Chapter One: The Composition of the Modernist Book

a) Introduction

This is a study of three books first published in Paris in the nineteen twenties which support the thesis that it is in print that Modernist literature first and finally attains its perfected form: *Ulysses* (1922), *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1930) and *The Making of Americans* (1925). This is the most important and neglected bibliographical feature of the Modernist book: its printed form represents the most refined and coherent form of the text. *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* eschew authorial identity for impersonality and objectivity, effects which are only fully realised in print. By contrast, within the disciplinary confines of the New Bibliography, emerging contemporary to the publication of these books, the author’s manuscript replaces the page of the first edition as the source of highest textual authority. It is the manuscript which is held by textual scholars to yield the subjective intentions of the author, revealing the handwritten development of a text and so the original intentions of the author. The principles laid by the New Bibliographers have given rise to an over-reliance on manuscript material when reading Modernist texts, and the consequent neglect, or under-theorised use of the printed book.

This study enters into a broad discussion of contested bibliographical states which can be framed around the figure of the Ideal Book. The figure of the Ideal Book concentrates the central aesthetic, bibliographical and intellectual problem of the Modernist book: the *making* of literature, brought into focus by the publication of the first edition. It suggests too the abstract and integral authorial text imagined by literary critics and bibliographical
scholars when reading Modernist books. The attraction of this ‘idea’ of the book is that described by poet and printer, William Everson:

The idea of the book, the concept of the book and what we call the archetype of the book is so powerful that it has a way of reaching out and grabbing you and taking you into a dimension of itself.¹

_Ulysses_ (1922), _The Making of Americans_ (1925) and _A Draft of XXX Cantos_ (1930), constitute themselves explicitly as new editions of the Ideal Book. Each is a comprehensive text which seeks to take the reader into ‘a dimension of itself,’ governed by its own standards of correctness. This is not an abstract intention, the Ideal Modernist Book is a book in print, of dimensions sufficiently sturdy to withstand any further effort to correct or perfect them.

The first concerns of this study are to install the first editions of _Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos_ and _The Making of Americans_ as the most important points of encounter with their texts, and to detail the ways in which they rely on print for the most complete revelation of their objectives. Treating Modernist literature as a set of first editions foregrounds the physical characteristics of these books and accepts their errors or inconsistencies as a necessary consequence to publication. A secondary set of arguments examines the viability of critical and editorial practices orientated towards manuscripts when reading such books. The following chapter of this thesis looks more closely at the historical and literary conditions which have produced such an ambivalent relationship between books and manuscripts in literary and bibliographical discourses. This acts as the basis for my critique of the usage of archival material to sustain analyses of Modernist books which effectively regress to their subjective manuscript forms. I examine closely the

circumstances of composition and publication of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* in separate chapters, with reference to their first editions and the archive, considering how the prospect of publication inflects their composition. Having established the significance of publication to *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos, The Making of Americans* and their respective authors, I outline how composition and publication are constituted within the verbal texts of these books. *Ulysses, The Making of Americans* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos* comprehensively parse their own composition, providing the book as the exemplary explanatory apparatus through which to approach the text, to organise and order their contents. Publication is not merely a practical necessity, it is vital to the achievement of their literary effects. Read in this light, Modernism is the literature of the imprimatur, rather than of authorial inscription.

The motto of Modernist composition is *res ipso loquitur*: the thing speaks for itself; ‘No ideas but in things.’ The printed book launches the text into independent circulation, detaching it from the body and hand of the author. *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* are highly aware of what Everson terms the ‘double range’ of the book:

> The invincible thing about the book is its capacity to reach backwards and forwards; in a sense it’s out of your hands—before you get to it, and after you are finished with it. Whatever you do to it, it will remain spoiled in some way by your contribution to it. Some small part of what you put into it might survive in an effective way, but the book generally goes on, following the momentum of its own history.²

To achieve their effects, Modernist authors rely on the capacity of books to ‘survive’ and to ‘go on,’ to generate their own momentum and standards of correctness. The book is out of their hands, and its presence works not only to ‘forbid a radical distinction between the

² Everson, pp. 341-2.
linguistic and graphic sign,” to borrow Jacques Derrida’s phraseology, but to assert the book as a complex physical sign which follows the ‘momentum of its own history.’

Modernist composition concedes all to the book, in which the linguistic and graphic sign are indivisible from the material which delivers them. The printed text is determined by its disposition on the page and in the book: the bibliographical state of the Modernist book cannot be separated from its meaning. The outlook of such a book, forwards and backwards, is not limited or determined by an author, indeed, *Ulysses, The Making of Americans* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos* visibly display their transgressions of every boundary of authorial experience.

An earlier rendition of the double range described by Everson is articulated by Richard de Bury, author of the *Philobiblon*:

> The book that he has made renders its author this service in return, that so long as the book survives, its author remains immortal and cannot die. How highly must we estimate the wondrous power of books, since through them we survey the utmost bounds of the world and time.

Joyce, Pound and Stein use the book as a platform from which to survey the world and time, to propose a universal history. The book is contractually bound to render its contents immortal, or at least immune to the interferences of editors. The signature of the author on the first edition is a mark of authentication and of official absence. It designates the completion of composition and the capitulation of the author to the absolute form of the book. Modernist authors rely upon the formal absence of the author to finally estrange subjectivity from the composition of the book. *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The

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Making of Americans discard the manuscript apparatus of authorship in favour of the objective structure of the book, so denying the identification of the text with the author as origin. It is this metonymic transference of significance from the text to the author which the deliberate gesture of publication evades.

The permanent literary form achieved when a manuscript is printed is what grants the book its significance in the scheme of Modernist literature: it is an irreducible objectification of the process of composition. The first edition represents the beginning of the history of the book and so inspections of the physical forms of Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos and The Making of Americans and the specificities of their publications are the starting point for my analyses of the more properly literary treatment of these books and their reliance on the printed page. Although James Joyce and Ezra Pound both later made some corrections to the texts of the first editions of Ulysses and A Draft of XXX Cantos, once the first editions were in print, the integral forms of both books are fixed in place. Gertrude Stein made no interventions into the text of The Making of Americans once it was published, leaving the first edition to speak for itself. So forceful is the orientation of composition towards publication that manuscripts are rendered theoretically redundant by the appearance of the first edition, indeed, manuscripts are more or less abandoned by the writers of Paris in the nineteen twenties once their contents are in print.

The theoretical redundancy of the manuscript to the study of Modernism has not, however, been fully recognised by scholars. The formulation of principles of editorial practice and bibliography in the nineteen twenties by W. W. Greg and R. B. McKerrow are the basis of Anglo-Americans textual scholarship in the twentieth century and have served to define
English literature as it is represented by the critical edition. The advances of the New Bibliography have set the agenda for the study of books and manuscripts in the twentieth century. Whilst the finer points of editing remain a source of active debate, the new focus on manuscripts as the best representatives of an author’s text is the most important innovation of the textual scholarship of this period, one which in turn has had a substantial impact on the reception and editing of Modernist books. Whereas Modernist books rely on the printed letter to distance the author from the scene of textual reproduction, the New Bibliography is concerned with the recuperation of text through as close reference to the author as possible. The book is treated as a secondary, flawed instantiation of authorial intention because of this emphasis on the manuscript, a theoretical reduction compounded by the general suspicion evinced by bibliographers towards copyists, compositors and printers. The correctness of a given text – in print or handwriting – is measured by its proximity to the more reliable source of the author. The diversion of theoretical and bibliographical attention towards the manuscripts of Modernist books effectively banishes their first editions from the scene of analysis. The fundamental incompatibility of the New Bibliography and Modernist books is a product of these different valuations of handwritten and printed texts.
b) Redefining the Book

The Modernist book is published in an intellectual environment in which proper bibliography and books proper were topics under wide contestation. The definition of the book and its role in literary studies are revised and refined by English bibliographers in the first decades of the twentieth century, lead by the work of A. W. Pollard, W. W. Greg, R. B. McKerrow, and later, Fredson Bowers. In the second chapter of this thesis, I outline how other authors – Ben Jonson, William Blake and William Thackeray – differently rely on the book to achieve their narrative effects in order to establish an historical background to the use of the book by Modernist writers. The transformations of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* by editors revise the statements about authorship and authority made by their first editions. It is the principles which underpin these editorial transformations, and most importantly those advanced by the New Bibliographers, which occupy the rest of this second chapter.

Print is orchestrated to emulate the forms of Roman imperial architecture in the first edition of Ben Jonson’s *Sejanus His Fall* (1605). This edition appeared after the first performances of the play and renders the textual apparatus as its setting, discarding any reference to contemporary manuscript culture. All editors of *Sejanus His Fall* replace this apparatus, constructed of glosses to the sources of the dramatic text, with a more conventional means of display, representing the play solely in terms of its verbal text, the script. In doing so, they fundamentally realign the monumental form achieved on the printing of the first edition.
To this ready manipulation of the printed page by Jonson, the pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c 1790), meticulously handprinted by their author, William Blake, stand as a foil which valorises the manual contact of the author with every page of the text. Blake’s control over the means of textual production and reproduction draws the printed book back towards an ideal of original, uncorrupted representation. In ‘A Memorable Fancy,’ the production of printed books is proposed as the materialisation of a mystical form. Blake’s suspicion of the technologies of printing is a typical symptom of the Romantic location of the creative process in the person of the author. It is the immediate proximity of Blake to the pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* which the New Bibliography seeks to recuperate. The idealised communion between the author and the page is reprised by their New Bibliographers in their postulation of the theoretical standard of the author’s fair copy. On the whole, editors have demonstrated themselves best equipped to cope with printed books which retain the link of *The Marriage to Heaven and Hell* to manuscript culture.

Whereas *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is a book which retains the features of a manuscript, *Vanity Fair* (1848) relies upon its printed form to licence its digressions from the Romantic model of originality and authorial proximity proposed by Blake. Thackeray’s text mediates the Romantic elevation of the manuscript as the repository of authorial intention and the Modernist reification of the book as an objective form. The professionalisation and diversification of the role of the author are evident on examination of the publication of *Vanity Fair*, as is the increasing distance between the author and his narrator. The treatment of *Vanity Fair* by editors has normalised the distinguishing features of first publication, regressing to a Romantic model of authorship as the creation of a
single, coherent text, undisturbed by the logistical requirements of printing. The complete suite of illustrations prepared by Thackeray which appear in the first edition of *Vanity Fair* are not reproduced in any of the twentieth century editions of the text. The conceptual whole represented on first publication is, like *Sejanus His Fall*, edited solely in terms of its verbal text.

