility we consciously disown. Her quest takes place in the most inhospitable intellectual environment possible, among uncomprehending and unsympathetic people, ourselves. Note the “us” that drags the husk of self, the “we” that pulls at the dead shell, and how they bleed into a “you” who believes “poets are useless”³⁷: “[S]o what good are your scribblings?” that particular “you” asks.³⁸

Spontaneously I find myself thinking that there’s little here to “get,” that I am in the presence of silliness, vacuous words, and that obscurity serves to veil her muddy thinking. At times, knowing that I am out of my spiritual depth, I believe H.D. tells me not to even bother:

O, do not look up
into the air

you who are occupied
in the bewildering

sand-heap maze
of present-day endeavor;

you will be, not so much frightened
as paralyzed with inaction,

and anyhow,
we have not crawled so very far

up our individual grass-blade
toward our individual star.³⁹

³⁶ *Trilogy*, p. 40-41.

³⁷ *Trilogy*, p. 14.

³⁸ *Trilogy*, p. 17.

³⁹ *Trilogy*, p. 23.

Note the contrapuntal relation between modesty and self-aggrandizement that emerges in the last 2 stanzas. It says: she's only been partly successful, but it implies: if only the poor, practical fools had the imagination and sensitivity to cease their busywork and had paid attention to H.D.'s quest, those world wars could have been avoided. Can we sniff out, as Freud is reported to have in *Writing on the Wall*,

a suppressed desire for forbidden 'signs and wonders'...a suppressed desire to be a Prophetess, to be important, anyway, megalomania they call it – a hidden desire to 'found a new religion'⁴⁰

or are those are precisely the wrong terms for deciphering what is actually there? Visionary or megalomaniac, she is okay with that, as even "the famous Delphic utterances which it was said could be read two ways"⁴¹ and "gods always face two-ways."⁴²

"Keeper of the secret"⁴³ (her autobiographical epithet), she searches for the notions we can embrace within the mess we inherit, but what is her concept of God, stripped of the implausible accretions concocted by inadequate imaginations; the accumulations of millennia of reified, pedagogically inspired oversimplifications; "without stained-glass, / picture, image or color"⁴⁴? In theological terms, how do we find the True God? And how will she describe her goal, even if attained? Words will fail: just as Hebrew silent letters are written alongside the others, the Inexpressible always finds its way into the poet's discourse. Has she succeeded in becoming "Two fold always" or is she simply confused?

Another practical question: where does she get her information? Does she have "intuition" about these things? "Intuition and divination would be such," writes Freud in his *New Introductory Lectures*, "if they existed; but they may safely be reckoned as illusions, the fulfillments of wishful impulses. . .Science...has not the slightest reason to regard them as justified. . .this [is] a warning carefully to separate from knowledge everything that is illusion and an outcome of emotional demands like these."⁴⁵ "Of the...powers which may dispute the basic position of science, religion alone is to be taken seriously as an enemy."⁴⁶

Freud's militancy is telling. We use the expression "pinning somebody down" because it frequently is just that – violence. Such violence finds justification in partial truth, in Single Vision. What narrow definition of "religion" does he have to have in order to see an enemy, what agenda does he pursue? Who, in the final analysis, can claim to be rational, or scientific? The Poet? The Psychoanalyst?

⁴⁰ *Tribute to Freud*, p. 51.

⁴¹ *Tribute to Freud*, p. 51.

⁴² *Trilogy*, p. 5.

⁴³ *Trilogy*, p. 24.

⁴⁴ *Trilogy*, p. 27.

⁴⁵ *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1965), p. 140.

⁴⁶ *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, p. 141.

I can't put it all together, but H.D. does keep a secret, she undeniably is on to something, something Freud, (Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, etc.) couldn't grasp, and their texts are arguments to pry our grip from it as well. She protects at least one real truth through our theological dark age, like a medieval monk holding on to an antiquity.

Our serious thinking is compelled to cleave always to the practical and demonstrable. We are thoroughly prejudiced in favor of particulars and concrete objects. Before a conversation has started we accept the dogma that any abstractions in our intellectual climate must be a product of confusion or superstition. We're convinced that any acceptable explanation must use certain current mathematical and scientific (or pseudo-scientific) tropes. Abstract objects (the most historically important of which is God), however, don't go away. Perhaps they can't go away, even when the serious thought of an entire epoch is pitted against them. It is a deep epistemological mystery how we understand the concept of "equals," let alone "zero," "infinity," or the square root of negative 2, (which clearly doesn't exist but is integral to our understanding of electricity) and there are no convincing explanations on the horizon.⁴⁷ It literally defies logic to insist that the only acceptable objects are physical and real.

That is where we find the true location of their impasse. There is no way for the psychoanalytic system to accommodate spiritual growth, or to distinguish genuine religious insight, or to explain why certain prophetic voices can shake the corrupt soul. At the same time, H.D. has no place in her thinking for the catharsis that would truly throw any of her spiritual pursuits into question. This is a paradigm for failed analysis, two people who continuously talk past each other. What did he walk away with, after she left Vienna? Did she learn anything from him? In 1935, H.D.'s post-analysis, unpublished poem "The Master," she writes "O God / let there be some surprise in heaven for him / for no one but you could devise / anything suitable / for him, / so beautiful."⁴⁸ Come to think of it, perhaps that's an expression of repressed hostility.

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H.D.'s mental health, Freud's spiritual limitations - the biographical truths of the matter aren't crucial. What's objectively important is the content of their quarrel, and, like any good question, the stalemate is the education.

How can we, decades later, absorb and adjudicate? What thoughts can we use to hold their thoughts?

The only canvas wide enough to put both the Freudian perspective and H.D.'s into the same picture is the very general language used by philosophers. The dispute boils down - not to a question of right and wrong, or true and false - the question is *ontological*.

⁴⁷ "Mathematical Truth", P. Benacerraf in *Philosophy of Mathematics: Selected Readings*, ed. Paul Benacerraf and Hilary Putnam, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge UP, 1983), pp. 403-420.

⁴⁸ *Collected Poems*, p. 452.

The word “ontology” puts people off -- it has the ring of undergraduate seminars to me -- but that’s the ready term. Any distinction drawn between Reality and mere Appearance – for Freud the physical is real and the spiritual is deception; for H.D. the true expressions of the spirit must be distinguished from the false or corrupt – requires implicit or explicit ontological choices. We need to ask how and why they connect their explanations to certain facts.

This applies all over the place. Many brilliant, in fact, most brilliant authors turn a blind eye to their ontological commitments. I’m looking at my bookshelf at random: according to this historian, the Jesuit Syncretists did not *really* try to unify world worship, they helped justify Spaniard’s mass axe-murders of Native Americans; here, Boston Brahmins did not *truly* fight and die for the dignity of black men made in God’s image, they perpetuated a nightmarish Civil War to subjugate the Confederacy to Northern (industrial) means of production. “Really” and “truly” carry the ontological burdens of those historians’ arguments.

As of this writing, syntactically sound economic models have caused a world-wide financial crisis which will destroy for real the standard of living for millions of the world’s poorest. The flaws were all in the ontological assumptions contained in these models. Some economists now say they distrust models altogether which, on reflection, is itself an ontological prejudice that relies on a facile and overstated distinction between theory and perception. There is an impassable jungle of data, as the history of economic thought proves again. I have to take that back - I risk inconsistency. What does history prove? There’s a jungle of historical data, and the principles, tools, definitions, and criteria used to hack one’s way through always determine the shape of the passage. It has taken my whole intellectual life to realize this.

Freud explains that childhood curiosity is *really* sexual ignorance and is fundamentally about finding out where babies come from.⁴⁹ Anyone who actually interacts with children will find this bizarre, a part-for-whole misunderstanding that is just dead wrong. And H.D. will say that a roomful of shallow, unimaginative conformists in Church on Sunday are not having true spiritual lives. So what of the bowed heads, the song of the choir, the sympathy for the bereaved or the fear devious children have facing a God Who Knows; the worship of “drab sack-cloth... [and] dead candles”?⁵⁰

So what Explanations are good? What Facts are thereby legitimately included or can be legitimately excluded? And – this is where all the sleight of hand and even an author’s self-deception will take place - what criterion is used to distinguish between the two? What facts are rephrased so that they seem harmless to the theories, what facts are clearly relevant but ignored? This is the real site of the Freud/H.D. crash – it won’t be graspable at the level of the theory or at the level of evidence. The evidence is either all around you or nowhere. We need to articulate what determines the scope of their ideas; what determines the validity of a piece of evidence. Only then can we weigh, can we think clearly about the evidence they use and how they identify some things as “mere appearance.”

⁴⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Leonardo and A Memory of His Childhood* trans. A. Tyson, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964). p. 28-29.

⁵⁰ H.D. *Selected Poems*, ed. L. Martz (NY: New Directions, 1988) p. 71.

The lure of certain explanations, the inclusion and exclusion of facts, the mapping done between the two, this is best described as aesthetic. That's what I think. An ontological choice is like an orderly desk, a working space where one can create; a conceptual workplace, where one can be productive and comfortable.

To understand the drawing power of the options, we need to a category we don't really have (I've never seen) which describes deep aesthetic preference, or *deep penchant*. Contemporaries put shape to subject matter and to the objective universe by allowing their deep penchants to blossom into fully articulated positions.

It's not "mere" preference: *deep penchant* ≠ arbitrary, or subjective. There is no self-evident reason to retain a shallow view of aesthetics. There are layers or levels to aesthetic experience that go all the way down in our lives. On one - "shallower" - level, I respond to Primo Levi and I'm not so crazy about Italo Calvino. But it goes further. Some pictures of the world, certain questions, they'll elicit intense sympathetic or antipathetic reactions. Certain writers and suggestions are "deeply" disturbing, even offensive. The situation is similar in ethics. Say you're facing a real moral problem that has stalled your life. Some jerk tells you what Kant, or John Stuart Mill, would say about your situation. The offense stems from the disproportion between the levels out of which the words come, the issue felt against the advice so formally given. Ontological choices lay at the deep stratum.

Deep penchant is not quite a "choice." "Choice" has to be somewhat cleansed of the insinuation of "decision." "Choice of ontology" doesn't rightly belong in the active voice, but (*pace* Heidegger) the passive voice doesn't quite capture the right sense, either. Choosing an ontology would be more like choosing a partner. Unless we subscribe to some Freudian narrative -- spin a tale of an early libidinal cathexis we eternally desire to relive -- to explain why we are with a specific person, the real "reasons" for partnering are an amalgam of attraction, convention, availability, one's impulses and needs, as well as mental associations and other factors. Do we "decide" in this instance? Does our partner "choose" us?

Deep penchant also ≠ the Unconscious, because of the latter's commitment to psychoanalysis. Two people sit in an office. What is there? (Forget about the timbre in the air, the spinning planet, and subatomic electromagnetism. We'll just isolate their communication.) According to *The Introductory Lectures* there are psychic substitutions, repressed primary processes, projections: these and other mental mechanisms can be teased out in the conversation. But Quine finds only observable actions and reactions admissible.⁵¹ Quine's perspective is dogmatically behavioral: all meaning must be publicly manifest. When a behaviorist faces off against a psychoanalyst, both sides regard the same phenomena and accuse the other of underdetermination or overdetermination. What good argument could convince a behaviorist to subscribe to psychoanalysis? By my thesis, the compelling questions are more like: to what degree would our contemporary self-understanding be impoverished if we allowed Quine to remove the tools from Freudian hands? And if we required of Quine that he show more "imagination" or "humanity," the philosophical landscape

⁵¹ W.V.O. Quine, *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*. (New York: Columbia UP, 1969).

would have lost a continent of commentary and inquiry. The value of what they say exists, (i.e., what phenomena are admissible to an argument or are susceptible to analysis), lies in the work they make possible

Deep penchant is also not a Paradigm, the Differend, an Existential Stance, Historical *a priori*, Epistemic Inclusion, Linguistic Determinacy, Being Revealing Itself, so forth – it's *the preference for explanations along those lines* as opposed to others. When I'm newly confronted with academic trends, I find that a certain affinity for some styles of thinking precedes and to an extent determines whom I will read charitably and whom I will take issue with. In the course of working through any broadly applicable idea, the first thing we do is underestimate the importance of this aesthetic dimension. If we ever revise our initial impressions it's the result of a lot of work.