*Sejanus His Fall, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* act as counters to my examination of Modernist books, insofar as they underscore the historically specific features of books published in Paris in the nineteen twenties. More importantly however, the editorial history of these books demonstrates the capacity for critical editing to substantially transform the propositions about authorship made by first editions and thereby anticipates the disfigurements of Modernist first editions when submitted to similar editorial practices.

The dislocation of the book from the scene of bibliographical consideration is a phenomena of the twentieth century. I detail the evolution of the attitudes of the New Bibliography to books, manuscripts and modern technologies of printing, touching on nineteenth century discourses on collecting and librarianship. The symbolic significance accorded printed books in national and bibliophilic discourses is at odds with the emerging suspicion of the printed book as an adequate copy of the authorial ‘best text.’ Attitudes of the New Bibliography to composition and the printed book darkened in the late nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century as editors struggled to emend printed texts to meet the form of this best text, the idealised image of authorial intentions. The editing of books with reference to such an abstracted standard is the basis of a discipline which
regards all printed texts as flawed instantiations of authorial intentions. First editions, particularly those rushed to print or revised on subsequent publication, are demoted from the field of such consideration as especially suspect objects. The physical particularities of first editions and their actual appearance, being irrelevant to the establishment of a correct text, are deemed to be merely of artefactual significance, secondary in importance to the texts they contain. The over-riding importance of being in print to Modernist authors is inconceivable on these terms.

The New Bibliography understands itself as the science of the certain. It proposes a coherent empirical methodology for understanding the printed book in relation to a human subject – the author – without the interference of publishers, unprofessional editors, copyists, and compositors. Under the auspices of the Bibliographical Society, new techniques were developed from the beginning of the twentieth century for the analysis of vernacular texts in order to establish a pantheon of well-edited English classics, like those of Jonson, Blake and later Thackeray. In place of philology, which examined the transmission of distant classical texts, English textual scholarship systematically investigated local, historically specific texts, those of the Elizabethan theatre and most prominently, Shakespeare. Bibliography undergoes a shift of focus from the conservation of texts to their correction by means of a rational process of critical editing.

The rearticulation of English literature as a set of streamlined and judiciously edited classics resonates with the engagements of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* with literary history and authority. In spite of this shared interest in the history, composition and production of printed books, their reception and transmission,
the New Bibliographers evince very little interest in contemporary literature and the bibliographical advances underway across the English Channel. Indeed, literature is defined as a purely historical ideal, to which the book is a mere functionary. Modernist books invert the ideal relationship between books and manuscripts proposed by the New Bibliographers in their insistence upon the printed book as the only conceivable real and figurative repository of the literary text.
c) In Print in Paris

It is Paris itself, according to Gertrude Stein in *Paris, France*, which generates the ‘emotion of unreality’ necessary to the publication of the Modernist book:

> So it begins to be reasonable that the twentieth century, whose crimes, whose standardisation began in America, needed the background of Paris, the place where tradition was so firm that they could look modern without being different, and where their acceptance of reality is so great that they could let any one have the emotion of unreality.5

Although the circumstances which govern the composition of these books are somewhat different, they are drawn together by their common publication in Paris. Neither *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* nor *The Making of Americans* was entirely written in Paris. The city marks rather the beginning of their histories in print. Being in print is the a priori sign of literariness in Modernist Paris, an environment of concentrated small press and publishing activity and innovation in which textuality and literariness are entirely defined within printed parameters.6

As typographical expressions, or as examples of the art of fine printing, the first editions of *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* are not particularly remarkable or innovative. All are in codex form, in more or less standard format, typographically consistent and, save for ornamental capitals, unembellished. The more explicit negotiation of the printed page as a visual and historical field is apparent in works like Djuna Barnes’s illustrated text *Ladies Almanack* (1928) and Bob Brown’s *The Readies* (1930), both published in Paris. The emerging genre of the artist’s book is a

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further site for experimentation with the form of the book and the codes governing its interpretation. Yet more subversive and experimental expressions like the various Dadaist, Surrealist and Futurist journals which proliferated in Paris in the interwar period sharpen the contrast and emphasise the relatively quotidian form of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*. Marinetti’s typographical revolution is out of sync with the books in this study. The Futurist and Dadaist use of print to disorder the page and the senses is distinct from the reliance of the Modernist book on printed letters to order the page and to regulate such chaotic effusions of type.

The variegated print culture which supported the publications of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* allowed their authors to maintain particular proximity to their printing and promotion. The publishers of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* were, like their authors, committed to the regeneration of contemporary literature through the production of new books. Although there existed other avenues for publication in Paris in nineteen twenties, the book represents the ideal and desired literary form of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*. Earlier appearances of elements of these books in print are superseded on the publication of their first editions. The book makes of all previous manuscripts and disparate printed texts an indivisible integrity is only imaginable as a book.

Paris was the only city in which Joyce and Stein could find publishers for *Ulysses* and *The Making of Americans*, having exhausted all other possibilities. Pound demonstrated more dexterity in his negotiations with publishers and I suggest that the selection of Paris for the

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publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is driven by his desire to correspond with books like *Ulysses* as the bibliographical monuments of their generation. The concentrated community of writers, artists, editors, publishers and printers on the Left Bank ushered into print the leading works of the period, a category which *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* seek to dominate. A tremendous energy was devoted to the publication of new and *avant-garde* texts within this milieu, sustaining the publication of books which were unlikely to be released by the commercial publishers of the period. Publishers like Sylvia Beach, Nancy Cunard and Robert McAlmon took the publication of contemporary literature very seriously, prioritising the necessity of publishing new literature over the business considerations which delimit the activities of commercial publishers.

Publication determines the final form of *Ulysses* and, to a lesser extent, of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The print dead-line prompted Joyce and Pound to revisions and alterations of the provisional forms represented by manuscripts and earlier publications. The composition of *The Making of Americans* anticipates its appearance in print and once complete, is wholly severed from the author. Stein did not revise the manuscript of *The Making of Americans*. The complete composition is an already perfected form which renders all further alteration unnecessary. The manuscripts of these books are the preliminary developments of forms whose complete dimensions become apparent only when they are printed at full length.

Correcting proof-pages and making exacting demands of publishers is behaviour absolutely typical of authors. What makes the involvement of Modernist authors in the publication of their books distinctive is the extent of their efforts to completely determine the shape of the
finished product. Joyce, Pound and Stein exerted extraordinary control over the publication and promotion of their books. The corrections to *Ulysses* added enormously to the manuscripts first presented to the publisher. There was considerably less correction of the typescripts of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* when it was published. Smaller groups of cantos had already been trialed in book-form and others had appeared in print in serials and little magazines. Pound took control of liaising with his printer to bring the book into print exactly as he determined. The only corrections made to the proof-pages of *The Making of Americans* were typographical but Stein exercised complete control over its publication, asserting her proprietorial right to the pages in a dispute with her publisher, Robert McAlmon. All three authors remained very close to the publication of their books, communicating independently with printers and demanding the contractual right to amend and correct proof pages as much as necessary.

This proximity and the affinity for print it engenders is even more evident because the activities of expatriate writers and artists in Paris in the nineteen twenties have been so comprehensively documented in archives. The distinguishing bibliographical feature of Modernist books relative to their predecessors is the rapid increase in the retention of archival material: letters, manuscripts, typescripts and other documents. Modernist archives are of much larger dimensions than those of previous generations. Particularly in terms of manuscript material, they dwarf those under examination by the New Bibliographers in their reconstruction of the canonical texts of English literature. There is an enormous, but always apparently insufficient, supply of documentary material to sustain the bibliographical and literary analysis of Modernist books. The valorisation of manuscript material in archives supports the emphasis on personal encounter advanced in
the many memoirs and biographies which cover the period. In spite of the orientation of the Paris literary circles towards the reproduction of printed texts, the retention of such a volume of manuscript material and other documents has tended to draw critical attention to the production of handwritten texts. The putative errors of books published in this milieu have been used to dislodge the focus of the Paris literary community on print and to sustain accounts of textual production located solely in the figure of the author. The phenomena of Modernist celebrity has compounded the interest of scholars in such material, held to be the most intimate and reliable representation of authorial intention. Drafts, notes, manuscripts and typescripts exist for *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*, and have been used by scholars to elucidate and correct the contents of the first editions and to establish more closely the biographical contexts in which they were written. The gradual encroachment of manuscript and archival material on the first printed forms of *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* effectively usurps the authority of the first edition and conceals the significance of publication to the composition of these three books.

Although manuscript and other archival material has been scrutinised primarily to adjudicate the correctness of the printed texts of *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*, the archive more importantly reveals the consistent significance of publication to the development of these texts. Being bound as a book is the primary focus of composition. The contents of the archive sustain the accounts of composition which unfold in *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* but have been used instead to draw these texts closer to their manuscript forms, a movement which undoes the work of composition. In spite of their clear narrative and archival emphasis on
publication, Modernist first editions have been generally been received as insufficient substantiations of their author’s intentions.

In different ways, *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* have been resistant to the process of critical editing. Of the books in this study, *Ulysses* has been most emended by editors but the case is far from closed as to the best version of the text. In recognition of the immediate demands of the printed book, Pound and Stein abandoned manuscripts at the earliest possible stages of composition. This practice has rendered *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* far more resilient to editors and so more proximate to the ideal of permanent objective form which they advance. Modernist books are published with the intention of rendering manuscripts and any further revision redundant. Publication installs the text as book, a self-explanatory object which, furthermore, needs no elaboration from manuscript material. The alienation of the manuscript and the book sustains the literary gestures made to objectivity by *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*: it is impossible to recognise a person writing the text. The strongest commitment to the objectives of Modernist composition is displayed by *The Making of Americans*, a book which denies that there is anyone at all writing.