When we read them, when the sparks of their conflict touch us, the ontological choices made by H.D. and Freud - the argument between theist and atheist, between the Poet-Patient and the Psychoanalyst - have already been cropped in the darkroom of our own penchants. Only then does a picture emerge as "Superstition Against Science," or "Narrow Rationality Oppresses Vision," or... Those are, arguably, legitimate descriptions. But they're not accurate at the level of *deep penchant*. If we burrow, their argument is better described as Gratitude versus Awe.

Awe – the sudden and unfortunately fleeting consciousness of Nature's complexity, majesty and inscrutability. At the right moment this oceanic feeling can go all the way to the bottom of our soul. It's not merely a fact that the eye, now watching this sentence unfold on a screen, is made of 14-billion-year-old cosmic explosions: we cannot always suppress wonder in the face of such staggering Truths. It is enough to make us cry. Nature is enough, is more than enough, we cannot inquire or adore it or respect it enough. It rightly inspires special, attentive, thoughtful people to devote their lives to knowledge and they, in turn, are a decisive force in the flow of history. Awe, understood in this way, is the molten core of a scientist's thought and faith, and their bias is the cooled crust.

But human sight is also, and no less truly, a gift. Yes, atoms stack themselves to make the cones and rods that allow the color spectrum to come flooding into my brain, the explanation is, yes, wondrous, but, from another perspective, the real soul-stopping issue is the depths of pleasure we can receive from seeing the world, and how grateful we should be for the experience. At the end of a manuscript, or in the face of cosmic or geological beauty, we can feel the impulse to utter a "thank you." Even the appreciation for such a gift is a gift: thank you for the capacity to acknowledge how astonishing this life is, this moment is. Thank you, Muse, or Nature, or...that identity is not, at the level of *deep penchant*, the issue. I simply should gesture to the overwhelming, spontaneous tendency toward Gratitude. H.D. felt this in her very bones. Her autobiography was entitled "The Gift."

HD

ARTICLE:

Jesus "Disentangled" by H.D.: *Trilogy, Pilate's Wife* and Cecil B. DeMille's *The King of Kings*

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Jesus "Disentangled" by H.D.:

Trilogy, Pilate's Wife and Cecil B. DeMille's *The King of Kings*

Calling upon a synthesis of elements—visual image, voice, metaphysics, and technology of cinema—H.D. envisioned, in poetry and prose, an image of Jesus "disentangled" from, in her words, "medieval jumble // of pain-worship and death-symbol."⁵² In her novel *Pilate's Wife* (1924) she dramatically alters scriptural text by preventing Jesus's death.⁵³ The novel's Jesus is said to resemble a "sun-god" (PW 100), a description that resonates with the sense of cinematic spiritual light H.D. extols in her review of the 1927 silent film *The King of Kings*.⁵⁴ The theme develops further in her 1944-46 long poem *Trilogy* where H.D. conflates Greek, Hebrew, and Egyptian image, text, and myth, to create timeless divinity. In this essay, I explore how H.D.'s intensely visual imagistic evocations of mystical knowledge to be found in nature and in great art evolve towards belief in herself as mediumistic poet-prophet-diviner.

The August 1927 issue of the avant-garde cineaste magazine *Close Up* features a passionate sermon by H.D. arguing for the spiritual reach of cinematic art. "Light is our

⁵² H.D., *Trilogy* (New York: New Directions, 1973), 27. Hereafter abbreviated in parentheses in the text as (T). Other abbreviations as follows: A, *Asphodel*; CP, *Collected Poems*; K, *The King of Kings*; PW, *Pilate's Wife*; TF, *Tribute to Freud*; MR, *Majic Ring*.

⁵³ H.D., *Pilate's Wife*, edited with introduction by Joan A. Burke (New York: New Directions, 2000).

⁵⁴ H.D., "The King of Kings Again," *Close Up* 2.2 (February 1928): 21-32.

friend and our god," she preaches, "Let us be worthy of it".⁵⁵ *Close Up* was edited by H.D.'s intimates, Kenneth Macpherson and Bryher, from their base in Territet, Switzerland, during the years 1927 to 1933, with an ideal of international intellectual exchange centered on the new art of cinema. The premier issues of July and August feature H.D.'s psalm-like two-part poem "Projector" and "Projector II"—a paean of worshipful praise for "light / who is god / and song".⁵⁶ The motion picture projector's "shaft of light"⁵⁷ is perceived as a tool of divine origin whereby visionary power can be transferred to ourselves through images revealed on screen. It is not accidental that H.D. speaks of cinematic art in phrases of religious hyperbole. "A perfect medium has at last been granted us," she states in her article, and repeats her earnest exhortation: "Let us be worthy of it" (Restraint 350).

Years later, the "perfect medium" will be H.D., the poet herself: with the writing of *Trilogy*, her long poem catalyzed by apocalyptic bombing of London during World War II, she transforms herself into oracle, prophetess, priestess. In *Trilogy*, her poetic art accomplishes a religious quest of profound re-visionary significance. Through words and permutations of words, the poet H.D. seeks to divine—in the verb's sense of intuitive association—intimations of mystical meaning. She comes to believe that her poetic art derives from, and contributes to, eternal spiritual energies of the world's mytho-historical-cultural present interwoven with past and future, unbound by chronologies.

The religious intent of H.D.'s *Trilogy* elicits increasing analysis by scholars who agree that the long poem is a profoundly re-visionary and prophetic work. For example: Louis Martz explores image, symbol, and statement by H.D. in *Trilogy* to

⁵⁵ H.D., "The Cinema and the Classics: Restraint" in *Close Up 1927-1933: Cinema and Modernism*, edited by James Donald, Anne Friedberg, and Laura Marcus (London: Cassell, 1998), 112.

⁵⁶ H.D., *Collected Poems 1912-1944*, edited Louis L. Martz (New York: New Directions, 1983), 350.

⁵⁷ *Collected Poems*, 351.

demonstrate her prophetic intention;⁵⁸ Timothy Materer insightfully analyzes the imagery by which her belief in occult alchemical process controls the structure;⁵⁹ Dennis Brown casts light on the work's dynamic of questioning as an example of "modern gnosticism";⁶⁰ Susan Stanford Friedman links H.D.'s Freudian experience to her religious quest;⁶¹ and poet Robert Duncan embarks upon a rare mystical philosophical essay, *The H.D. Book*, which rays out from H.D.'s articulated rhythms.⁶² The verb "rays" is used advisedly—for both Duncan and H.D., the concept of "light" presumes a tripartite interplay of visionary consciousness, divinity itself, and the poem which is divinely inspired. While the public sense of occult practice is sometimes combined or even confused with spiritualist attempts to contact persons after their death, the word "occult" rightfully refers to forms of secret ritualistic practice available only to initiates. Both aspects inform H.D.'s poetry and prose. Materer discusses uses of the occult and spiritualist practice by a series of poets, from W.B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, and H.D., to four who follow in literary chronology—Duncan, Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes, and James Merrill. Plath's poem "Ouija" records several hours she and Hughes manipulated a ouija board together in 1959 at Yaddo.⁶³ Materer states that throughout Duncan's 1964 collection, *Roots and Branches*, "H.D. serves as Duncan's muse. . . . H.D.'s influence is seen in the way Duncan uses the figure of Hermes/Mercury, just as H.D. does, to explore bisexuality." (Materer, 115-16).⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Louis L. Martz, *Many Gods and Many Voices: The Role of the Prophet in English and American Modernism* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), 80-128.

⁵⁹ Timothy Materer, *Modernist Alchemy: Poetry and the Occult* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

⁶⁰ Brown, Dennis, "H.D.'s Trilogy: Modern Gnosticism?" *Literature and Theology* 10.4 (1996): 351-60.

⁶¹ Susan Stanford Friedman, *Penelope's Web: Gender, Modernity, H.D.'s Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

⁶² Robert Duncan, *The H.D. Book*, Frontier Press, 1984; available online in pdf format at: http://www.ccca.ca/history/ozz/english/books/hd_book/HD_Book_by_Robert_Duncan.pdf

⁶³ Sylvia Plath, ed. Ted Hughes, *The Collected Poems* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981).

⁶⁴ An overview of individual processes by which occult tradition informs the work of Yeats, Joyce, Pound, Hughes, and William Carlos Williams, as well as H.D., appears in a gathering of essays edited by Leon Surette and Demetres P. Tryphonopolous, *Literary Modernism and the Occult Tradition* (Orono, ME: The National Poetry Foundation, University of Maine, 1996).

H.D.'s sense of herself as an initiate into occult knowledge of events paralleled throughout history was precipitated in the wake of war-shattering experiences. Dislocations of body and mind following World War I were articulated by artists and writers of the time, many of whom experimented with early cinema. Susan McCabe illustrates the process in her insightful article, "'Delight in Dislocation': The Cinematic Modernism of Stein, Chaplin, and Man Ray."⁶⁵ In the 1940's, subjected again to violent shattering during the World War II bombings of London, H.D. sought wholeness: her visionary artistic solution re-invents the past in ways that reconfigure and harmonize with present time. Her art in the years from the 1940's to her death in 1961 worked integrally with her self-concept as psychically gifted. Several of her major prose works of this period are only now reaching posthumous publication. Her visionary novel *The Sword Went Out to Sea* opens with a detailed narrative of her intense psychic concentration dedicated to receiving messages she believed were being sent from five dead RAF pilots. Subtitled "*(Synthesis of a Dream) by Delia Alton*," the novel has been painstakingly edited with introduction and background analysis by Cynthia Hogue and Julie Vandivere.⁶⁶ Recent additional major works to appear are Jane Augustine's informative edition of *The Mystery* (1949-51), H.D.'s novel based on her Moravian religious background;⁶⁷ Demetres Tryphanopolous's edition of *Majic Ring*, generated by H.D.'s occult experiences of the 1940's;⁶⁸ and *White Rose and the Red* (1948), edited by Alison Halsall.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Susan McCabe, "'Delight in Dislocation': The Cinematic Modernism of Stein, Chaplin, and Man Ray," *Modernism/modernity* 8.3 (2001): 429-52.

⁶⁶ H.D., *The Sword Went Out To Sea (Synthesis of a Dream) by Delia Alton*, edited Cynthia Hogue and Julie Vandivere, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007).

⁶⁷ H.D., *The Mystery*, edited Jane Augustine (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009).

⁶⁸ H.D. (writing as Delia Alton), *Majic Ring*, edited by Demetres P. Tryphanopoulos, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009).

⁶⁹ H.D. (writing as Delia Alton), *White Rose and the Red*, edited by Alison Halsall (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009.)

The development of H.D.'s art is informed by yearning for wholeness, for ways to reconstruct and to heal. A vital attribute of the "Projector" poem's light-as-god is its healing power, in H.D.'s words, "[to] reclaim the lost. . .to readjust / all severings / and differings of thought" (CP 349). H.D. was, in 1927, already at work on her novel *Pilate's Wife*, which purposefully sets out to explore lost mythologies of the divine, and to readjust accepted biblical narratives—an artistic strategy by which she reclaims Jesus from death on the cross. H.D. prefaces the novel with a one-page "Author's Note" where she disclaims "originality for any of the ideas" and makes clear that "The theme of the wounded figure, not dead upon the cross, and its return to life . . . has fired the imagination of so many" (PW 1). Despite her disclaimer, however, H.D. offers a Jesus persona whose words resonate with her characteristic world view of shifting mytho-historical boundaries. What is more, it is a woman who, by means of her direct intervention, becomes the primary factor of rescue. It is interesting as well to note a phrase H.D. casually inserts at the conclusion of her preface: "I have endeavoured, *except for the central motif*, to conform to the traditional rendering of the Gospels" (emphasis mine). The novel's effect is barely traditional once it changes what is the New Testament's generative vortex of Christ's death and resurrection.