The independence of the book from the guiding figure of the author is fundamental to the Modernist book and to the achievement of its literary effects. The denial and division of authorial subjectivity in *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* have not, however, served to deflect critical attention away from the original subjectivities of their authors. James Joyce, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein have variously pre-occupied
textual scholars and critical readers of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*. The fetishisation of authorial manuscripts and correspondence supports an account of composition which understands the development of a text and its author as co-dependent. Close attentions to the manuscript forms of Modernist books situate their authors as the embodied, subjective source of the texts. Returning the Modernist text to its scriptive origins violates the contract of authorial anonymity and textual autonomy to which the Modernist first edition is consideration.
d) Three Modernist Books

The order in which I address the books at the heart of this study – *Ulysses*, followed by *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and then *The Making of Americans* – is not dictated by their chronological relationships to each other but by their demonstration of the gradual consolidation of a set of distinct principles of Modernist bibliography. The chronological order between the books and their composition is far from clear: each book makes a bibliographically valid claim to be considered as the first book of this study. Following the dates of the commencement of composition would accord priority to *The Making of Americans* (1903) over *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1904) and *Ulysses* (1914). First publication in partial form would treat *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1917) before *Ulysses* (1919) or *The Making of Americans* (1924). My arrangement signals the increasing insignificance of manuscripts to Modernist books as a function of the refinement of the process of composition by their authors. The sequence also brings into view their gradual refusal of specifying detail. I trace the transformation of the figure of the book from the progeny of its author in *Ulysses* to the product of composition in *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*. The difficulties attendant to the publication of *Ulysses* diminish on the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*, whose archive and first editions signal more ready and comfortable occupations of their printed forms. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* mediates the vestigial nostalgia for a manuscript based model of authorship still evident in *Ulysses* and the absolute commitment to a de-personalised program of composition in *The Making of Americans*. Manuscript material is increasingly detached from the regulated publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and effectively irrelevant to the publication of *The Making of Americans*. This book resolves the conflict between manuscript and printed texts through reference to no text but itself.
Read together, these three books make a strong case for focusing the study of Modernism on the printed book and reveal the incompatibility of the methods of the New Bibliography to the Modernist book. I examine the way Modernist archives have been used to sustain idealised accounts of the manuscript and author as the known origins of literary texts, counter to the redefinitions of literary origins which preoccupy these texts. Whilst *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos* have assumed key positions in critical reconstructions of Modernism, *The Making of Americans* has not prompted a great deal of scholarly debate. It is, however, *The Making of Americans* which most acutely demonstrates the necessity of print to the achievement of the objectives of Modernist composition. Furthermore, responses to this dense and difficult text have been most explicitly shaped around the author and manuscript as idealised sources of meaning.

i) *Ulysses* (1922)

The first edition of *Ulysses* reflects the rush and urgency which lead up to its appearance in 1922. Riddled with typographical errors and printed in a cheap and somewhat fragile volume, the text has since appeared in several corrected versions and remains a source of bibliographical contestation. The difficulty of exactly representing the intentions of James Joyce’s text is signaled in every edition of *Ulysses*, including the first to which is appended a note drawing attention to the typographical errors it contains. The zealous commitment of publisher, Sylvia Beach, to bring *Ulysses* into print was matched by an equally zealous effort on behalf of Joyce to correct and perfect the text before allowing it to be published. The corrections to *Ulysses* as it went to press are the main source of variants in the disputation over the best text of the book. The extraordinary licence granted Joyce to revise
and correct considerably expanded the size of the book. The capitulation of the publisher to apparently endless revisions of proof-pages has resulted in an enormous amount of often contradictory archival material and moreover, has shaped the reception of the first edition (and arguably all subsequent editions) as a chronically flawed text.

*Ulysses* stages the transformation from manuscript to printed, bound text as a difficult delivery, like that of a child. The symbolic connection established between human reproduction and the publication of printed books positions the author as father, the book his son. The growth of the narrative of *Ulysses* is thematised as its gestation, this embryonic growth is matched by the expansion of the text as it approaches publication. As the author keeps pace with the gradual consolidation of the text in its printed form, several stages of hybrid pages, in which printed and handwritten letters compete for authority, mediate the transition from manuscript to print. The process of correction does not proceed with reference to a previous manuscript, indeed, much of the earliest manuscript material for *Ulysses* had been sold to John Quinn before James Joyce and Sylvia Beach made their agreement to publish the book in 1921. The archival material begs the question as to whether *Ulysses*, when determined by the pen of its author, could ever have attained an authorially ratified ideal form.

*Ulysses* and its author demonstrate an acute awareness of the ways in which transmission can distort the meanings of literary texts. The qualms held by Bloom and Stephen about the fidelity of women project the anxieties of an author who must rely on printers and a female publisher to faithfully reproduce his text. The attentions to the finitudes of textual production in ‘Aeolus’ and ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ draw into focus the book’s close interest
in the transmission and corruption of printed texts. It is in these episodes, located in the newspaper office and the library, that the incipient capitulation of *Ulysses* to its printed form is most directly addressed as Bloom and Stephen reflect upon the material and social machinery of textual reproduction. I read these episodes closely as indications of the book’s anxious and ambivalent characterisation of the relationships between printed texts and their authors.

For all the efforts made to perfect the text of the first edition by its author and by later editors, *Ulysses* exploits the appearance of typographical imperfection to great effect. The puns, wordplay and neologisms for which *Ulysses* is renowned can appear as errors and some early readers found it difficult to assess just which elements of the text were actually correct. Joyce’s wordplay, the manipulation of print to reference other genres, and the narrative interest in textual errors and mistakes of all kinds suggest firstly that print can be a duplicitous medium and further that this duplicity can be a productive source of literary meaning. The errors of the first edition are the necessary consequences of publication. They are continuous to the demonstrably deliberate effects inscribed by Joyce. As such, they serve to historicise the first edition, linking the verbal text it contains to first publication in their reflection of the fraught production of the text.

The desire for a correct text of *Ulysses* held by bibliographers, editors and critics reifies the concept of textual perfection, a concept the narrative holds as impossible. Like Stephen and Bloom, editors and readers of *Ulysses* have been generally suspicious of mechanically produced texts. The author’s reluctance to recognise the first edition as complete has encouraged scholars to recuperate the text Joyce intended through close examination of
archival material. The facsimile reproduction of the manuscripts and pre-publication material for *Ulysses* has made the autograph evolution of the text immediately available to scholars and has been used to displace the authority claimed by the first edition. I close my reading of *Ulysses* by assessing its editorial reception with particular reference to the Gabler edition. Whilst the narrative and literary innovations of *Ulysses* have been heralded by a range of critics, bibliographical treatment of the book does not correspond with the thematisation of authorship and publication it contains. The over-use of manuscript material for *Ulysses* reveals the investment of bibliographers in a Romantic writing subject which is anachronistic to Modernist composition.

**ii ) A Draft of XXX Cantos (1930)**

The deluxe hard-cover first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, in contrast to the slightly shabby condition of most extant first editions of *Ulysses*, is an immediate bibliographical signal of the book’s allegiance to the history of fine printing and good books: all exceptional circumstances have been brought under control on its appearance. Whereas the publication of *Ulysses* remains proximate to manuscript material and James Joyce, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is built on the more solid foundation of printed books. The entire contents of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* had already appeared in print by the time Ezra Pound and Nancy Cunard agreed to publish the book through the Hours Press in 1930. The first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* was printed in a run limited to two hundred and twelve copies. As Pound’s profile and reading public increased, it was inevitable that *A Draft of XXX Cantos* would be reprinted by a commercial publisher, and it was, in 1933, when Farrar and Rinehart and Faber and Faber released corrected editions of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* to a much wider audience of readers. The release of a deluxe and limited first edition is not
merely the indulgence of Pound’s bibliophilia but an element in a publication strategy which both consolidates the correspondence of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* with other books in the tradition of fine printing and prepares for its reception by a broader reading public beyond the reach of the author.

The slippage – typographical corrections and a change of format – between the 1930 and 1933 texts is anticipated by *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The core forms of the book remain in the edition released for general circulation and the whole marks a structural partition of the longer volume, *The Cantos*. The earlier publications of individual cantos and groups of cantos are a set of deliberate bibliographical experiments which test different forms and formats to display the texts. The form attained in 1930 is the deliberate and strategic conclusion to this experiment. Publication is closely regulated by the author to shield the text from the chronic bibliographical instability which attends the text of *Ulysses*. My examination of the composition and publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* considers the particularities of these changes of format and their significance in installing the book as a monument in print, estranged from the figure of the author writing.

The exact specification of the form of the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* by Ezra Pound is matched by the close interest taken by the book in the physical matter of textual transmission. Like *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* pays attention to the production and components of printed books in advance of its imminent appearance as a bound volume, drawing into focus the circumstances of its own production. Whereas *Ulysses* plays out its concern with generational change in terms of the relationships between fathers and sons, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* structures its understanding of such change with reference to the
history of the printed book. The author is identified as a craftsman, a ‘maker of books,’
rather than as a spiritual father or textual deity. In this way, the Romantic characterisation
of textual production as an abstract, subjective process is further undermined.

The book is the necessary apparatus to display *A Draft of XXX Cantos*: the first thirty
cantos are integrated as a sequential whole and their measured dispositions on the page are
immediately visible. The poems themselves are the apparatus through which a host of
secondary texts are displayed, their content adjusted to meet the metrical, aesthetic, and
intellectual requirements of the poems. The earlier appearances of the first thirty cantos
provide an object lesson in the malleability of print and its presentational importance to a
text, a lesson which inflects the program of quotation in *A Draft of XXX Cantos* by
exposing the continuous transformation of printed texts in the hands of their readers and
editors. All texts are secondary to that which quotes them and so draws them into a new
referential scheme. The mercurial, fragmentary forms of the individual cantos are
subsumed by the unity of the book, the final collation of a series of texts which have all
already appeared in print many times before. There is no text which is properly original to
the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Quotations from other texts and publications by
Ezra Pound suggest that works by the author have no claim to be treated differently to any
other works which are so processed by *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, indeed, quoted material and
contents original to the author are indistinguishable, rendered equivalent forms on their
repetition within the apparatus of the book.

*A Draft of XXX Cantos* departs from received standards of correctness in its misquotation
of secondary texts and its play with deliberate orthographic and linguistic error as a poetic
device. The transformation of texts and language as they are processed by *A Draft of XXX Cantos* does not entail their corruption but rather, their adaptation to a new form. These interchanges between texts are vital to maintaining the continuity of the book to literary history, defined by its material forms. This mode of accommodating other texts revises the Romantic concept of the poet as the single point of origin to the text and undermines the construction of textual genealogies with reference only to the manuscript notation of a single text. I follow the program of quotation in *A Draft of XXX Cantos* as a lesson in bibliography, taking the exertions of the poet as editor of other texts as an indication of how best to approach the book and its manuscript remains. In particular, I examine the reliance of the Malatesta Cantos on secondary documents to sustain my argument that *A Draft of XXX Cantos* represents itself as a text which has already been edited. Its contents already having been subject to a rigorous editorial process, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* resists any further editorial attention or annotation.