H.D.'s strategy in *Trilogy* parallels and juxtaposes biblical with far-ranging mythologies older than Genesis: the long poem leads us away from Golgotha's "place-of-skulls," rescues traces of spiritual symbols which have been obliterated, and forefronts feminine aspects effaced by standard Christian images of the divine. Concomitant with *Trilogy*, H.D. worked on her autobiographical prose work, *The Gift*—seeking a pattern for harmony of regeneration while enduring the "buzz" bombings of London. The influence of H.D.'s background as a child raised in the Moravian religion of mystical brotherhood came to the fore at that time. H.D.'s maternal family were members of the Moravian Church of her birthplace, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Her memories of communal "love feasts" and of spiritual regard for peace and universal

brotherhood are documented in her "Notes" to *The Gift*, now published in its complete original form, superbly edited by Jane Augustine.⁷⁰ H.D.'s "gift" is a psychic power inherited, she believed, from her grandmother, Elizabeth Wolle, whom she called Mamalie. In one chapter, the child Hilda listens to her grandmother speaking in a kind of trance. The grandmother appears to be re-living, as if in actual memory, an event of the seventeenth century when their Moravian sect ancestors, who had emigrated from Europe, discovered a spiritual connection to Native Americans (Gift 145-182). This grandmother's psychic ability to enter past centuries is passed on as H.D.'s gift for psychic intuition that she will use as an adult. The Moravian sect, while believing in the divinity of Jesus Christ, broke away from the dogma of other Christian churches and sought to set up their own communal practice.⁷¹ For H.D., the centering quality of their ceremonies and teaching is "love," as evidenced in rituals shared by her extended family, and warmly remembered in *The Gift*.

H.D.'s thoughts regarding the Christ persona manifest her self-concept as seer, literally one-who-sees. H.D.'s innately imagistic stance embodies the sacred function of the poet— "the scribe," she asserts in *Trilogy*, "takes precedence of the priest" (T 15). The oracular poetics demonstrated in *Trilogy* evolves from and operates within her intensely visual original context. She was indeed "the perfect Imagist" who gazed at the actual—flower, jewel, tree, rock, pool, face, or figure—in order to see something unseen, expectant that outward manifestation might evoke deeper knowledge. Again, a childhood experience dynamizes her revelation: in *The Gift*, Hilda looks into her grandfather's microscope to see that "where there is nothing, there is something" (Gift 42). Later, the cinema screen becomes a source of revelation by giving visual actuality to the magical swiftness of idea, a concept of cinematic flow. She articulates the

⁷⁰ *The Gift by H.D.: The Complete Text*, ed. Jane Augustine (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).

⁷¹ Jane Augustine, "The Mystery Unveiled: The Significance of H.D.'s 'Moravian' Novel," *H.D. Newsletter* 4 (Spring 1991): 9-17.

concept in her review of the 1929 Russian silent film *Turksib*, an innovative documentary on the unlikely subject of building the Trans-Siberian railroad. H.D. writes, "Thought is never static. It creeps, it seeps, it crawls in just where you don't expect it. . . 'Thought,' one wanted to shout aloud, 'is here for the first time adequately projected. . . These are not images made artificially but thought itself, seen for the first time, in actual progression. . . [like] the subtle silver-thought of some Hellenic trickster.'" ⁷² Characteristically, as in the "Projector" poems, H.D. associates cinematic effects with powers of a classical Greek divinity—in this case, Mercury/Hermes, in alchemy the intermediary between gods and humans.

Classical art might also be a visual touchstone for the "something" which has divine power. A vital moment of such insight is depicted in *Asphodel*, her novel first composed in 1921/22. As her autobiographical young heroine, Hermione (the name almost an anagram for heroine), gazes at the marble Venus de Milo in Paris's Louvre museum, she is "caught by something" which, for her, fuses art with religion. "That was the answer to prayer," the young woman muses, "Prayer was asking, asking." ⁷³ God is addressed as inspirer of timeless artistic creation: "when you led the fingers of Phidias along those two crescents, you already had my hands in yours" (A 20). Spiritual energy latent in ancient Greek art has ignited Hermione's urge to create. To Hermione, the representations of religious images by painters such as Leonardo da Vinci or Fra Angelico now appear to weave "a curtain hiding reality" (A 20). Perceiving spiritual reality as something hidden behind veils of Christian dogma, Hermione goes on to question: "Is Christ the soft mist, the blue smoke of altar incense hiding the beauty of the thing itself? Is Christianity then that, at its best, a curtain, woven of most delicate stuffs to hide reality, the white flame that is Delphi, that is Athens?" (A 20). H.D.'s early book demonstrates a religious bent apart from dogma, in search of an ancient

⁷² H.D., "Turksib," *Close Up* 5.6 (Dec 1929): 490-91.

⁷³ H.D., *Asphodel*, edited by Robert Spoo (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992), 19.

indefinable mystical essence. Her writings through the years will begin to explore occult methods of reaching beyond what may be physically apparent. In *Trilogy*, language itself becomes an alchemical tool, exemplified in the following sequence:

Now polish the crucible
and in the bowl distill

a word most bitter, *marah*,
a word bitterer still, *mar*,

sea, brine, breaker, seducer,
giver of life, giver of tears;

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,

Star of the Sea,
Mother. (T 71)

In *Pilate's Wife*, H.D. seeks to draw aside that gauze barrier to spiritual reality by conflating Jesus with more ancient divinities: he is described as having the features of a "sun-god"—as Adonis, as Apollo, as Osiris, and as incorporating the pure Light worshipped by a Mithraic cult, a "brotherhood" with secret ritual of wafer and red wine.

The novel was begun in 1924, revised 1934, and reconsidered by H.D. twenty years after, from 1954 to 1957. She was, therefore, absorbed by the conception of this narrative throughout periods that overlap the years of her active cinematic involvement, from 1927 to 1933, with her mature later years. After a rejected early attempt at publication, she did not send it out again. The novel has at last been published posthumously, edited and with a useful introduction by Joan A. Burke (PW i-xiv).

The “wife of Pilate” is mentioned in but one of the New Testament’s four gospels—Matthew 27:19. Otherwise unnamed, she is said to have sent a message to Pilate which counsels, “Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him” (King James Version). From this scrap of dialogue, H.D. constructs a Roman woman of high station, and names her Veronica—resonant of the woman who is said to have wiped Christ’s face with her veil and taken home the miraculous imprint of his features upon the cloth. According to Joan Burke in her introduction to the recently published novel, H.D.’s naming of the woman is a statement by which “H.D. makes clear that in the Roman Veronica will be found the divine face” (PW vii). My interpretation, however, goes further—she is not merely “stamped” with his face. By the conclusion of the novel, H.D.’s Veronica will have taken the words of this poet-rabbi-teacher and—by preventing his death, also responsibility for the fact of his very life—into herself. He is alive within—and because of—this woman.

At the start, H.D.’s Veronica, like Hermione, is seen to be in the throes of religious discovery. Seeking for something beyond her external mask set up for stately duties, she is attracted to “a modernised cult of Isis” (PW 18). The Isis/Osiris myth will emerge in *Trilogy*, where Osiris is conflated with other male divinity figures, such as Ra, Amen, and by association, Jesus (discussed below). Arguing with an Egyptian mentor about his narrative of the dismemberment of Osiris, Veronica cannot accept that a god who is “all-powerful” would countenance “the mutilation and hideous disfigurement of

his own Son”—sounding the pun with Sun as god (PW 21). She recognizes that the “fascinating spectacle” of violence attracts public excitement. “Admit,” Veronica ardently contends, “that the slaughtered, or foully mutilated, body of a Hero or God has to be set before people, who have so little conception of beauty or life that they must worship, even kneel before it. Say that must be. But how can any enlightened people say *God not only permitted, but decreed it?*” —emphasis H.D.’s (PW 21). Veronica’s words applied to Osiris clearly resonate with our knowledge of the crucifixion narrative to come, and foreshadow motivation for the part she will play in Jesus’s survival.

Introduction to Jesus comes to Pilate’s wife through a young woman named Mnevis, a psychic diviner whose intensity fascinates her. Mnevis enralls Veronica by her descriptions of the new teacher, or rabbi, and his sayings, words the reader may recognize as New Testament phrases. Veronica is entranced by concepts which we see echoed in H.D.’s imagistic spiritual searching—that there is wisdom in “lilies of the field”; that divine knowledge is accessible by visual study of things of this world—a flower, a tree, the flight pattern of a bird—any of these may be read, in harmony with Veronica’s—and H.D.’s—interpretations as hieroglyphs of revelation. Veronica reflects on a thought “consider the lilies of the field” as having been spoken by “that Jew of Mnevis”—Mnevis is the young woman who introduces her to the words of the new prophet. H.D. has incorporated Jesus’s words given in Matthew 6:28 (PW 56-57). “He had recognised the secret life, growing in the flower-petal, the bird-wing, the fish, moving lazy fin under clear water” (PW 135). In the visual study of living things, of occurrences in the physical world, H.D. is certain that other meanings may be glimpsed.⁷⁴ The “secret life” spoken of by the novel’s Jesus echoes the dramatic revelations of invisible life brought before the eyes of the child Hilda through the lens of

⁷⁴ H.D.’s developmental evolution of visual imagery is explored in my article, “Magical Lenses: Poet’s Vision Beyond the Naked Eye,” in *H.D.: Woman and Poet*, ed. Michael King (Orono, ME.: National Poetry Foundation, 1986) 301-317.

her grandfather's microscope. For the adult H.D. the revelation has combined with her sense of divinatory processes of thought.

The novel's Jesus figure seeks to heal divisions—he is approachable, and, according to Mnevis, invites women to a place in his teachings. Significantly, several times throughout the novel, Jesus is styled as "poet"—a designation that indicates H.D.'s self-identification with the persona created. Veronica muses that although "[h]e didn't write anything". . . "he was a poet, for all his disdain of the usual implements, the scroll, ink-horn and reed" (PW 123); Pontius Pilate refers to Jesus as but "an isolated poet" and therefore, in his view, harmless (PW 98); at the end of the novel, Veronica crowns Jesus's validation as a mytho-historical poet: "he was a second Homer" (PW 135). The words of such a poet have the power to construct a narrative that changes the world forever. To H.D., it is the function of a see-ing poet to articulate concepts of brotherhood and non-sundering love. The words he speaks have the capability, as does H.D.'s "Projector" light-as-god, to "readjust / all severings / and differings of thought." As mentioned above, such concepts of indivisibility are integral to the Moravian religion of H.D.'s childhood.

Veronica cannot convince her husband to prevent Jesus's crucifixion, but Pilate consents to her scheme to save him from final suffering through a narcotic potion and "nails fastened. . .lightly to the bound wrists" (PW 120); Jesus's unconscious form is taken down, secretly doctored, his wounds cleansed and salved by Veronica's own hands, and transported next day to the island of Cyprus. H.D. had intended to write a sequel to be titled "Christ on Cyprus" but apparently never followed through (PW xiii). The theme of a surviving Christ had been discussed by H.D. at some length with D.H. Lawrence; without informing her, he published in 1929, by Black Sun Press in Paris, a

version titled *The Escaped Cock* (in some later versions as "The Man Who Died."⁷⁵ Lawrence's novella follows the revived Jesus to an eventual transcendent sexual union with a "priestess of Isis" by whom his wounds have been nursed and healed. Early in H.D.'s analysis with Freud, her friend Stephen Guest brought her a copy of Lawrence's book, and said, "Did you know that you are the priestess of Isis in this book?"⁷⁶ Her initial reaction is "annoyance" that "he has taken my story." (TF 141-142)⁷⁷ Nevertheless, she concedes that "It was not my story. George Moore, among others, had already written it. There is the old myth or tradition that Christ did not die on the Cross" (TF 142).

After she has saved Jesus's life and he is safely on his way to Cyprus, Pilate's wife asks herself a stunning question: "Would he thank her?" (PW 125). This may be a crucial metaphysical challenge that H.D. answers indirectly by means of her methodology of re-vision in *Trilogy*. In this long poem, H.D. incorporates divine Egyptian attributes into the physical body of Christ. H.D. interprets "Dream"—the noun capitalized as though personified—to be "Holy Ghost"—a "way of inspiration" (T 29). The Dream has presented a "world-father" manifested as the triply-named "Ra, Osiris, Amen. . . in a spacious bare meeting-house. . . [of] simplicity and grace" (T 25). A visitor to the Moravian church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, place of H.D.'s earliest upbringing, will see an echoing interior. Leonora Woodman explains the "Dream" in terms of H.D.'s occult vision: "a veiled hieroglyph of the mind's highest self. . . a reservoir of symbols that bespoke the continued divine presence of the transhistorical One."⁷⁸ A year before the publication of *Trilogy*, H.D. describes her first awareness of

⁷⁵ D. H. Lawrence, ed. Gerald M. Lacy, *The Escaped Cock* (Los Angeles: Black Sparrow Press, 1973).