Critics have resorted less to manuscripts in their readings of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* than those of *Ulysses*, not least because the archive itself bears the signs of strategic editing and contains less manuscript material relative to printed material. The archive reveals Ezra Pound in control of the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, directing printers and editors as to the precise disposition of the poems on the page. This material is more legible than the publication record for *Ulysses*. It is a ledger which accounts for composition, clearly displaying the historical development of the poems so as to deflect the attentions of editors. I consider the use of the textual archive by critics to reconstruct the history of composition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* in advance of the preparation of a critical edition. The most frequently proposed editorial future for the book is a variorum edition. In light of the
efforts made in the poems to compress an already edited history of literary forms, I argue that the prospect of a variorum edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* fundamentally undermines the coherence marked by first publication. It is the book which secures the structural and aesthetic order necessary for the achievement of the poet’s pan-historical epic. To expand or fragment the book through the imposition of an historical apparatus will effectively decompose the integrity representation by first publication.

iii) *The Making of Americans* (1925)

*The Making of Americans* intensifies the commitments made by *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos* to the book as the repository of the final, objective form of composition, a form which needs no further attention from the author, or moreover, from an editor. It is the accomplishment of composition rather than the subjectivity of the author which mandates publication and authorises the text. The consolidation of the Modernist book in the form of *The Making of Americans*, published in 1925 by Robert McAlmon’s Contact Edition, defies the foundational principles of the New Bibliography in its absolute refusal to admit a productive connection between the book and the author.

In my reading of *The Making of Americans*, I treat first the circumstances of composition and publication, outlining the model of authorship suggested by the first edition and archive. The print unhesitantly covering the pages of *The Making of Americans* concentrates on the objective aspirations of the project of composition generating the text: a comprehensive scheme of personality which will cover all human kinds. The documents bequeathed by Gertrude Stein to the Beinecke Library reinforce this account of composition as continuous: manuscripts and typescripts are remarkably free of correction, revision and
other authorial reconsiderations. The ‘just now’ of the continuous present is represented at a basic bibliographical level as a continuous manuscript. The narrative remains in a state of perpetual beginning as composition moves closer to final comprehension of its object: ‘a history of all of them.’ The manuscripts written by Stein appear as the fluent release of a pre-ordained text, unbroken by formal divisions, quotation or revision. This manuscript was typed by Alice Toklas as the book was being written and presents the text as the automatic unfolding of an already complete text, original to the page rather than to the author. The typescript is barely marked by the author: no further intermediary is needed between the handwritten and mechanically reproduced text.

The conflict between the manuscript and printed forms of Ulysses is resolved by the immediate and unambiguous orientation of the composition of The Making of Americans towards the generation of a book. Whereas the earlier forms of both Ulysses and A Draft of XXX Cantos are put to trial in manuscripts, proof-pages and as published texts, the experiment of composition is completely contained by The Making of Americans. The continuous and consecutive efforts to draw together language and cognition are assiduously recorded as the narrative. Unlike Ulysses, which is metaphorically identified as the progeny of the author, The Making of Americans is the product of composition and so the property of its author. It appears impossible to alter a work so clearly complete and Stein later declined to revise the text when it was published.

The hermetic practice of composition suggested by the archive is in agreement with the theory of composition developed in The Making of Americans and its elaboration in later expository writing by Stein. In its rejection of plot, memory and allusion, The Making of
*Americans* presents only language, represented by the book, as the matter of composition. *The Making of Americans* insists upon its own standards of correctness in presenting a comprehensive grammatical scheme into which errors are absorbed. Composition enacted through repetition is a process of continual correction and adjustment to which plot and the conventional demands of narrative are increasingly irrelevant. This is a book which relies on the absolute objectivity and anonymity of its composition for the effect of its narrative: there is no sign of the author as a productive body.

Composition emulates the controlled environment of a laboratory in which all variables are under control: the experiment of composition can be resumed again and again. Mechanical and industrial metaphors dominate the account of composition advanced in *The Making of Americans* and elsewhere. There is no imagined biological link between the book and author. Rather, the book is the product of composition, enacted through Gertrude Stein, the first machine to reproduce the text. The narrator is a necessary function of composition, disembodied and without personality. As a result, the narrative voice is wholly impersonal, a conduit for the observations, apprehensions and final comprehension which organise the self-contained referential scheme it promises. The impersonality of the apparently automatically written manuscripts and scarcely revised typescripts for *The Making of Americans* sever all vestigial links between the writing author and her page, leaving little indication as to the original sources of composition. In the absence of an identifiable sphere of reference beyond the book, critics have turned to manuscripts, the archive and the author to create such a sphere of reference.
Whereas editors of *Ulysses* suffer a superabundance of variants between different versions of the book, editors of *The Making of Americans* have gleaned little in the way of error or variation from the material held in the Beinecke Library. *The Making of Americans* was typed and ready to print when the manuscript was completed in 1914, this version remained unrevised on its publication, more than a decade later in 1925. There is every archival sign that the first edition represents the first and final version of *The Making of Americans* to which any emendation is superfluous. The archive also reveals Stein's very literal desire to be a book: to be in print and have a readership of ‘strangers’ who recognise not the author’s personality or celebrity, but the objective values of the text.

In spite of the clear directions in *The Making of Americans* that its aspiration is to aesthetic independence, Stein’s readers have worked hard to familiarise the author, turning to the earliest drafts and notes for the book to recuperate and reintegrate biographical detail into their readings. The lack of visible revision of manuscripts has been read to suggest that composition is a reflexive narration of the self, a concept precluded by the compositional program of *The Making of Americans*. I present an overview of the critical and editorial history of *The Making of Americans*. The book has been generally defined as a quasi-autobiographical project, as the jejune and immature work of an inexperienced writer. The bibliographical and critical treatments of *The Making of Americans* which install a biographical or historical narrative as a guide to the text undermine the strength of the book’s commitment to textual autonomy. Further, gestures to identify the author directly contradict the effort of composition to contain a general and universal history of types of being, uninterrupted by the constraints of identity. The book is the self-sufficient means of
presenting the text rendering editorial and critical approaches grounded in manuscripts ill-equipped to resolve its composition.
Chapter Two: From Book to Text:

The New Bibliography and Printed Books

In the 1890s, a generation before the publication of *Ulysses*, *The Making of Americans* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, bibliography was understood as the enumeration and description of printed books, a discipline useful to librarians and collectors. Nineteenth century discourses on books and bibliography are formalised by the New Bibliographers who expand the field to cover the correction of texts, asserting the priority of the author and authorial inscription to their editorial practices. By 1930, the New Bibliography was well established as an independent and autonomous scholarly discipline devoted to the study of the transmission of printed books and manuscripts. In this chapter, I outline the theoretical protocols of critical editing proposed by the New Bibliographers, with particular reference to the work of R. B. McKerrow and W. W. Greg, considering how the innovations of the New Bibliography work to construct literature as a purely abstract quantity which is ambivalent to its material form.

Like Joyce, Pound and Stein, Ben Jonson, William Blake and William Thackeray are by no means indifferent to the physical forms of the first editions of *Sejanus His Fall* (1605), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790) and *Vanity Fair* (1848). The first editions of these books are addressed to a sensibility which does not restrict the literary to the image of the verbal. I examine the editorial histories of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* and diagnose a state of chronic conflict between the first editions of these books and the literary texts reproduced by textual scholars. These first editions are
transformed upon their encounters with editors who understand the printing of books as a corruption of their essential form. The New Bibliography, interested in the transmission and correction of vernacular texts, places itself at a critical distance from earlier discourses on bibliography, making a new discipline of the old. The consolidation of the principles of the New Bibliography by R. B. McKerrow, W. W. Greg and Fredson Bowers provides a theoretical foundation to the editorial changes witnessed in *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair*. The critically edited text is secured to the manuscript of the author.

The understandings of intention and authorship articulated by Greg and McKerrow and their colleagues are the foundation of Anglo-American bibliography in the twentieth century and have subsequently been projected onto Modernist books. The ‘MATERIAL OBJECT’ of nineteenth century bibliography – the appreciation and enumeration of fine books – is replaced by a different kind of material object: the Ideal Book, equivalent to the correctly edited text. All factors which bear on the physical production of the book are deemed of secondary importance to the composition of the literary text, understood by the New Bibliographers as an abstract verbal form. The contestation of the definition and importance of books in literary analyses by bibliographers is the immediate back-drop to the publication of the Modernist book and has vitally shaped its reception. The treatments of authorship, composition and publication by *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* responds to and qualifies the principles of bibliographical analysis, appealing to readers as to scholars, connoisseurs and collectors.
a) Three Histories in Print

The first publications of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* were closely monitored by their authors. The particular statements that these first editions make about the status of the literary object, and the relationship of the author to the text, disappear upon their reproduction in critical editions. Jonson, Blake and Thackeray variously manipulate the surface of the printed page to detail an account of authorship which extends beyond the verbal imagination of the text. Critical editions of these texts are incongruent to their first editions, reformulating their authorship with reference to an idealised and exclusively verbal account of composition. The relationship of critical editions to first and early editions turns on the definition of the literary object by editors. When the literary object is defined in terms of its provenance from a manuscript, the features original to the printed book are marginalised as extra-literary concerns. The reluctance of editors to expand their definitions of authorship and literariness beyond the image of the manuscript results in a remarkably homogeneous set of critical editions. I look at the first editions of these books and then detail their treatment by editors, considering how the propositions made on first publication are transformed and normalised on encounters with editors.

i) Sejanus His Fall (1605)

The first edition of *Sejanus His Fall* by Ben Jonson was published in quarto format in 1605. The next appearance of the play in print was in 1616, on the publication of the *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson*. This second edition, a single volume folio, was set from the corrected text of the 1605 edition and has acted as the copy-text for all subsequent editions of the
play.¹ The quarto and folio texts differ from each other insofar as textual variants are concerned but it is the distinctive visual appearance of the first edition which has undergone the most alteration in the folio edition, and consequently, in all later editions of the play.

The player’s text of Sejanus His Fall, first performed in 1603, was revised in advance of its first publication by Thomas Thorp in 1605 to tone down the inflammatory political content of the play. Jonson had been called before the Privy Council following the performance of the play, although it is not recorded for what charge. A note ‘To the Readers’ which prefaces the first edition announces that the text:

is not the same with that which was acted on the publicke Stage, wherein a second Pen had good share: in place of which I haue rather chosen, to put weaker (and no doubt lesse pleasing) of mine own, then to defraud so happy a Genius of his right, by my loathed vsurpation.

This text is set up for presentation on a new stage, the printed page. The changes make the text Jonson’s own and may have protected his anonymous co-author (and Jonson himself) from prosecution for slander. For the purposes of this study, it is not the textual changes to the first edition which are of interest so much as the adaptation of the apparatus which displays the text.

Jonson’s gesture to make the text ‘mine own’ is complicated by the inclusion of glosses which point to the historical sources of the play, appearing as columns on the outer margin of the page. See Figure 1, overleaf. The rationale for their inclusion is advanced in his note ‘To the Readers:’

The next is, least in some nice nostrill, the Quotations might fauour affected, I doe let you know that I abhor nothing more; and haue onely done it to shew my integrity in

¹ Both the quarto and folio texts have been reproduced in facsimile: Sejanus His Fall (1605; repr. Amsterdam: Da Capo, 1970) and The Workes of Ben Jonson (1616; repr. London: Scolar, 1976).
Figure 1. Ben Jonson, *Sejanus His Fall* (1605).
Story, and saue my selfe in those common Torturers, that bring all wit to the Rack: whose Noses are euer like Swine spoyling, and rooting vp the Muses Gardens, and their whole Bodies, like Moles, as blindly working vnder Earth to cast any, the least, hilles vpon Vertue.
Whereas, they are in Latine and the worke in English, it was presupposed, none but the Learned would take the paynes to conferre them.

In indicating the classical texts and works of scholarship which provide the ‘Story’, the criticism that Jonson has fabulated the drama is deflected. Given the playwright’s history of prosecution, these notes serve to remind the reader that the satirical content of the play is rooted in credible historical texts rather than the imagination of the author. The notes also make clear to Elizabethan readers that the source of Jonson’s play is not William Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar (1599) but the classics. The historical facts, as represented by these classical sources, provide the basis of the dramatic structure of the play. The text is presented as composed of a set of other texts, an effect whose immediacy is lost when the glosses are separated from the body of the text. Barish assesses Sejanus His Fall thus:

It probably marks the most complete attempt ever made to follow the dictates of Italian Renaissance critics, who had judged history to be the only proper basis for a tragedy.²

That Sejanus His Fall follows these dictates is clearly asserted by the notes, which visibly proclaim the text’s fidelity to an external system of reference. The text is set up for reading rather than performance and anticipates the closest scrutiny of scholars. Jonson’s use and manipulation of historical texts look forward to their similar use in A Draft of XXX Cantos. The glosses vindicate the author’s erudition and, sustaining the historical truth of the argument, protect him from the critics. They serve to present a dramatic text in the format of a learned text to support a claim of authorial objectivity and detachment. The conflict

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between history and poetry is resolved on the presentation of these glosses, indeed, their inclusion serves to emphasise the historical accuracy of the play.

The disposition of the script and notes on the page evokes the appearance both of a work of classical scholarship and the architectural forms of the Roman Senate in the first edition of *Sejanus His Fall*. The acts of the play are referred to in Latin – ‘actus primus’ and so on – and the notes are all in Latin. There are no ornamental letters or printer’s devices illustrating the text: the apparatus is entirely composed of printed letters. In spite of his reliance on classical texts and the bibliographical evocation of Latinity, Jonson makes it clear to his readers that he has discarded two of the most important conventions of Senecan tragedy. The chorus and the ‘strict Lawes of *Time,*’ the correspondence between the duration of the action and the duration of the play, are both abandoned in the construction of this tragedy. The classical appearance and milieu of the play also stand in contrast to the language of the text. The play is delivered in unrhymed iambic pentameter, drawing on a lexicon which reflects the Anglo-Saxon roots of the English language, as well as more recently imported classical vocabulary.

The 1616 folio edition of *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson* does not approximate the classical dimensions of the first edition. Its production supervised by Jonson, the folio edition of *Sejanus His Fall* is brought into a standard format within the context of his dramatic work. The glosses disappear and are replaced by occasional stage directions; the verbal frame of the play is replaced by printer’s devices and illuminated initials. See Figure 2, overleaf. The 1616 text resembles a conventional dramatic script and makes no gestures to scholarly or otherwise prosecutorial readers. The historical accuracy and

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*SEIANVS*

**Ad. 1.**

*SABINVS, SILIVS, NATTA, LATERAIRIS, COR-
DVVS, SATRIVS, ARRIVNTIVS, EVDE-
MVVS, HATERIVS, &c.*

H

**Aile, CIAVS SILIVS, SII Tupivs SAB-
INVS, Haile.**

Yo'are rarely met in court! *SAB.* Therefore, well met.

*SIL.* Tis true; Indeed, this place is not our sphere.

*SAB.* No, *SILIVS,* wee are no good ingeniers;
We want the fine arts, & their thriving vse,
Should make us grac'd, or favour'd of the times:

We have no shift of faces, no cleft tongues,
No soft, and glutinous bodies, that can stickle,
Like faineles, on painted walls; or, on our breasts,
Creepe vp, to fall, from that proud height, to which
We did by flauerie, not by service, cline.

We are no guilty men, and then no great;
We have nor place in court, offcie in state,
That we can say, we owe unto our crimes:
We burne with no black secrets, which can make
Vs deare to the pale authors; or liue fear'd
Of their still waking jealoies, to raife
Our selues a fortune, by subueriting theirs.
We stand not in the lines, that doe advance
To that so courted point. *SIL.* But yonder leane
A pairle that doe. (*SAB.* Good cousin *LATERAIRIS,*)

*SIL. SATRIVS SECVNDVS,* and *PINNARIUS NATTA,*
The great *SEIANVS* clients: There be two,
verisimilitude signaled by the notes are immediately less visible. Jonson had less need for the immunity from prosecution provided by the notes to the first edition. Rather than including glosses to vindicate his text, Jonson’s debt to his new protector, Esmé Stewart, Lord Aubigny, is conveyed in the dedication to the folio edition.

Editors of Sejanus His Fall are provided, then, with two editions published during the author’s lifetime, both of which were monitored by Jonson. It is the dramatic text of the 1616 edition which has been reproduced by editors who situate the scholarly notes of the first edition as tangential to the properly literary intentions of the author and the art of the play. The conflict between history and art which motivates the inclusion of the notes in the first edition has been resolved by editors in favour of art. The glosses are entirely omitted from all but one subsequent editions of Sejanus His Fall. Herford, Simpson and Simpson observe that these notes ‘imposed a severe test upon a printer’ and this logistical difficulty may account for their exclusion from the folio text.3 The elimination of the notes by later editors does not, however, turn on the relative difficulty of reproduction but on their perceived externality to the dramatic text.

One nineteenth century editor of Sejanus His Fall, Peter Whalley, criticises Jonson for his reliance on historical material in the play:

He was insensibly led to imagine that equal honours were due to successful imitation, as to original and unborrowed thinking.4

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4 Peter Whalley, ‘Preface,’ to Peter Whalley and George Colman, eds., The Dramatic Works of Ben Jonson and Beaumont and Fletcher (London: John Stockdale, 1811), vol. 4, p. xi.
A Romantic preference for the creative output of the individual artist is clearly expressed here and it is this preference that has defined the editorial reception of the play. Whalley takes the 1616 folio edition as his copy-text and does not include Jonson’s notes. He adds, rather, a set of his own annotations as footnotes. The only editor to restore the glosses is Gifford, whose 1875 edition follows the text of the folio and includes two sets of notes at the base of the page: Gifford’s annotations and Jonson’s glosses. The edition of the play which appears in the Mermaid Series, *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists*, edited by Harold Nicholson does not reproduce the notes. Jonson’s most important twentieth century editors, C. H. Herford, Percy Simpson and Evelyn Simpson, who produced the Oxford *Works of Ben Jonson*, tabulate the textual variation between the quarto and folio texts of *Sejanus His Fall* but relegate the glosses to an appendix. More recent reading texts of the plays, like those edited by Barish, Bolton, Wilkes, Procter, Huston, and Kidnie, also discard the glosses of the first edition. The relationship of the play to its classical origins disappears when it is only the verbal text – the script – which is deemed properly authorial. In effect, the scholarly apparatus is replaced by the symbolic apparatus of authorship. The origins of the play are identified firstly with the author; more distant sources of the text are deemed to be of secondary importance.

The first edition of *Sejanus His Fall* expresses a similar desire to the Modernist book: to detach composition from the subjectivity of the author. Like *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*, the objective basis of *Sejanus His Fall* is

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fundamental to the achievement of its literary effects. The disappearance of the notes in critical editions defines the play as a work of individual subjectivity, rather than as a text which aims to satisfy two muses: truth and poetry. Given the explicit interest of the play in reconciling truth and poetry, the omission is particularly striking. It serves to highlight an editorial preference for the poetic, verbal content of literary texts. *Sejanus His Fall* is well placed to illustrate the principles of the New Bibliography which are advanced with particular reference to the Elizabethan drama. My discussion of the New Bibliography will map out how and why the protocols for critical editing work to realign texts like *Sejanus His Fall* in conformity with the models of originality and authorship so explicitly disclaimed by the first edition.

**ii) The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (c. 1790)**

The only edition of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* to appear in its author’s lifetime is that printed by William Blake, circa 1790. This is a book which retains the individual features of a manuscript and for this reason, many of its defining features have been retained by editors who defer to it as if to a manuscript.\(^8\) William Blake is exclusively responsible for the final form of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, as such, this book makes material the ideal of the fair copy which animates the editorial practices of the New Bibliographers. The graphic relationships between the artist, literature and the technologies of textual production are visible in the plate reproduced overleaf in Figure 3, ‘The Printing House in Hell,’ from the sequence, ‘A Memorable Fancy.’

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**Figure 3.** William Blake, ‘The Printing House in Hell’ from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790).

The image of the page is a rebus of the poem which appears as if written by the poet directly onto the page. The visual field of the page is demarcated in dazzling colour: the verbal text appears in its perfected form and frame, girded by the poet’s illustrations.