⁷⁶ H.D., *Tribute to Freud: Writing on the Wall, Advent* (Boston: Godine, 1974).

⁷⁷ For discussion of interchange between H.D. and Lawrence, including his reference to the priestess of Isis in *The Escaped Cock*, see chapter titled "H.D. and D.H." in Martz, *Many Gods and Many Voices*, pages 109 - 129.

⁷⁸ Leonora Woodman, "H.D. and the Poetics of Initiation," in *Literary Modernism and the Occult Tradition*, ed. Leon Surette and Demetres P. Tryphonopolous (Orono, ME: The National Poetry Foundation, University of Maine, 1996) 145.

the Dream in her autobiographical journal-structured *Majic Ring*.⁷⁹ H.D.'s own interpretation of the Dream conflates Jesus with the figure of the "world father"; she further conflates "world father" with other figures: "that would include the last Master, the Christos, and Amen would suit Him, too." Her clue centers on the figure's eyes: "But it was the eyes that—well—gave the show away. . . You see his eyes were amber—fire and amber. They were light-amber in colour and there was colour. They were globes of fire."⁸⁰ Her occult exploration of the Dream divinity persists in *Trilogy*—the eyes are "dark // yet very clear with amber / shining," and she questions, "whose eyes are those eyes?" (T 25). Seeking answer, she speculates by association:

The Christos-image
is most difficult to disentangle

from its art-craft junk-shop
paint-and-plaster medieval jumble

of pain-worship and death-symbol,
that is why, I suppose, the Dream

deftly stage-managed the bare, clean
early colonial interior,

without stained-glass, picture,
image or colour,

⁷⁹ Helen Sword has commented that *Majic Ring* provides clues to source material in *Trilogy*. "H.D.'s *Majic Ring*," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 14.2 (Autumn 1995): 347-362.

⁸⁰ H.D., *Majic Ring*, Letter to Lord Howell from Delia Alton dated November 26, p. 33 in published text. Tryphonopoulos notes that this Dream relates to H.D.'s inclusion of the Master figure in *Trilogy* (25) as "world-father" (MR note 83). I am grateful to Maria Fox for this reference.

for now it appears obvious
that *Amen* is our Christos" (T 27).

H.D.'s dream image of "Christos" next recalls the famous painting by Velasquez, "Christ Crucified," a full-length larger than life oil depiction of a nearly naked wounded Christ at the moment of dying on the cross.⁸¹ H.D. saw the actual painting, usually housed at Madrid's Museo de Prado, in Geneva, Switzerland in 1939, just before she left for England at the outbreak of World War II. In *Majic Ring*, she writes (as Delia Alton) of her strong impressions of the painting, and of photographs she brought with her to study. In the painting, the man's eyes are downcast, hidden. In *Majic Ring*, H.D. as Delia Alton speculates, ". . .should the head lift up again. . .and should the eyes open—should the eyes open—". Here, the sentence is left unfinished.⁸² Soon after, writing *Trilogy* during the wartime period concomitant with her occult experiences, she completes her vision: suddenly, in words evoking a cinematic screen dissolve, "the eyes / of Velasquez' crucified" lift their eyelids and "now look straight at you." Those eyes burn with the color and intensity of her Dream world-father, "they are amber and they are fire" (T 28). In *Asphodel*, Hermione had rejected stereotypical Christian images in art as "curtain hiding reality"—images which block one's comprehension of spiritual timelessness. H.D. herself has now unveiled the eyelids of "the authentic Jew / stepped out from Velasquez" to reveal an ancient Egyptian divinity staring directly at the viewer (T 28). "*Amen* is our Christos." (T27)

The motion of the Velasquez' Christ's eyelids demonstrates one of the cinematic techniques which grant fluidity of rhythm to H.D.'s long poems—a poetic technique I have termed "word dissolve."⁸³ H.D., elated by technology's creation of the projector's

⁸¹ Image online at: <http://www.abcgallery.com/V/velazquez/velazquez69.html>

⁸² H.D., *Majic Ring*, Letter to Lord Howell from Delia Alton dated November 28, p. 37 in published text.

⁸³ Charlotte Mandel, "The Re-directed Image: Cinematic Dynamics in the Style of H.D.," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 11.1 (1983): 35-45. Available online at <http://www.imagists.org/hd/hdcmtwo.html>.

"rod of light," might have been greatly impressed by the visual effects of current state-of-the-art digital production. Timed for the 2001 Easter season, the Public Broadcasting System broadcast a two-hour sequence depicting images of Jesus in art over the centuries titled "The Face: Jesus in Art."⁸⁴ The program opened and closed with a tour de force of graphic artistry colloquially termed "morphing." The TV monitor turned magical: twenty or more portrayals of the imagined face of Jesus appeared—not in standard successions of slides—but as visual metamorphoses, the features of one giving way until transformed to its successor. Here was concrete symbolical rendering on screen of H.D.'s theory of synchronous existences, an uncanny graphic enactment of her palimpsestic summoning of images whereby nothing can be completely erased. *Trilogy's* succession of images of "the Lady," resonant of depictions of the Virgin Mary, vibrate in the mind as companion pieces to the recent video showing of Jesus images:

we have seen her, an empress,
magnificent in pomp and grace,

and we have seen her
with a single flower

or a cluster of garden-pinks
in a glass beside her;

we have seen her snood
drawn over her hair,

or her face set in profile

⁸⁴ *The Face: Jesus in Art*, directed by Craig MacGowan, Voyager Productions, 2001.

with blue hood and stars;

we have seen her head bowed down
with weight of a domed crown,

or we have seen her, a wisp of a girl
trapped in a golden halo (T 93).

This Lady, however, evokes mythical mystery beyond Christian iconography—she embodies a combination of ancient secret ritual practice, a “Vestal” who “carries over the cult / of the *Bona Dea*” as well as a future still to be conceived:

she carries a book but it is not
the tome of the ancient wisdom,

the pages, I imagine, are the blank pages
of the unwritten volume of the new;

. . .

. . . she is not shut up in a cave
like a Sybil; she is not

imprisoned in leaden bars
in a coloured window;

she is Psyche, the butterfly
out of the cocoon. (T 103)

In this section, H.D.'s revisionary purpose has "disentangled" a female image from previous Christian or pre-Christian representations. H.D.'s *Dream* releases a prophetess whose book "is our book" (T 105).

Among the portrayals of Jesus by artists through the centuries, the video presentation titled "The Face" includes one by Michelangelo with striking resonance with H.D.'s sun-god/Jesus. Urged, as were other artists of the Renaissance, towards reclamation of Greek sculptural form, Michelangelo appropriated the face of an ancient Greek statue of Apollo—most likely the Apollo Belvedere—to portray the face of Jesus in his dazzling fresco "The Last Judgment" on the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel; the image is shown with commentary in the film on images of Jesus in art. Might H.D., an avid and discerning appreciator of classical art, have marked the resemblance? One can only speculate; nonetheless, H.D., in an essay published in the same issue as her "Projector" poem, professes an ideal of art akin to that of Michelangelo and his contemporaries who turned to ancient Greek ideal perfection of face and form. H.D. insists that "the world will not be sustained, will not exist, without that classic, ancient Beauty. Beauty and Goodness. . .to the Greek, meant one thing".⁸⁵ H.D. tells us that Veronica In *Pilate's Wife* "loved this manifestation [Jesus] of her old gods; the young man was beautiful" (PW 104).

Through the magical light of the Projector, and the cinematic audacity of Cecil B. DeMille, H.D. was granted a vision of Jesus on screen in harmony with her inner vision. In her February 1928 review in *Close Up* of DeMille's silent epic, *The King of Kings*, she reiterates her conflation of mythologies.⁸⁶ "[T]ime honored phrases" attributed to Christ in the gospels are described as "mysteries like the Seven cryptic sayings on the walls of Delphi"; and "the words, the Delphic utterances of the young Hebraic-sungod

⁸⁵ "The Cinema and the Classics: Beauty" rpt. in Donald et al, *Close Up 1927-1933: Cinema and Modernism*, 107.

⁸⁶ H.D., "The King of Kings Again," *Close Up* 2.2 (February 1928): 21-32.

remain true" (K 23). She characterizes the film as "Hebraic Sophoclean drama" (K 27). In praise of the actor's performance, she writes, "The Christ of [H.B.] Warner is a miracle of synchronization. . . His very robes seemed patterned to lean robust Hellenic limbs. . . Hellas of the Renaissance. The outline remains Jewish according to Christian tradition" (K 31-32). Her description of H.B. Warner's Jesus resonates with Veronica's view of Jesus in *Pilate's Wife*: "This Jew seemed to combine the Greek way and an occult wisdom" (PW 106).

Rightly castigating DeMille for the cardboard spectacle elements we often associate with silent epic films (the most egregious, a Mary Magdalene slinking in Theda Bara see-through spangles), H.D. lauds him for the "beautiful" portrayal of its central figure as played by H.B. Warner. She admires "that grace, that Hellenic charis," which she defines as "CHARM" in capital letters (K 25). She is captivated by a scene where a child asks the healer of broken legs to fix her doll's wooden leg, and he does so with naturalness and pleasure. The scene recalls and confirms her description of Jesus in *Pilate's Wife* as approachable. The screenplay was written by Jeanie Macpherson who worked with DeMille on a number of his films. Marsha McCreadie, in her informative book *The Women Who Write the Movies*, suggests that the nurturing qualities apparent in several scenes reflect the viewpoint of their female author's naturalistic fulfillment of the Jesus quote—"Suffer little children" (Matthew 19:13-14).⁸⁷

H.D. remarks in her review: "Pilate's wife interceding is again a fine piece of acting and sustainedly Roman" (K 30). H.D. would have seen the original full-length two and a half-hour version released in 1927. The scene where Pilate's wife appears on screen is cut out of a shortened version edited by DeMille in 1931. Both versions are now available as a two-disc DVD carefully restored offering by Criterion.⁸⁸ An earlier

⁸⁷ Marsha McCreadie, *The Women Who Write the Movies: From Frances Marion to Nora Ephron* (New York: Birch Lane Press, Carol Publishing Group, 1994).

⁸⁸ *The King of Kings*, dir. Cecil B. DeMille, The Criterion Collection 266, 1927.

videotape of the film does not include the scene with Pilate's wife. Named in the subtitles as Claudia Procula, the wife of Pilate comes to him where he sits in state, having to decide Jesus's fate; she speaks the words quoted in the Matthew gospel, mentioned above, titled on screen. A curtain is drawn revealing Jesus being flogged, and the woman, clearly distressed, pleads with her husband. H.D. had already been engaged upon her novel centering on the Roman woman, and the film seems to have enacted her own character's feelings. H.D.'s description of a close up of H.B. Warner resonates with a line in *Trilogy*. Of the scene where Jesus at the temple drives out the money changers, his eyes, writes H.D. in her review, are "lit with dynamic fire" (K 29). So, too, are the eyes of Velasquez's painted Christ which open "and they are fire." (T 28)

Viewing the film seventy years after its making, I admired DeMille's use of light and superimposition to express the spirituality of its central figure. Anticipation is enhanced—the miraculous healer, attracter of so much attention, is not immediately shown to us. We follow the stumbling progress of a tattered little girl with blind closed eyes, seeking his help until, at long last, she is brought before him. Soon, the screen itself projects the vision of a rod of light, expanding to full illumination, and slowly the face of Jesus arrives superimposed within radiance—the face, indeed, of a beautiful sun-god. Throughout the film, Jesus is clothed in white which contrasts with assorted clothing worn by others.⁸⁹ His close ups are lit in soft focus; the Last Supper is staged as expected, the central figure, again, in contrastive white; the goblet of wine he passes to the disciples glows of itself. In the final crucifixion, Jesus glows in the same manner while flashes of lightning project brilliance onto his expired body on the cross. Upon resurrection, he stands for a moment with arm lifted in a pose similar to the

⁸⁹ Stills depicting H.B. Warner as Jesus in contrast with others in the film may be viewed at: <http://www.imagesjournal.com/issue03/reviews/kingofkings.htm> and <http://www.criterion.com/asp/release.asp?id=266>

marble statue (mentioned above) of the Hellenic sun-god, Apollo. The titles necessary to silent film dialogue are shown against a background of clouds opening to sunlight. The impression of his ascension is accomplished by slow fade into light, luminescent upon the silver-white screen. Cecil B. DeMille achieved the luminosity of his final sequence by use of an early Technicolor system—a two strip process by which a special projector simultaneously superimposed red and green images upon the screen.

The transfigured white robe on screen recalls the veils of the Lady later pictured in *Trilogy*—“*white as snow, // so as no fuller on earth / can white them*” (T 97)—italics are H.D.’s to indicate she is quoting from the gospel (Mark 9:3). Amy Benson Brown points to this phrase as an example of H.D.’s “theft of biblical language.”⁹⁰ Renee Curry has noted that “When looking for language that represents perfection, H.D. . . . turns to images of unattainable whiteness”.⁹¹ For H.D., Jesus as artistically imaged in *The King of Kings* represents timeless spiritual beauty. When shimmering at its luminescent best, the film grants H.D. fulfillment of visionary desire, an exquisite visual promise giving expression to her mystical concepts of the divine. Her review chants a psalm of rapt appreciation: “. . . just this light and interweaving light and the eternal truism, the Delphic utterance, the voice in the silence, the oracle on the hill top, all the machinery of the mystics brought into everyday existence” (K 31). H.D. applauds an image of Jesus unfettered by “art-craft junk-shop” appurtenances.

In *Tribute to Freud*, H.D. describes a significant dream manifested during her psychoanalytic sessions with Sigmund Freud—that of “the Princess” who rescues the biblical baby Moses afloat in a reed basket. “Am I. . .in my fantasy, the baby?” she wonders, and attains the dream’s true implication: “Do I wish myself, in the deepest unconscious or subconscious layers of my being, to be the founder of a new religion?”

⁹⁰ Amy Benson Brown, *Rewriting the Word: American Women Writers and the Bible* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 45.

⁹¹ Renee Curry, *White Women Writing White: H.D., Elizabeth Bishop, Sylvia Plath and Whiteness* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), 65.

(TF 37). The patriarchal prophet of scripture gives way to her feminine expanding consciousness of all-time. H.D.'s writing is the script by which she transforms inherited fixed frames of belief into a spiritual concept of infinite radiance. Her 1933 poem "The Magician," told in the voice of someone following Jesus as he visits and speaks with people, concludes with images of Roman Judea, and of Light:

he would see worlds in a crystal
and while we waited for a camel
or a fine Roman's litter
to crowd past,
he would tell of the whorl of whorl of light
that was infinity to be seen in glass,

or a shell
or a bead
or a pearl (CP 439).

The "Magician's" intent gaze upon a small hard object in nature focuses imagistic energies to evoke an ever-circling ever-expanding infinite cosmic Light. His vision reflects H.D.'s poetic process: "every concrete object // has abstract value, is timeless / in the dream parallel (T 24)." H.D.'s "disentangled" Jesus, "a second Homer," is identified with herself as a poet of transformation. "She herself is the writing," as stated of Helen in the revisionary epic *Helen in Egypt* may be applied to the poet herself.⁹² In H.D.'s unwritten narrative sequel to *Pilate's Wife*, "Christ in Cyprus"—the island to which H.D.'s surrogate contrives transfer of a wounded but surviving Jesus—her poet-prophet would have reappeared in the world through "natural" rather than

⁹² H.D., *Helen in Egypt* (New York: New Directions, 1961), 22.

ARTICLE:

Euripides: Volumes in the H.D. Library at Yale

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EURIPIDES: VOLUMES IN THE H.D. LIBRARY AT YALE

The volumes of Euripides's plays presently in the H.D. archive at Yale are certainly not all that H.D. owned and used.⁹⁴ The collapse of her marriage, two wars, and many relocations probably dispersed a considerable portion of her library. Notably absent, for instance, are books she might have been using in the early years of World War I, during her work with choruses from the *Rhesos* and the *Iphigeneia in Aulis* in 1915. Nevertheless, the number of surviving texts of Euripides is remarkable. The inscriptions, notes, and markings in these books allow one to draw some conclusions about H.D.'s typical methods of translation and about the importance of particular plays and particular editions at different moments in her career.

There are a few scholarly editions among these volumes (Greek with Latin notes) (numbers 2, 3, 4, 7); some with Greek text and English or French translation (5, 8, 9, 10); some with only translated texts, in English or French (1, 6, 11). It seems clear that H.D. worked with a Greek text arduously, with the help of a dictionary and in tandem with textual notes and translations; her classical books show the kind of scribblings typical of a critical reader or translator--translated words, underlinings, checks or brief marginal comments. Richard Aldington's advice in 1918 to Bryher, whom he was encouraging to translate for the Poets' Translation Series, gives an impression of the amateur's method that H.D. probably also

94. Virginia Smyers has published a list of H.D.'s books in the Bryher Library in East Hampton, New York, at the home of H.D.'s daughter Perdita Schaffner. There are no other editions of Euripides in that collection. "H.D.'s books in the Bryher Library," <http://www.imagists.org/hd/hdvs121.html>. She also discusses H.D.'s bookplates.

employed in her early years: "You will need Jacob's [sic] Anthologia . . . and the latest edition of Liddle [sic] & Scott's Lexicon . . . and a good Greek grammar. The Latin translation in Jacobs' will help you to be sure you have the precise literal sense, & for the rest I am secure in your own taste."⁹⁵ Prerequisites for their labors were, then, a respectable edition, a dictionary, a grammar, possibly a transliteration of some kind, and good literary sense, if not poetic facility.

It is impossible to date with certainty any of H.D.'s marginal notations or inscriptions in these volumes. They sometimes represent literal palimpsests of numerous readings. H.D. worked at the lon, for instance, at many different moments in her career, and her markings of the Greek text in some editions may be overlays. Nevertheless, the textual notations show correlation with H.D.'s specific engagements with Euripidean translation at various points. By noting in different editions the plays read intensively, one may trace the trajectory of H.D.'s life-long engagement with Euripides. For example, extensive marking of the Greek text of Hippolytus probably indicates a fairly early effort, while interest in the text of Electra or of Orestes probably comes from mid-career. Moreover, H.D.'s reliance on the intermediary of French translations--helpful for reference because generally less mannered than English ones--increased over the years.

Scholarly editions of Greek texts of Euripides very likely date from early in H.D.'s career, beginning in 1912, when she and Aldington were first drawn together by a common interest in classical translation. Though they did not aim at literal accuracy as a primary goal, they tried to base translations on recognized texts, such as the Treubner or Tauchnitz editions of the late nineteenth century.⁹⁶ Harold P. Collins says in unpublished recollections of H.D., dating from

95. Letter dated 22 September 1918, in the Bryher Papers, General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

96. The edition of Frederick Jacobs to which Aldington refers in his letter to Bryher was available throughout the nineteenth century in Tauchnitz editions, and other Tauchnitz editions include that of Anacreon (Richard F. P.

the early twenties: "I once saw the Greek texts she used for her versions. They were extraordinarily expensive-looking and elegant, and smothered in presumably intelligible notes."⁹⁷ Only a few of such editions remain in H.D.'s library, among them several of Euripides.

H.D. possessed a standard nineteenth-century edition of Euripides, the Greek text with Latin commentary edited by Frederick A. Paley (7); but there is little evidence that H.D. used it. She also possessed three separate editions of the Greek texts edited by Wilhelm Dindorf (2, 3, and 4). One of these (4) is inscribed "H.D.' April 1912"; thus it apparently dates from the earliest days of "H.D.," before she had yet married (October 1913) or had yet been officially christened by Pound in the British Tea Room (September 1912). The most heavily used of the Dindorf editions (2) would also appear to be an early acquisition. This possibility is evidenced by the intermediary nature of H.D.'s signature--"Hilda Aldington `H.D.'"--suggesting that both marital and literary names were still new (her standard book signature gradually stabilized by 1920 to "H.D. Aldington."). An early date is also suggested by the quotation from A.E.⁹⁸ added in her hand, suggesting the idealism of H.D.'s earliest hellenic engagement, such as that voiced in her 1912 Paris diary.⁹⁹ One may surmise from the extent and character of notations that this Greek text was the basis for H.D.'s translation from the Hippolytus (1919); and that it was extensively consulted during her engagement in the early twenties with the texts of the Ion, the Helen, and the Bacchae, in preparing her essays in "Notes on Euripides, Pausanius, and Greek Lyric Poets." Dindorf edition 3, though generally less used than number 2, also shows evidence

Brunck) and of the Orphic Hymns and Callimachus. Treubner editions in H.D.'s library include that of Euripides (Wilhelm Dindorf); the Greek bucolic poets, Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus (Heinrich Ahrens); Pindar (Eduard Hiller); and Epicurus (Herman Vsener).

97. Collins' notes on H.D. are in the H.D. Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale. H.D. first met Collins in August 1923.

98. "A.E." is the pseudonym of George Russell (1867-1935), Irish nationalist, writer, painter, and theosophist.

99. Located in the H.D. Papers (Series III [Personal Papers], box 47, folder 1196: Diary 1911-1912), Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

of intensive work with the Hippolytus and the Bacchae.

The English translation by Buckley (1) was apparently also read extensively in this same period of the early twenties. This fact is indicated strikingly by the presence, on the inside back cover of volume two, of a pencil draft in H.D.'s hand of the poem "Helen" (1923), inspired by a line from Buckley's translation of the Helen, underlined by H.D. in this text (p. 201). The plays most extensively marked in this edition also indicate a correspondence with H.D.'s literary interests at this time. There is here considerable notation of the Bacchae and of the Ion, and divisions of the choral odes in these two plays as well as in the Helen. Moreover, passages from some plays marked or annotated in this text surface in H.D.'s writing of the twenties: the "Sea-Choros" of Hecuba marked here first appears in Palimpsest (1926); the concluding speech of Thetis in Andromache is alluded to in "Thetis" (1923) and in "Notes on Euripides..." (c. 1924). H.D. here makes marginal comments on two of Hermione's speeches in Andromache, one showing Hermione's violent jealousy toward Andromache as her husband's concubine, and another lamenting her father's abandonment of her. In her annotations H.D. interprets Hermione as "injured . . . unbalanced," noting the poignancy of the images of her desperation: "Hermione's speech - blue-winged bird, pitched bark." She notes in the second of these speeches directed at Menelaus: "pathos of Hermione . . . a child's fear and weakness." These remarks suggesting H.D.'s identification with Hermione's jealousy, desperation, and sense of abandonment may indicate another literary source for the name H.D. gives herself in Hermione and Asphodel, two of the autobiographical narratives dating from the early twenties.¹⁰⁰

At this time French translations of the plays of Euripides begin to gain prominence in H.D.'s work. The inscription to Mario Meunier's translation of the Bacchae (11) indicates that H.D. acquired this text in 1924, and it provided the basis for an early draft of the choruses of the

100. On the dating of Asphodel, see Robert Spoo's Introduction to H.D.'s Asphodel (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1992) p. x.

Bacchae in "Notes on Euripides...." H.D. notes on the half-title page of Meunier the correspondence between pages in this text and her English translation--a version of the earlier choruses--published in Red Roses for Bronze (1931).

Further, notations in volume three of Leconte de Lisle's translation of the plays (6) demonstrate the character of H.D.'s textual engagement with Euripides in the thirties. This volume is inscribed with H.D.'s Lowndes Square address, where H.D. resided between 1934 and 1946 (Silverstein 40).¹⁰¹ Divisions of Ion indicated in Leconte de Lisle's text correspond to the nineteen sections in the published version (1937); and moreover H.D. on a back leaf has indicated what pages in Leconte de Lisle she would omit in her translation, along with the page numbers of a corresponding Greek text.