Whilst the page sizes of the first edition of *The Marriage and Heaven and Hell* vary, as does the coloration of each plate, the dimensions of the image of the text are fixed.\(^9\) The display of the apparently handwritten text is dependent on the illustrative apparatus which contains it. Any schism between the body and soul of the text is overcome through the investment of textual production with symbolic, spiritual import:

> The notion that man has a body distinct from his soul, is to be expunged, this I shall do, by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.\(^{10}\)

The union of the body and soul is figuratively achieved on the moment of impact of the press upon the page. Blake named the process used to produce *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* illuminated printing, a term which conveys the poet’s efforts to recuperate the values of illuminated manuscripts through printing. This method was famously divulged to Blake in a dream-vision of his brother, Robert. Conventional intaglio engraving corrodes the forms of the texts, leaving their negative on the plate. Blake’s method of preparing the plates reverses this order, leaving intact the raised forms to be printed, the infinite text elevated above the invisible abyss: the lake of fire. Corrosion of the printing plate reveals the surface of the negative of the text and that which is finally imprinted onto the page is the positive image of this reversal. The infernal method of printing circumvents the need for typesetters and compositors, allowing the poet infinite access to the page. The effort

\(^9\) See Bentley, *Blake Books*, pp. 286-7, for a table of original page sizes. The details of each of the copies of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* printed by Blake are recorded on pp. 285-302.

devoted to realising the vision of the poet is commemorated by the whole image of the page, every speck of which is the poet’s own.

Blake’s prioritisation of written forms and his sovereignty over the field of the page have set the Romantic standard of authorial proximity which the New Bibliographers aim to rehabilitate. Images of the extremely rare pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* are made available to twentieth first century readers through photo-fascimile technology and it is the facsimile edition which is generally received as the most credible reproduction of Blake’s text. The surfaces printed by Blake are so rare as to be untouchable and so they are reproduced as a set of depthless facsimiles which are paradoxically recognised as the most direct representation of the poet’s intentions. In its application of the technology of the twenty first century to a book produced in the eighteenth century, the photo-fascimile reproduction is a bibliographical anachronism. At once, the photo-fascimile draws attention to the page as a historical scene and flattens that history into a smooth and depthless image.

From the moment it is scanned, the digital image is in a simultaneously separate and composite form. The colours of the image are split in order to be reproduced by the colour-mixing schemes of modern printing, like the four channel CMYK system. These newly isolated elements of the image are recombined when they appear on a screen or are printed. The integrity of the image reproduced is of a fundamentally different order to that of the original. The minutiae of such printing methods – with reference to dots and miniscule, but perceptible, colour variation – draw the handprinted pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* into a modern and finite economy of textual production. The facsimile page can be saturated with the image of the text, a process which can be endlessly repeated and
regulated. In projecting literature and the page as visual quantities, reproducible by means of digital technology, the first edition is re-instated as a vessel for the abstract and always abstractable, extractable text. The facsimile encounter with ‘A Memorable Fancy’ establishes intention as a quantity best transmitted by the hand of the author, wholly responsible for the production of the image of the text.

In spite of the ambivalent representation of printing in ‘A Memorable Fancy,’ *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* has not only been reproduced in facsimile, but has appeared in critical editions of Blake’s writings:

> I was in a Printing house in Hell & saw the method in which knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation.
> In the first chamber was a Dragon-Man, clearing away the rubbish from a caves mouth; within, a number of dragons were hollowing the cave,
> In the second chamber was a Viper folding round the rock & the cave, and others adorning it with gold silver and precious stones.
> In the third chamber was an Eagle with wings and feathers of air, he caused the inside of the cave to be infinite, around were numbers of Eagle like men, who built palaces in the immense cliffs.
> In the fourth chamber were Lions of flaming fire raging around & melting the metals into living fluids.
> In the fifth chamber were Unnam’d forms, which cast the metals into the expanse.
> There they were reciev’d by Men who occupied the sixth chamber, and took the forms of books & were arranged in libraries.11

To quote ‘A Memorable Fancy’ in print is an impropriety which theoretically violates the subjective texture of the page of the first edition. When the poem is rendered a set of printed forms, Blake’s proximity to the ‘A Memorable Fancy’ and his sovereignty over its

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production is diminished. The distinctively illustrated pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* retain their difference from each other when reproduced as whole images in facsimile form. In print, stripped of colour, illustration and embellishment, they are less visibly distinct. The patina and detail of the first edition are lost in the white space of the page and the etching process developed by Blake, does not appear to immediately produce the page. Instead, the molten liquid forms of the first edition of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* are cast into more rigid shapes, as conventional printing imposes an absolute limit on the expansive, mystical vision of composition. The black letters of the printed page, cast by ‘Unnam’d forms,’ are the privileged and reproducible repository of the meaning of ‘A Memorable Fancy.’ The more immediately striking facsimile image of the poem is itself rendered a memorable fancy.

‘A Memorable Fancy’ undergoes both a visible and an ontological transformation when it is quoted in print. The most immediate change is the obliteration of the colour, flourishes and illustrations which furnish an imaginative context to the poem. The black and white field delineated by the quotation of ‘A Memorable Fancy’ institutes a scene of absolute optical polarity: print/page; form/formlessness; presence/absence; things/nothingness. Anything extrinsic to the letterforms of the text is eliminated from the associational field of the page. The flaming inferno as which Blake envisages composition is transfigured as a rarefied, methodical intellectual environment: the black and white visual field of the page.

In print, the spelling error on the original page, ‘reciev’d,’ is easier to discern, as if to emphasise that transmission in such stark mortal form might always be a flawed transaction. It is a highly suggestive error. ‘Reciev’d’ marks a fragmentary stretch back to
the Latin root, *recipere*, of the verb ‘to receive.’ Is this a genuine error? And if so, is it deliberately placed by the author as a riddle, or as a lapse of the complex gravure which cut the letters from the plate? A survey of editions of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* reveals a division between those editors who treat their work as the transcription of the plate and those who seek to correct it and present an idealised version of the text. A further breach appears between those editors who treat ‘A Memorable Fancy’ as prose, unaffected by line breaks, and those who retain the breaks registered by the first edition, further transforming the visual disposition of the text.

Of the few editions which correct this error, the earliest is the *Poems of William Blake*, edited by W. B. Yeats and published in 1893. The text edited by R. B. Kennedy in 1970, which follows David Erdman’s 1961 edition, with modern spelling, also corrects the error. William Rossetti’s 1888 edition, titled *The Poetical Works of William Blake*, does not broach *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. The 1905 edition of the same title, edited by John Sampson, is a selection of lyric poetry and does not include *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. These exclusions suggest the difficulty of accommodating a text like *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, which so strenuously relies on the physical form and illustrations of the first edition to transmit its effects, into an easy definition of poetic, or lyrical works. *The Prophetic Writings of William Blake* (1926), edited by D. J. Sloss and J. P. R. Wallis, is a supplement to the Sampson edition and retains the spelling of the first edition without comment but treats the sentence as the basic unit of the text and discards the

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line breaks. Geoffrey Keynes, in *The Writings of William Blake* also keeps the spelling ‘reciev’d’ but not the line breaks of the original plates, reproducing the text as prose. Similarly, David Erdman, in both his 1961 edition of *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake* and its 1982 revision, maintains the original spelling but not the original spatial disposition, without annotation by Harold Bloom. *The Early Illuminated Books of William Blake* presents the transcribed text on the verso opposite a facsimile reproduction of the plate on the recto, without correction of, or comment on ‘reciev’d.’ Apart from the transcribed text cited above, this is the only edition which retains the line-breaks of the original plates. The continuity of the pages illuminated by Blake as a sequence is broken by the interleaved pages in print, a hyper-illuminated form of the original text.

The authoritative twentieth century editions of the writings of William Blake agree in their reading of ‘reciev’d’ as that which is faithful to Blake’s intentions: the possibility of its incorrectness is vindicated by the deliberately rendered and intact original plate. Where they disagree is in the placement of line-breaks, indicating that whilst the verbal text of the author is precluded from correction by the form of the first edition, its spatial disposition is not. What is at stake in these editorial decisions is the readiness to accept the text manually produced by Blake as an absolute version of the text which precludes any further adaptation. When the line-breaks of the first edition are retained, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* appears more consistent with Blake’s poetic works. Reproduced as a continuous text composed of sentences and unbroken by line divisions, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*...
**Hell** is visually associated with prose. In spite of the poet’s complete control over the production of his text, the fundamental units of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* have been received as variable quantities, subject to reinterpretation by editors. The first edition has been authoritative for the verbal text of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* but not for its arrangement.

### iii) *Vanity Fair* (1847-8)

*Vanity Fair*, by William Thackeray, was first published in twenty monthly parts by London publishers, Bradbury and Evans, in 1847 and 1848. A complete volume, in which the subtitle of the first publication, ‘Pen and Pencil Sketches of English Society,’ was changed to ‘A Novel without a Hero,’ was released by the same publisher in 1848. Both of these editions included full page plates, wood-cut illustrations and ornamental initials prepared by the author. The illustration on the title page of the first book-length edition was prepared by Thackeray to reflect the change in the sub-title. The text was revised by Thackeray for the release of a cheaper edition in 1853 which did not include illustrations. The last edition published in Thackeray’s lifetime appeared in 1864. There is considerable variation within the settings of these editions, recorded by Peter Schillingsburg.20

Although *Vanity Fair* has remained in print since its first publication, not all authorial material has been retained in later editions. The most immediately apparent distinction between the first and subsequent editions of *Vanity Fair* is the absence of authorial illustrations. Joan Stevens argues that the use of ornamental capitals turns ‘commentary,

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satirical attitudes, abstract ideas, to ‘shapes,’ and summons up for them usually also some ‘local habitation’ which sets them for the reader in a wider context of literature of history. She advances a strong case for their exact retention in critical editions however editors, and particularly twentieth century editors of Thackeray, have been reluctant to include the author’s illustrations and extra-textual embellishments. An examination of the editorial history of *Vanity Fair* reveals that it is the distance of the illustrations from the literary scheme of the novel which licences their exclusion. The literary text is defined by printed letters; illustrations, whether prepared by the author or not are treated as tangential to the literary quality and quantity of *Vanity Fair*. The externality of the illustrations to the literary text is reinforced by the inclusion of illustrations by other authors in later editions, a replacement cognate to the substitution of Jonson’s glosses to *Sejanus His Fall* with the glosses of later editors.22

The title page of the first edition depicts the writer alone and at a distance from a town, gazing into a mirror, a reflective pose in which the characters of the book are never represented. See Figure 4, overleaf. The title ‘Vanity Fair’ is spelt in pages hung out to dry above the figure’s head as he contemplates his reflection. There are no such gestures to the inner life of the characters or narrator in the novel. This image is not a literal comment on the authorship of *Vanity Fair* – Thackeray was very much a man of the town and the book was written in London – but an important indication of the distance of the narrator from the events which unfold in the book. The narrator records events but is not so involved as to

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comment on them or act as a moral arbiter. Excurses from the narrative into commentary draw attention to the fictive quality of the narrative, characterising the novel as a theatrical spectacular to which the narrator, as well as the reader, is a spectator. This distance is complicated, but only slightly, by the narrator’s treatment of his characters as puppets. In ‘Before the Curtain,’ the note to readers which preceded the first publication in book form, Thackeray introduces the narrator as the ‘Manager of Performance.’ The book is the theatre in which the drama is performed: ‘Let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out,’ read the last lines of the text. The narrative is framed by these unambiguous assertions that the novel is a show and that the role of the narrator, the ‘humble servant’ of the reader, is to pull the strings and light the stage. Schillingsburg comments:

Thackeray’s methods expose the sham realism in which the author pretends to know not only what his characters think and do but by what moral standards characters should be measured.23

Verbal description, illustration and elaboration are what propel the narrative of the book, rather than the moral commentary to which nineteenth century readers were more accustomed: if the puppet-master is to gaze in the mirror, it is only his own image that will be reflected. In this way, the illustration on the title page of the first edition is a counterpoint to the narrative. The illustrations provide not only the author’s visual imagination of his characters, but also draw attention to the necessary distance between the narrator and those characters. The sustain the conceit of the book as theatre and are an authorial addition equivalent to set-dressing.

23 Schillingsburg, Pegasus in Harness, p. 24.
The first collected edition of the works of Thackeray was published from 1867-9. This edition follows the 1864 text of *Vanity Fair* and retains all of the author’s illustrations.\(^{24}\)

The first corrected edition of *Vanity Fair* to appear is that published in the Oxford edition of *Thackeray’s Works*. On the grounds that it is the last published in the author’s lifetime, the editor, George Saintsbury, adopts the 1864 text as a copy-text and records the variants between the 1848 and 1864 editions in an appendix. A selection of the illustrations from the first edition are reproduced in this edition.\(^{25}\) The 1963 Tillotson edition takes the 1853 text as a copy-text, arguing that this represents the last edition revised by Thackeray, making emendations on the authority of both the first edition and manuscripts.\(^{26}\) They are criticised for this selection by Gerald Sorensen on the grounds that the motivations for publishing the cheaper 1853 edition were financial, and so ‘extra-literary.’\(^{27}\) A selection of illustrations are included in acknowledgement of what the editors term the ‘composite form’ of the novel: ‘Pen and Pencil Sketches of English Society.’ The loss of illustrations in this edition and others is an omission of a far more significant order than the dozen or so textual variants which are recorded by Saintsbury and the Tillotsons.

Unlike *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Sejanus His Fall*, there are no modern facsimile editions of *Vanity Fair* which reproduce the text of the first edition and all illustrations.\(^{28}\) Whilst the proximity of Blake to the production of the pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* has encouraged attention to the physique of the book, the

\(^{24}\) *Thackeray’s Works* (London: Smith, Elder, 1867-9), vols 1-2: *Vanity Fair*.
\(^{26}\) These restorations are listed in *Vanity Fair*, eds. Geoffrey Tillotson and Kathleen Tillotson (London: Methuen, 1963), ‘A Note on the Text’, p. xl.
\(^{28}\) The text of *Vanity Fair* issued in parts by Bradbury and Evans in 1847-8 was released in facsimile form as part of Lewis Melville, ed., *Thackeray’s Works*, (London: Macmillan, 1901-7).
production of *Vanity Fair* is held to have been a hindrance to the composition of the literary text. The concern of editors and commentators is not just with the establishment of the correct text, but with the contemplation of a superior text which Thackeray might have written under different conditions. Thackeray is treated as a kind of anti-heroic author who, like Becky Sharp, is prevented by extraneous circumstances from achieving his final objectives. Thackeray’s editors discuss not only the problems of transmission of *Vanity Fair* which arise in the print-shop but also the errors introduced or left in the text by Thackeray himself. Names of minor characters change throughout the text and there are small inconsistencies of details in the narrative itself, all of which are addressed in editorial introductions to the text. It is not just the narrator of *Vanity Fair* who is revealed to be fallible, but the author himself. A fallible author is somewhat of an embarrassment to literary propriety and particularly to an account of artistic genius. Drags in the narrative and such inconsistencies are rationalised as products of the need to write rapidly a text for publication, and for publication in a particular format. How would the book have appeared, the reader is invited to speculate, if the first edition had not appeared in parts, and if there had been no pressing financial circumstances hastening its composition?

As is to be expected, there is far more manuscript, proof and other documentary material available to scholars and editors of Thackeray to supplement the printed record of *Vanity Fair* than there is available to scholars of Jonson and Blake. The composition history of the book has been reassembled by Thackeray’s twentieth century editors, Geoffrey and Kathleen Tillotson, and examined in particular detail by Gordon Ray, Peter Schillingsburg,
Manuscripts and printer’s records have facilitated an atomising account of composition. In brief: the opening chapters of the novel were written in Spring 1845 and Bradbury and Evans agreed to publish the work in early 1846. The publication was first planned for mid-1846 but serialisation did not begin until January 1847. In the intervening period, it is generally accepted that Thackeray substantially revised the original plan for the novel, decided upon a title and re-wrote earlier sections of the book to reflect the changes to the original plan. The results are a text which exists in several authorially approved editions and much speculation as to the ideal state of the text.

Like the author of *Ulysses*, Thackeray continued to write and revise the later parts of *Vanity Fair* as the first were being published. He is characterised by his editors as an improvisational writer, composing to meet the immediate demands of publication. The Tillotsons and Ray both consider in some detail the extent to which the composition and final form of *Vanity Fair* was affected by the requirement that the work appear in parts. According to Ray, commentary was added to the narrative to address a moral lack in the opening of the novel and earlier chapters were revised to adapt to Thackeray’s revised vision of modern day England as *Vanity Fair*. Another addition to the original conception of the text is the introduction of the character of Dobbin, a step which necessitated the writing of a new chapter, Chapter Five, and significant revision of Chapter Six.

Schillingsburg’s investigations of the writing of *Vanity Fair* reveal an author who was extremely familiar with the requirements of Victorian publishers, suggesting that this kind

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of speculation trades in an idealism misapplied to Thackeray’s definition of writing as a profession. Following Schillingsburg, the most substantial intention that can be projected onto the composition of *Vanity Fair* is that to appear in print. The inconsistencies in the narrative are slips to a performance which can only be staged in print.

A survey of the editorial history of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* reveals a tendency to valorise an account of literary production which, as far as possible, is not determined by the material circumstances of production. Literature, it appears, should ideally be represented as timeless, unburdened of elements which are a product of the immediate circumstances of publication, rather than the verbal imagination of the author. The debate between history and art into which *Sejanus His Fall* enters is decided conclusively by editors in favour of art and to a large extent, it is the production of an original literary text which is foregrounded in critical editions. Reading *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair*, the most significant editorial preference that emerges is that for the verbal text of a work. The treatment of verbal texts is governed by an understanding of literature as detached from history. By this, I mean detached from both the historical conditions of production and from the aspiration to be an historically accurate or credible text. Authorship is represented as the *writing* of texts and any activity which falls out of this definition is displaced by critical editors. This narrow definition of authorship in relation to the printed book is all the more remarkable in light of the efforts of these books to assert their own propositions about authorship and publication.

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The textual state of *Vanity Fair* most resembles the Modernist books which follow in this study. The turn of modern editors and commentators to manuscript material anticipates the reactions provoked by *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*, whose readers, in investigating the composition of the book, turn to the archive for material that is demonstrably authorial. Idealised accounts of the literary content of *Sejanus His Fall, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* proceed with reference to a manuscript-bound economy of production. It is the resort to a similar understanding of authorship and literary production which effectively transforms the Modernist book.
b) Redefining the Book

i) The Emergence of the New Bibliography

For much of the nineteenth century, bibliography was the province of collectors, a useful tool to aid collectors in the identification of their books and so necessary to the development of a discriminating sensibility: ‘I have already told you of my passion for books, and cannot, therefore, dislike bibliography.’ The Reverend Thomas Frognall Dibdin, member of the Roxburghe club of book collectors, wrote these lines in *Bibliomania; or Book-Madness; A Bibliographical Romance*, published in 1809. In this text, bibliography is identified as a supplement to a passionate encounter with the book which allows the collector to gain a more accurate understanding of their merits and value:

To know what books are valuable and what are worthless; their intrinsic and extrinsic merits; their rarity, beauty and particularities of various kinds; and the estimation in which they are consequently held by knowing men — these things add a zest to the gratification we feel in even looking upon and handling certain volumes.

The purpose of bibliography, following Dibdin, is to identify and catalogue rare and beautiful books, to establish their authenticity and provenance, and finally, to ascertain the sum of their merits. The pleasure of accumulation is enhanced by knowledge about books which places them in relation to the literary history of the nation.

In *The Library Companion* (1824), a guide to collecting for novices, Dibdin represents book collecting as a worthy pursuit which will be enriched on the acquisition of facts about the book, advancing a rudimentary rationale for bibliographical study:

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From the beginning to the end, I have never lost sight of what I considered to be the most material object to be gained from a publication of this nature; namely, the imparting of a moral feeling to the gratification of a literary taste.\(^{35}\)

Dibdin’s manual aims to help readers ‘to form a correct notion of the various channels by which knowledge is so swiftly and so widely diffused.’\(^{36}\) Implicit in Dibdin’s writing on bibliography in *Bibliomania* and *The Library Companion* is the assumption that literary sensibility, and indeed, the pleasures of collecting and reading books, are improved by the development of a body of positive bibliographical knowledge.

At the close of the nineteenth century, discerning of the objective qualities of books is of great interest to W.T. Rogers, who designates the criteria for ‘good books’ in his guide for novice collectors, *A Manual of Bibliography* (1891):

> Without entering into a discussion of what constitutes the intrinsic goodness of a book, it is sufficient to say that its beauty consists in its being a good size, with large margins; the letterpress being perfectly squared, whether in a folio or 24mo; in the quality of the paper, which should be thick, solid and white; in the printing, which should be bright, easy to read, proportionate, and with a proper distance between the lines and words; and in a diligent correction — the highest necessity of any book.\(^{37}\)

The list of physical characteristics of good books are here placed subordinate to the final requirement: ‘a diligent correction.’ The consideration of the correctness of the text of a book anticipates the efforts of the New Bibliographers to clarify the most diligent form of a literary text, quite detached from the book. The historical and aesthetic qualities intrinsic to the book are deemed secondary to the status of the text it contains. This shift in focus – from the quantification of the book as an object to its qualification on the basis of its verbal content – pre-empts a similar shift, on a larger scale, within the field of textual scholarship.