Furthermore, H.D.'s letters to Bryher during August 1935 while translating the Ion indicate that she had tentative plans to translate the Helen during the coming winter, and to translate two more plays the next year.¹⁰² Confirming this project, one finds that in Leconte de Lisle's text H.D. has marked the Helen into twenty-one divisions, and that she has slightly marked the Orestes and the Electra. For the corresponding Greek text of these plays she apparently referred to Arthur Way's Loeb edition (8), which also bears the Lowndes Square address. In Way she has marked the Helen into twenty-one sections, and has slightly marked the other two plays as well. Years later, while she was in the midst of writing Helen in Egypt, H.D. mentions in a letter that she once "did a sketchy translation of Euripides' Helen in Egypt, but threw away the old script."¹⁰³ That translation almost certainly dates from this period, as

101. "Louis Silverstein's HD Chronology," Part IV (1929-April 1946), entry for December 1934. Accessible at <http://www.imagists.org/hd/hdchron4.html>.

102. Letters dated 1 and 24 August 1935, in the Bryher Papers, General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

103. Letter to Francis Wolle, dated 26 September 1952, in the Francis Wolle Collection in the library at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

does her interest in the Electra and the Orestes, passages of which are echoed in "From Electra-Orestes," published in 1932 and 1934.

Leconte de Lisle again serves as an intermediary for H.D.'s engagement with Euripides two decades later. A working-notebook for Helen in Egypt, which indicates her re-reading of Euripides during the spring of 1953, quotes extensively from his Leconte de Lisle's translations of five plays (Helen, Andromache, Iphigeneia in Aulis, Iphigeneia in Tauris, and Trojan Women). Indeed Leconte de Lisle's Parnassian hellenism is a significant textual overlay in H.D.'s epic poem. His French transliteration and translation is consciously or unconsciously evoked in the strange intrusion of French names and phrases throughout the poem--Leuké, l'isle blanche, l'Amor, la Mort. (The last two phrases may be Freud by way of Denis de Rougement, but the first two belong to Leconte de Lisle.)

H.D.'s volumes of Euripides at Yale indicate one final, very late turn in H.D.'s engagement with Euripides. In 1955, after completing the lyric portion of Helen in Egypt, H.D. was being encouraged by Norman Holmes Pearson to translate more Euripides plays, and at this point she turned to another edition in her possession, the Edition "Les Belles Lettres" (1948-1950), having the Greek text with French translation, notes, and commentary. Evidence from her late memoir "Compassionate Friendship" indicates that she was reading from this edition in April of 1955, when she was thinking about doing translations and beginning to think about the discursive headnotes to Helen in Egypt. Some unscribed and very slightly marked volumes from the set were recorded by Norman Holmes Pearson in his original census of H.D.'s library, though these volumes are not presently in the Beinecke.

The critical introductions in this edition to some of the plays especially caught H.D.'s attention. Essays by Henri Grégoire establish a detailed structural parallel between the

Iphigeneia in Tauris and the Helen, and H.D. includes the Ion within the framework of his general argument. Here are her remarks in "Compassionate Friendship"¹⁰⁴:

The strictly scholarly but almost clairvoyant findings of the translator of these plays . . . leave me breathless. He classes them with the Ion which I have already done.

Originally, I worked on Iphigenia choruses - but Aulis.

I am living this Elusinian [sic] cycle - will it be given me to serve again this other temple, cycle or circle?

I put aside my Euripides volumes and the notes that I have done, as for the Helen and the comparison of the Iphigenia and Helen, "l'identité presque absolu [sic] de la composition." Of the 20 plays, "les filles immortelles d'Euripide ... deux jumelles."

These twins are companions to the Ion that I worked on so many years These all deal with a defamed or "lost" oracle, Helen herself being exiled to Egypt She is lost, to be found again. (71)

Grégoire's complex argument about the Helen and the Iphigeneia (which does not include the Ion, except very tangentially¹⁰⁵) is this: because of a conflict with regard to Iphigenia and Helen between the cultic worship of a goddess and the mythic figure of a mortal, the mortals were imagined in legend to have been magically removed to a nebulous country at the margins of the known world--Iphigenia in Tauris, Helen in Egypt. But in its national self-consciousness, fifth-century Athens wanted to recover its mythic origins---thus perhaps the connection H.D.

104. "Compassionate Friendship" is unpublished but in the H.D. Papers at the Beinecke.

105. H.D.'s remark about Grégoire's inclusion of the Ion probably comes from a footnote in his treatment of the Iphigeneia in Tauris (4.10), where he quotes another critic who suggests that the Helen and the Iphigeneia are identical to the Ion in structure.

makes with Grégoire's reading of the Ion, a play about the original Attic ancestor. Grégoire says in his explication of the Iphigeneia: "Mais, le jour vint où les Grecs, pénétrant plus avant dans des contrées que perdaient peu à peu leur mystère, voulurent y retrouver les divins exilés qui l'imagination de leur pères y avaient bannis"¹⁰⁶ (4.94). Thus the Euripidean versions of the legends of Iphigenia and Helen constitute a recovery or nostos ("return home") to Greece of a lost or exiled goddess.

H.D. clearly (and rightly, in the context of the plays) reads this return in terms of an "Eleusinian cycle," a Persephonean return to life ("Compassionate" 71). Why she emphasizes the lost "oracle" is not clear from reading Grégoire--perhaps because all three of these Euripidean plays are located at the site of a temple and involve the speech of an oracle. In particular, Grégoire gives a very compelling account of the role of Thoenöe in the Helen as a regal and wise precursor of Socrates' Diotima, interpreting the divine nous ("mind, heart, purpose"). But in any case, H.D. clearly imagines her own recovery of Helen in Helen in Egypt as the recovery of a lost oracle. Also, finding that Iphigenia of her earliest hellenic engagement was a "twin" of the Helen of her late years affects the final shaping of Helen in Egypt. Grégoire's interpretations are traceable in the prose headings being written at this time; and they may in part account for H.D.'s renewed interest in the latter stages of revision with the "sister motive" of the poem ("Compassionate" 140).

H.D. emphasizes Grégoire's reading a few years later commenting on the typescript of her early essay on the Helen in "Notes on Euripides." In marginal comments throughout the typescript she indicates her resistance to her earlier reading of the play, finally concluding in a note dated 16 August 1958: "Re-reading Helen, some quarter century later, or more, gave me an entirely new idea of this enigmatic drama. This play, in light of history, the ill-fated Sicilian

106. "But the day came when the Greeks, penetrating farther into countries which little by little lost their mystery, desired to find there the exiled divinities which the imagination of their fathers had there banished."

expedition, is one of the most poignant & devout of the series of the 'lost oracle,' making a trilogy with Ion and Iphigenia" ("Helen in Egypt" 18). H.D here again refers to Grégoire's reading of the Helen in the political context of Athens. Grégoire situates the play chronologically in the bitter and disillusioned aftermath of the Sicilian expedition, finding in it a reflection of Euripides' "émotion angiossée" at the catastrophe, his analysis of the "psychose du sacrilège" of the last phases of the Peloponnesian Wars, and his final affirmation of a divine nous in the speech of the priestess Theonöe (5.12, 14, 45). As H.D. was so intently engaged in her last years in synthesizing a pattern in the recurrent erotic events of her life, itself cut across by traumatic wars, Grégoire provided clues to the religious as well as political dimension of her persistent textual engagement with Euripides.

[Editions]

1. Buckley, Theodore Alois, trans. The Tragedies of Euripides (English).

London: Bell & Daldy, 1871. 2 vols. [Za/D721/Zz871E]

Vol. 1. Rose bookplate, partially defaced. Hecuba: second choral ode marked (approx. lines 435-83). Orestes: slight marking of passages, especially last speech of Apollo. Phoenissae: slight marking of passages. Hippolytus: slight marking of passages. Alcestis: slight note in margin. Bacchae: extensive marking of passages; division of choral odes; fifth choral ode (line 977 ff.) numbered. Heraclidae: slight marking. Iphigenia in Tauris: marking of passages, especially choruses, and particularly second choral ode (line 395 ff.).

Vol. 2. Rose bookplate, partially defaced. Madness of Heracles:

slight marking of passages. Trojan Women: marking of passages, especially choruses; second full choral ode (line 798 ff.) divided into sections. Ion: extensive marking of passages; divisions marked in the first speech of Ion. Andromache: marginal comments and marking of passages; especially speeches of Hermione, line 854 ff. and line 921 ff., and the concluding speech of Thetis, line 1250 ff. Helen: marking of passages; choruses marked for division; p. 201, line underlined, "for all Greece hates the daughter of Jove"; cf. on back covers of volume two, a pencil draft of a poem titled "All Greece Hates," later titled "Helen." Rhesus: very slight marking of passages.

2. [Dindorf, Wilhelm, ed. Euripidis opera omnia (Greek, Latin notes). Oxford: Jacobus Parker et Soc., 1871-1873.] 3 vols. (Beinecke catalogue notes that the full edition consists of 4 vols.) [Za/D721/Zz871Ea]

Autograph: "Hilda Aldington `H.D.'" Bacchae: extensively marked in H.D.'s hand, translations of words and passages. Between Bacchae and Hippolytus, in H.D.'s hand, this quotation: "We should wish rather [?] for our thoughts a directness such as belongs to the messengers of the Gods, swift, beautiful flashing presences but in purposes never understood. / A.E." [This appears to be a misquotation, deliberate or not, of a passage in A.E.'s essay "The Hero in Man" from his book Imaginations and Reveries (1915): "We would wish rather for our thoughts a directness such as belongs to the messengers of the gods, swift, beautiful, flashing presences bent on purposes well understood."] Hippolytus, translated words marked; division of choruses;

choruses most heavily marked. Helen, slightly marked, passages from choruses set off. Ion, very heavily marked, words translated, underlining, division of choruses.

3. Dindorf, Wilhelm, ed. Euripidis tragoediae superstites et deperditarum fragmenta (Greek, Latin notes). Oxford: Typographeo Academeo, 1832-1840. 4 vols. [Za/D721/Zz832E]

Vol. 1. No inscription. Notes in Hecuba in one passage, choral ode line 445 ff. Heracles: notes not in H.D.'s hand.

Vol. 2. Autograph: "H.D. Aldington." Ion: slight marking setting off sections. Hippolytus: translated words in H.D.'s hand heavy throughout, and notes in another hand. Bacchae: notes in H.D.'s hand marking off sections of chorus; notes in another hand. Iphigeneia in Tauris: slight marking of choruses. Helen: translated words in H.D.'s hand at the beginning of the play; notes in another hand.

Vol. 3. No inscription. Medea: marking not in H.D.'s hand; Electra: marking in H.D.'s hand, setting off Electra's speech (lines 112-67) into strophe and antistrophe; marking in another hand on one page. Alcestis: marking not in H.D.'s hand. Phoenissae: slight marking in H.D.'s hand and division of choruses.

Vol. 4. No inscription; no marking.

4. [Dindorf, Wilhelm, ed. Euripides (Greek, with Latin notes). Oxford: I. Shrimpton, c. 1870]. [Za/D721/Zz870E] Selections, with various paginations, in

one volume. Title EKABH.

Autograph: "' H.D.' April 1912"; no marking in H.D.'s hand.

5. Grégoire, Henri, et al., ed. and trans. Euripide (Greek and French). Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1948-50. 5 vols. [Vols. 3, 4, and 5 indicated in Pearson's list of the library, but these are not in Beinecke catalogue; probably dispersed.]

Vol. 3. No inscription, no marking (Pearson's notes)

Vol. 4. No inscription, no marking (Pearson's notes)

Vol. 5. No inscription, slight marking (Pearson's notes). In marginal comments on her early essay on Helen in "Notes on Euripides...", H.D. in 1958 refers to this edition's commentary on Helen, Ion, and Iphigeneia in Tauris (the "lost oracle plays").

6. Leconte de Lisle, trans. Euripide (French). Paris: Lemerre, n.d. [188-?]. 3 vols. [Za/D721/Zz880E]

Vol. 1. No inscription. Slight marks in a chorus of Orestes; otherwise no marks.

Vol. 2. No inscription; no marks.

Vol. 3. Autograph: "H.D. Aldington No. 10 49 Lowndes Square S. W. 1." Rose bookplate, partially defaced. Helen marked into twenty-one sections; no other marking. Ion marked into nineteen sections, corresponding to divisions in published translation; occasional marking elsewhere. Electra: slight marking. There are also notes in H.D.'s hand on

a back leaf, apparently indicating proposed omissions of the original text in her translation of the Ion.

7. Paley, Frederick A., ed. Euripides (Greek, Latin notes). New York: Harper and Brothers, 1858?-1861. 3 vols. [Za/D721/Zz8J8E]

Three volumes bound in one. Hecuba has marking not in H.D.'s hand; otherwise no marking. Probably a bequest from May Sinclair.

8. Way, Arthur S., ed. and trans. Euripides (Greek and English). Loeb Classical Library. London: W. Heinemann; New York: Macmillan, 1912-1916. 4 vols. [Za/D721/Zz912E]

Vol. 1. Autograph: "H.D. Aldington 49 Lowndes Square S. W. 1." Rose bookplate, partially defaced. Helen: Greek text divided into twenty-one sections.

Vol. 2. No inscription; rose bookplate, partially defaced. Electra, slight marking of passages. Orestes, slight marking.

Vol. 3. No inscription; rose bookplate, partially defaced. No marking.

Vol. 4. No inscription; rose bookplate, partially defaced. Hippolytus, slight marking of passages.

[Individual plays]

9. Fix, Théobald, trans. Electre (Greek and French). Les Auteurs Grecs. Paris: Hachette, 1893. Bound with C. Leprévost, Hécabe. Les Auteurs Grecs.

Paris: Hachette, 1906. [Za/D721/Zz893E]

Owl bookplate in bound volume; no marking in either text. The editions contain a Greek text and two translations--one literal translation in prose; another word for word.

10. Fix, Théobald, trans. Hippolyte (Greek and French). Les Auteurs Grecs. Paris: Hachette, 1912. Bound with Edouard Bailly. Médée. Les Auteurs Grecs. Paris: Hachette, 1897. [Za/D721/Zz912Ea]

Owl bookplate in bound volume; no marking in either text. The editions contain a Greek text and two translations--one literal translation in prose; another word for word.

11. Meunier, Mario, trans. Les bacchantes (French). [With "étude sur la religion dionysiaque"]. Paris: Payot, 1923. [Za/D721/Zz923E]

Autograph: "Hilda Aldington - Territet - Spring 1924". Passages marked, underlining, translation; passages marked in Introduction, "Le Mythe Dionysiaque." On half-title page a note by H.D. indicates page numbers in this text corresponding to translations of the choruses of the Bacchae in Red Roses for Bronze.

[French text]	<u>Red Roses</u>
58	20-21
62	22-23
67	24-25
139	26-27

151	28-29
191	30-31
	32

HD

BRIEF ITEMS OF NEWS:

The Beinecke Library has announced a new exhibition, running from January 28-June 13, 2011, entitled *Psyche and Muse: Creative Entanglements with the Science of the Soul*. The poster blurb states: "This exhibition explores the influence of cultural, clinical, and scientific dialogues about human psychology on twentieth-century writers, artists, and thinkers. Tracing important themes in the lives and work of key figures and artistic communities represented in the Beinecke Library's Modern European and American Literature collections, *Psyche and Muse* documents a range of imaginative encounters involving the arts and the study of the mind." (Posted on November 28, 2010 at <http://beineckepoetry.wordpress.com/> .)

Several people from the HD List have started discussing the need for a listing of the books in H.D.'s library (now dispersed in the Yale library system). Those interested can look at the extremely useful catalog that Heather Hernandez has set up through: <http://librarything.com/profile/hildadoolittle> . (For more information about this project, list members may search the H.D. List archives of 2010.)

The *H.D. Book*, edited by Michael Boughn and Victor Cole, will be available to buy from California University Press from January 2011.

From the Publisher's website:

This magisterial work, long awaited and long the subject of passionate speculation, is an unprecedented exploration of modern poetry and poetics by one of America's most acclaimed and influential postwar poets. What began in 1959 as a simple homage to the modernist poet H.D. developed into an expansive and unique quest to arrive at a poetics that would fuel Duncan's great work in the 1970s. A meditation on both the roots of modernism and its manifestation in the work of H.D., Ezra Pound, D.H. Lawrence, William Carlos Williams, Edith Sitwell, and many others, Duncan's wide-ranging book is especially notable for its illumination of the role women played in creation of literary modernism. Until now, *The H.D. Book* existed only in mostly out-of-print little magazines in which its chapters first appeared. Now, for the first time published in its entirety, as its author intended, this monumental work—

at once an encyclopedia of modernism, a reinterpretation of its key players and texts, and a record of Duncan's quest toward a new poetics—is at last complete and available to a wide audience.

(Thanks, Amy Evans, for submitting this item.)

Lisa Simon, as part of her research fellowship at the Beinecke, gave a talk on April 22, 2010: "Museums, Materials, and Myths: H.D.'s Anthro-poetics." For a brief abstract and more details, see

<http://beineckepoetry.wordpress.com/2010/04/21/h-d-fellows-lecture/> .

Amy Evans (King's College London) gave a paper on H.D.'s importance as a poetic influence in the work of Robert Duncan entitled "The Adoption of Influence: Robert Duncan, Derivation and the Writing Woman," at a Robert Duncan Symposium, "The Truth and Life of Myth," at The Chicago Poetry Project, The Art Institute of Chicago, in April. The papers from the conference, and plenary addresses by Michael Palmer and Nathaniel Mackey, will be available in the future as sound files on the internet at the Pennsound website. The website also contains Duncan's "Seminar on H.D." (1986): <http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Duncan.php>

HD

CONFERENCES:

(arranged chronologically, the most recent listed last)

Modernist Studies Association

12th Annual Conference: Modernist Networks

University of Victoria

Victoria, British Columbia

November 11-14, 2010

Numbers refer to the program, which may be found here:

<http://msa.press.jhu.edu/conferences/msa12/program.html>

2. Reception of Late Modernist Writing by Women_(seminar)

Leaders: Lara Vetter (University of North Carolina)

Demetres Tryphonopoulos (University of New Brunswick)

Respondent: Cynthia Hogue (Arizona State University)

21. Philanthropy, Patronage and the Literary Market (panel)

Organizer: Julie Vandivere (Bloomsburg University)

Chair: Tamar Katz (Brown University)

"H.D.'s Chevalier: Norman Holmes Pearson and the Grooming of H.D. as 'National Poetess-Heroine'"

Annette Debo (West Carolina University)

"'Suicidally Generous': Bryher and her Personal-Passionate Philanthropy"

Susan McCabe (University of Southern California)

"American Philanthropy and the Ressentiment"

Francesca Sawaya (University of Oklahoma)

"Patrons as Matrons in the Making of the Modernist Canon"

Julie Vandivere (Bloomsburg University)

24. Modernist Patronage: Corporate and Academic Evolutions (panel)

Organizer: Brenda Helt (Metropolitan State University)

Chair: Christopher Reed (Pennsylvania State University)

"From Vagabond to Visiting Poet: Vachel Lindsay and the Prehistory of the Program Era"

Mike Chasar (Willamette University)

"The Making and Managing of American Modernists: Norman Holmes Pearson and the Yale Collection of American Literature"

Brenda Helt (Metropolitan State University)

"On Company Time: Agee in the Office"

Donal Harris (University of California, Los Angeles)

29. Modernism, Modernity & the Visual Vernacular (panel)

Organizer: Marsha Bryant (University of Florida)

Chair: Susan Rosenbaum (University of Georgia)

"Cosmopolitanism, Modernity, and Islam"

Teresa Heffernan (Saint Mary's University)

"Vernacular Voices and the Personal Museum"

Will Garret-Petts (Thompson Rivers University) and Donald Lawrence (Thompson Rivers University)

"H.D. in CinemaScope: *Helen in Egypt* & Historical Epic Film"

Marsha Bryant (University of Florida)

42. Modernist Women and Publishing (panel)

Organizer: Donna K. Hollenberg (University of Connecticut)

Chair: Jenny Penberthy (Capilano University)

"Publishing in Disguise: Frances Boldereff's Authorial Evasions"
Sharon Thesen (University of British Columbia)

"Documentaries and Archives: Dorothy Livesay, Collaborative Editing, and Women's Modernisms in Canada"
Dean Irvine (Dalhousie University)

"'Their own privately subsidized firm': Bryher and the New Patronage"
Emily Wojcik (University of Connecticut)

"Making *Contact* in Canada: Denise Levertov's Links with Raymond Souster and Margaret Avison"
Donna K. Hollenberg (University of Connecticut)

43. Modernism and Emancipatory Politics (panel)

Organizer: Chris Robé (Florida Atlantic University)
Chair: Phyllis Alsdurf (Bethel University)

"Wounded Island: H.D.'s Emancipatory Politics and the Betrayed Promise of Moravian Bethlehem"
Seth Moglen (Lehigh University)

"The Good Fight: The Spanish Civil War and U.S. Left Film Culture"
Chris Robé (Florida Atlantic University)

"Riding Toward Everywhere: Boxcar Politics in 1930s U.S. Literature and Film"
John Lennon (St. Francis College)

54. Archaeological Modernism (panel)

Organizer: Stephen Park (University of Southern California)
Chair: Sasha Colby (Simon Fraser University)

"Modernity's Flight to Egypt: Early Spanish Archaeology and Degeneration"
Oscar Vásquez (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)

"H.D., Archaeology, and the British Museum"
Lisa Simon (University of Montana, Missoula)

"Mesoamerican Modernism: William Carlos Williams and the Archaeological Imagination"
Stephen Park (University of Southern California)

93. Formalist Modernism (roundtable)

Organizer: Lesley Wheeler (Washington and Lee University)

1. "The 'Guide-Book Tourist' versus 'The Cultivated Minority of Travellers' in Edith Wharton's Travel Writing," Frederick Wegener, California State Univ., Long Beach
2. "'The Banalities and Promiscuities of Modern Travel': Female Cosmopolitanism and Transnational Capital in Edith Wharton's *In Morocco*," Andrea Bebell, West Virginia Univ., Morgantown
3. "The Frenchwoman *Dépaysée*: Edith Wharton's *French Ways and Their Meaning*, Gabrielle Landormy, and the Transnational Body," Donna M. Campbell, Washington State Univ., Pullman

Respondent: Gary Totten

For abstracts, write to gary.totten@ndsu.edu.

139. Prosody in the Poetry of Ezra Pound and William Carlos Williams

Program arranged by the Ezra Pound Society and the William Carlos Williams Society

Presiding: Ian D. Copestake, Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität

1. "The Challenges of the American Idiom," Emily Mitchell Wallace, Bryn Mawr Coll.
2. "'When the Equities Are Gathered Together': Sound, Sense, and Endings in Pound's 'Canto 83,'" Ellen Keck Stauder, Reed Coll.
3. "'The Jump between Fact and the Imaginative Reality': A Consideration of Rhythm and Measure, of Poetry and Prose in William Carlos Williams," Natalie E. Gerber, State Univ. of New York, Fredonia

For abstracts, write to demetres@unb.ca after 15 Nov.

254. Dirt, Desire, Recollection: James Joyce and Virginia Woolf

Program arranged by the International Virginia Woolf Society and the International James Joyce Foundation

Presiding: Bonnie Kime Scott, San Diego State Univ.

1. "Woolf's Gothic Modernism: Spirited Feminism in *To the Lighthouse*," Bonita Rhoads, Masaryk Univ.
2. "Shitting on Empire: Metropolitan Abjection and Colonial Returns in Virginia Woolf's London," Katherine Merz, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison
3. "The Crumbs of *Ulysses*," Abby S. Bender, New York Univ.
4. "Joyce, Woolf, and the Philosophy of Dirt," Richard H. Brown, Univ. of Leeds

268. Biographical, Musical, and Legal Narratives: Ezra Pound in Context

Program arranged by the Ezra Pound Society

Presiding: Demetres Tryphonopoulos, Univ. of New Brunswick, Fredericton

1. "Life in Context: Stories of Pound," Ira Nadel, Univ. of British Columbia
2. "Ezra Pound's 'Melodicles' and 'Rhythmicles': Composers' Techniques for Poetry," Margaret Fisher, Second Evening Art Publishing
3. "Pound, Copyright Law, and the Cultural Heritage," Robert Edward Spoo, Univ. of Tulsa

For abstracts, write to demetres@unb.ca.

495. Queering Lawrence

Program arranged by the D. H. Lawrence Society of North America

Presiding: Jill Franks, Austin Peay State Univ.

1. "The Escaped Cock? Questioning Homoeroticism in Lawrence's Poetry," Merrill Cole, Western Illinois Univ.
2. "Queering Masochism: *The Rainbow's* Radical Marriage Complex," Jennifer Mitchell, Graduate Center, City Univ. of New York
3. "Queering Masculinity in *The Virgin and the Gypsy*," Bret L. Keeling, Northeastern Univ.

586. Crowds and Masses in Modernist Poetry

Presiding: Joel T. Nickels, Univ. of Miami

1. "Reimagining the Crystal Palace and the Fascist 'House of Glass': Crowds and Carnality in F. T. Marinetti's Late-Futurist Colossus, 1944," Jennifer Scappettone, Univ. of Chicago
2. "The Mass Poetics of William Carlos Williams," Joel T. Nickels
3. "'From This Distance Thinking toward You': Oppen's Intersubjective Poetics," Hillary Gravendyk, Pomona Coll.
4. "An Eliot for the People? *The Waste Land* as a Production of Mass Sensibility," Charles Sumner, Univ. of Southern Mississippi

720. William Carlos Williams's *An Early Martyr and Other Poems: Seventy-Five Years Later*

Program arranged by the William Carlos Williams Society

Presiding: Theodora Rapp Graham, Penn State Univ., Harrisburg

1. "Williams and the Great Depression," Steven Gould Axelrod, Univ. of California, Riverside

The author notes that this article is about *Sea Garden* and H.D.'s prose about America (*The Gift*, *HERmione*, and *Paint It Today*).

Mandel, Charlotte. *ROCK VEIN SKY: Poems*. New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 2008.

Vetter, Lara. *Modernist Writings and Religio-Scientific Discourse: H.D., Loy, and Toomer*. New York: Palgrave Press, 2010.

This book is part of Rachel Blau DuPlessis's "Modern and Contemporary Poetry and Poetics" series.

H.D.'s *The Mystery*, edited by Jane Augustine, is now available in paperback. The editor of this work notes that it has lots of information on H.D.'s Moravian church background and her uses of it, especially her view of the Holy Spirit as female. For more information, go to <http://www.upf.com/book.asp?id=AUGUS002>.

Finally, H.D. seems to be thriving in translation. For example, recent Spanish versions of *Tribute to Freud*, *Sea Garden*, *Helen in Egypt*, and *Trilogy* are available:

Trilogía. Bilingual edition. Trans. and intro. Natalia Carbajosa. Barcelona: Lumen, 2008.

Helena en Egipto. Bilingual edition. Trans. Alfredo Martínez. Tarragona, Spain: Igitur, 2007.

Tributo a Freud. Trans. Alejandro Palomas. Barcelona: El Cobre, 2004.

Jardín junto al mar. Bilingual edition. Trans. Alison Bartolo and Alfredo Martínez. Tarragona, Spain: Igitur, 2001.

For information on these and other translations, go to <http://www.worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n78-95822>. On the right is a list of languages. Not all of the works are actually by H.D., but with patient scrolling one can find translations in Italian, French, German, Swedish, Portuguese, Japanese, Modern Greek, Turkish, and Norwegian, in addition to others in Spanish.

Other publications of interest:

Beach, Sylvia. *The Letters of Sylvia Beach*. Ed. Keri Walsh. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.

Brooker, Peter, and Andrew Thacker, eds. *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines. Volume I: Britain and Ireland, 1880-1955*. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Clark, Catherine O. "Sapphic Consciousness in H.D. and de Noailles." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 12.3 (2010): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol12/iss3/9>

- Conilleau, Claire. "What's in a Name?: H.D.'s Revision of Shakespeare." *Transatlantica* [online] 1 (2010). <http://transatlantica.revues.org/4801>
- Connor, Rachel. *H.D. and the Image*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.
- Egan, Deirdre. "Mina Loy's Modern Long Poem: New York and the *Compensations of Poverty*." *Literature Compass* 6.5 (September 2009): 968-988.
- Humm, Maggie. *Modernist Women and Visual Cultures: Virginia Woolf, Vanessa Bell, Photography, and Cinema*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003. Includes chapters: "Modernism, Cinema, Gender, and *Borderline*" and "Modernist Women and Cinema."
- Jeffers, Robinson. *The Collected Letters of Robinson Jeffers, with Selected Letters of Una Jeffers*. Volume One: 1890-1930. Ed. James Karman. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009. First of three projected volumes.
- Nyberg, Lennart. *Bodies of Poems: Graphic Poetics in a Historical Perspective*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2009.
- Oudart, Clément. "Dissémination et défiguration: 'Hymen' de H.D." *Revue française d'études américaines* 123.1 (2010): 101-115.
- Park, Josephine Nock-Hee. *Apparitions of Asia: Modernist Form and Asian American Poetics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Poets at Play: An Anthology of Modernist Drama*. Ed. Sarah Bay-Cheng and Barbara Cole. Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2010. Includes H.D.'s play *Hippolytus Temporizes*.
- Roffman, Karin. *From the Modernist Annex: American Women Writers in Museums and Libraries*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010.
- Staley, Gregory A. *American Women and Classical Myths*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009.
- The Cambridge Companion to Modernist Women Writers*. Ed. Maren Tova Linett. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

HD

REVIEWS:

- Elkins, Marilyn. *Modernism/modernity* 17.2 (April 2010): 462-463.
REVIEW OF *Kay Boyle for the Twenty-First Century: New Essays* edited by Thomas Austenfeld (WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2009).
- Forth, Christopher E. "Imagining Our Ancient Future." *Science* vol. 325 number 5941 (7 August 2009): 677-678.
REVIEW OF *Knossos and the Prophets of Modernism* by Cathy Gere (University of Chicago Press, 2009).
- Halsall, Alison. *English Studies in Canada* 33.3 (September 2007): 200-203.
REVIEW OF *H.D. and the Image* by Rachel Connor (Manchester University Press, 2004).
- Henke, Suzette. *The Review of English Studies* 61.249 (2010): 321-323.
REVIEW OF *The Persistence of Modernism: Loss and Mourning in the Twentieth Century* by Madelyn Detloff (Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- Mandel, Charlotte. "H.D.'s Visionary War & Peace." *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 52.3 (2009): 380-383.
REVIEW OF *The Sword Went out to Sea* by H.D. (University Press of Florida, 2009).
- Mauro, Evan. "Modernism's Lost Causes." *Reviews in Cultural Theory* 1.1 (Winter 2010): 57-61.
REVIEW OF *Mourning Modernity: Literary Modernism and the Injuries of American Capitalism* by Seth Moglen (Stanford University Press, 2007).
- Radia, Pavlina. *College Literature* 37.2 (Spring 2010): 213-216.
REVIEW OF *Apparitions of Asia: Modernist Form and Asian American Poetics* by Josephine Nock-Hee Park (Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Scholes, Robert. "The Epoch of the Small Reviews." *Modernism/modernity* 17.2 (April 2010): 421-429.
REVIEW OF *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines, Volume I: Britain and Ireland, 1880-1955*, edited by Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (Oxford University Press, 2009).
- van Zyl Smit, Betine. *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 17.1 (March 2010): 146-149.
REVIEW OF *American Women and Classical Myths* by Gregory A. Staley (Baylor University Press, 2009).

A full review of *H.D.'s Poetry: "the meanings that words hide"* (ed. Marina Camboni, Brooklyn, NY: AMS Press, 2003) by Liana Sakelliou (University of Athens) is available at <http://www.eaas.eu/publications/book-reviews/marina-camboni-ed-hds-poetry-qthe-meanings-that-words-hideq> .

Reviews of Charlotte Mandel's *ROCK VEIN SKY* may be found at <http://www.valpo.edu/vpr/wheelerreviewmandel.html> (by Lesley Wheeler in the *Valparaiso Poetry Review*) and at <http://www.dzancbooks.org/the-collagist/2010/4/14/rock-vein-sky-by-charlotte-mandel.html> (by Cynthia Hogue in *The Collagist*).

Reviewed in the *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (<http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/>):

Bowden, Hugh. *Mystery Cults of the Ancient World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010.

Bowlby, Rachel. *Freudian Mythologies: Greek Tragedy and Modern Identities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Cook, William W. and James Tatum. *African American Writers and Classical Tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Dill, Ueli, and Christine Walde, eds. *Antike Mythen: Medien, Transformationen und Konstruktionen*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009.

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES:

The act of writing itself is a bulwark against loss, as a form of recovery, as a shape of memory; mourning and loss are recurrent themes in literature. H.D. so often seems to be seeking and digging for, and guarding and preserving and renewing, the lost object, idea, perception, piece of knowledge, hour. Below is a beginning for a bibliography of works about modernist mourning and loss.

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But really, the best thing to do is go over to the website and wander about. It's worth doing frequently, as they continue to add to the online collection.

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RECORDINGS AND PERFORMANCES:

At the Modernist Studies Association conference in November 2010 (see "Conferences," above), the following was performed:

"H.D.: A Life"

Performer/Author: Sasha Colby

This performance of "H.D.: A Life" is generously sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and is part of a larger project on dramatizing modernist scholarship.

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HD ON THE WEB:

H.D. has a presence on YouTube! Here are several videos that include tributes to and readings of her poetry, and H.D. reading from *Helen in Egypt* (these are just some of the videos posted):

"For Hilda Doolittle"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmzHYvWj4bl&feature=related>

"5 Poems by H.D."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqgPei0Q7mE>

"Hilda Doolittle Reads from 'Helen in Egypt'"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITkakIOUuug&feature=related>

"Wash of Cold River By: H.D."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I97Bw9RVsqE&feature=related>

"Sea Rose by Hilda Doolittle 1886-1961"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZsqBP0BpFo&NR=1>

This page is an excellent starting place for researchers:

http://orlando.cambridge.org/public/svPeople?person_id=buttma

The Orlando Project: Women's Writing in the British Isles from the Beginnings to the Present:

<http://orlando.cambridge.org/svHomePage?>

A "textbase" that "provides entries on authors' lives and writing careers, contextual material, timelines, sets of internal links, and bibliographies. Interacting with these materials creates a dynamic inquiry from any number of perspectives into centuries of women's writing."

Please note that one must subscribe to use fully.

Robert McAlmon is given a solid article that surveys his life and career at:

http://www.glbtc.com/literature/mcalmon_r.html

Here is an article about his poetry:

http://www.pennilesspress.co.uk/prose/robert_mcalmon.htm

The director G.W. Pabst was important to H.D. and Bryher's involvement in the art of film. Although the site noted below is dedicated to Louise Brooks, it has some good information about Pabst, including several links and bibliographies:

http://webspaces.webring.com/people/ql/louise_brooks/pabst-links.html

This site gives a brief biography and a filmography:

http://www.kino.com/pandorasbox/pandora_director.html

Another overview, in which Bryher is quoted:

<http://www.filmreference.com/Directors-Mi-Pe/Pabst-G-W.html>

Sergei Eisenstein was another director much admired by Bryher.

Here's an introduction to his work, plus a filmography and bibliography:

<http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/04/eisenstein.html>

And another brief overview:

<http://www.russianarchives.com/gallery/old/eisen.html>

Kenneth Macpherson and POOL are getting some web-space.

For a brief article called "The Rediscovery of POOL" by Alberta Marlowe, go to:

<http://www.filmintelligence.org/pool.htm>

Also included is (most of) Macpherson's editorial from the first issue of *Close Up* ("As Is") and H.D.'s poem "Projector."

Here's an article on *Borderline* with many photographs, both stills from the film and pictures taken during production ("backstage"):

<http://moicani.over-blog.com/article-30937250.html>