As well as formalising the bibliographical approaches of collectors like Dibdin and Rogers, the New Bibliography traces a direct intellectual lineage to the Early English Text Society, the Philological Society and the Malone Society, sustaining their neo-Romantic, nationalist project of English literature. The New Bibliography flourishes as a participant in, and product of the discovery of national literature heralded by the activities of the Early English Text Society. Under the guidance of F. J. Furnivall, over two hundred and fifty editions of early English and Anglo-Saxon literature were published between 1864 and 1900 under the auspices of the Early English Text Society. The publications and researches of the Early English Text Society serve to establish a known corpus of English literature:

Furnivall’s main object was, in his own words, that Englishmen might be able to say of their early literature what the Germans can say of theirs, ‘Every work of it is printed, and every word of it is glossed.’

This scholarly program aims to totally account for the book, as if to inhibit the suggestions that books can make without the support of a regulated system of reference. Decreasing the possibility for the errant transmission and reception of books is an objective which is strenuously pursued by the textual scholars of the following generation.

The assembly of such a comprehensive body of knowledge about the English literature by Furnivall and the Early English Text Society provides a solid documentary and factual foundation not only for scholars, but for the nation. This imperative is clearly articulated by Arundel Esdaile, the secretary of the British Museum, in 1926:

By national literature, I mean, of course, not merely the poems, plays, essays and other works of the literature of power; I mean also the literature of knowledge; in fact, every book that has ever been produced in this country. And this it is which we now endeavour to preserve.

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The idea is not ancient. We have little evidence that the Greek or Roman world ever approached the conception. Still less did the medieval world conceive it, for the Roman Empire, that vast and venerable shade, still exercised a sway over men’s imaginations, so that in its presence the nation was nothing; and while the nation as a spiritual entity had not been born, the national history, the national vernacular and with it the national literature written in that vernacular, could not be held in honour.39

Esdaile’s vision of the British Empire is grounded in a secure and permanent body of national literature. To build the nation as a ‘spiritual entity’ requires the enumeration and preservation of printed books in order to establish a permanent and rigorously defined history of English literature. For books to act as the reliable foundation to the nation, bringing them within the sphere of positive knowledge is vital. The rigorous standards of correctness which are later advanced by the New Bibliographers ensure that this foundation will be sufficiently sturdy.

The members of the Bibliographical Society, established in 1893, continued the task initiated by Furnivall, describing in detail the specifications of English literature and the books which circumscribe its transmission. A more critical and formal debate developed on the transmission of English texts in response to the issue of a challenge in 1900 to members of the Bibliographical Society by A.W. Pollard, their Secretary, to address points of specifically English book-lore. As editor of The Library and mentor to a generation of younger scholars like Greg and McKerrow, Pollard encouraged formal bibliographical inquiry into English literary history. Members of the Bibliographical Society began to tackle the problems of the transmission of English texts, pursuing a more scientific approach to bibliography, seeking to establish accurate critical genealogies based on close analysis of material artefacts and rejecting bibliophily of collectors like Dibdin.

Increasingly, the interest of the members of the Bibliographical Society shifts from the enumeration and description of printed volumes, to the identification and correction of the errors they contain, with reference to both handwritten and printed material.

R. B. McKerrow’s *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* (1927) and W. W. Greg’s *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* (1942) are key texts of the New Bibliography. I place these two texts at the core of my reading of the New Bibliography not only because they precisely distil the general principles of the discipline, but also because of their paramount influence on, and importance to the development of English textual scholarship. Notionally, Greg’s work is concerned with the editing of texts and McKerrow’s, with their enumeration. When read together, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* and *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* reveal the convergence of editing and enumeration. The two are placed in a mutually sustaining relationship which is confirmed by the publication of the enormously influential *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (1949) by Fredson Bowers. This later text secures the principles advanced by Greg and McKerrow. *Principles of Bibliographical Description* claims direct filiation to Greg. The book bears a dedication to him and names him as ‘the greatest bibliographer of our time.’ Bowers’ text formalises bibliographical analysis and proposes an ever-widening application of its methods. Unlike Greg, Bowers was active as both a bibliographer and as an editor of texts spanning five centuries. His career marks both the generalisation of textual scholarship and its hybridisation.

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The establishment of the Bibliographical Society in 1893 marks the beginning of a new discipline which is increasingly independent from earlier bibliographical practices. In the years immediately following the establishment of the Bibliographical Society, a fraternal relationship to other disciplines is maintained. H. R. Tedder comments in 1896:

To me it is almost impossible to dissociate biography, literary history, and bibliographical research.\(^4\)

Thirty years later, bibliography is identified as a modern discipline which functions according to its own regimental codes, as scholarship for the new century, untainted by the transgressions of the previous. In 1930, Greg writes:

\[\text{to suppose that bibliography can be parcelled out into linguistic, literary, or regional departments is to harbour a dangerous fallacy.}\^{4}\]

*An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* collates a very recent list of authorities in its reading list: the discipline of textual scholarship is presented as a new field, rather than one which relies on the work of previous generations. There are few references which pre-date the foundation of the Bibliographical Society in 1893 and those which do concern the technical history of printing and typography, rather than editorial methods.\(^4\)

In his 1930 address to the Bibliographical Society, delivered as its president, Greg observes of the shifting constituency of the field: ‘The amateur and dilettante are giving place to the

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\(^{4}\) The reading list leans in favour of the publications of the Bibliographical Society and does not refer to publications for collectors or librarians. The earliest references are to trade manuals like Joseph Moxon’s *Mechanick Exercises: or, the Doctrine of Handyworks* (London: 1683), John Johnson’s *Typographia or the Printer’s Instructor* (London: 1824) and Antoine-François Momoro’s *Traité élémentaire de l’Imprimerie, ou le Manuel de l’Imprimeur* (Paris: 1793).
expert and the scholar.\textsuperscript{45} In the hands of experts and scholars, the definition of bibliography is considerably expanded. Dibdin’s ‘passion for books’ is supplanted by bibliographical study which increasingly defines itself in relation to authors and an idealised version of literature, rather than printed books. The institutionalisation of bibliography translocates erudition and literary sensibility to the academy and aims to eliminate subjective judgments which might imperil the rectitude of its findings. Pollard, Greg and McKerrow assert the detachment of their methods from those of their predecessors, asserting the novelty of the New Bibliography: a new field specifically orientated towards the study of books in English, printed in the United Kingdom.

ii) Accounting for the Book: Enumeration and Description

The description of printed books and the enumeration of their content is the definition of bibliography inherited from the nineteenth century. It acts as the initial focus of the activities of the members of the Bibliographical Society. Increasingly, the enumeration of texts and the production of bibliographies is undertaken not solely in pursuit of a body of positive knowledge about literature, but in order to identify and redress the deficiencies of printed texts.

‘What … is the business of the bibliographer?’ Pollard asks his colleagues in 1903. His own response to this question frames bibliography as a service of unending necessity, as book-keeping for specialists:

Primarily and essentially, I should say, the enumeration of books. His is the lowly task of finding out what books exist, and thereby helping to secure their preservation, and furnishing the specialist with information as to the extent of the subject-matter with which he has to deal.46

This definition draws into focus the loftier goal of enumeration: providing the basis for further scholarly work. Pollard continues:

So long as literature in order to be communicated has to take material form, so long will it be to the advantage of the little world which cares for literature that every point which concerns this material form should be carefully and thoroughly investigated.47

Here, the separation of the ideal of literature from its material form is clearly stated. This theoretical separation is the point of departure for the reorientation of bibliographical enumeration and description towards the comprehension of the transmission, and particularly the defective transmission, of literary texts. Rather than being merely

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concerned with the accumulation of knowledge about books, Pollard envisages the further 
application of bibliography to redress the deficiencies of printed texts.

Enumerative and descriptive bibliographies of English books establish English literature as 
a known quantity, presenting themselves as factual additions to the historical record of the 
Commonwealth. The most important enumerative project of this period was completed in 
1926: the Short Title Catalogue of English Books, compiled by Pollard and G. W. 
Redgrave.48 The Short Title Catalogue is an index of the new priority of English literature, 
a ledger which lists some 26,500 books printed in England between 1475 and 1640, 
organising the books printed in this interval in historical relation to each other, as well as 
nomining the locations of individual volumes in libraries and collections. The Short Title 
Catalogue makes other reference works which addressed portions of the period largely 
redundant. Provisionally, it exhausts one of the basic imperatives of the New Bibliography: 
to assert a known corpus of English literature through a normative apparatus which can 
indiscriminately account for all books in print. The relationship between nation and 
literature articulated by the Short Title Catalogue secures the project of literary preservation 
already underway in British libraries in the first decades of the twentieth century. The 
Short Title Catalogue sets the parameters for the study of English as a national literature 
and identifies positively the object of study, reinforcing the patrimonial importance of 
vernacular language asserted in production of the first edition of the Oxford English 
Dictionary (1884-1928). The limits of what is known about English literature, the English 
language and English authors are objectively delineated by these projects.

Descriptive bibliographies expand the amount of information available about printed books through close formulaic attention to the physical forms of individual publications, supplementing the knowledge contained in reference works like the *Short Title Catalogue*. Greg’s *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration* (1939) is the best example of the descriptive bibliography which so completely covers its field that any further reference seems unnecessary. Entries are ordered according to the date of first publication, and cover all editions to 1700 of dramatic compositions written before the end of 1642, or printed before the beginning of 1660. A list of all editions for the period is included in each entry, following the protocols of description laid down by McKerrow in *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students*. Variants between and within editions are recorded, suggesting that books are potentially suspect vessels for the transmission of literary texts. The Register of the Stationer’s Company, previously the most useful guide to the publications of the period, is checked against the evidence presented on the examination of individual books. *Sejanus His Fall* is included in Greg’s study. The description of its first edition does not, however, include any reference to the extraordinary physical disposition of the text. A note in the description registers only that ‘there are many directions and references printed in the margin.’⁴⁹ There are in fact glosses printed in the margins of only the first edition of *Sejanus His Fall*; this minor error is an indication that the focus of the descriptive bibliography is with the properly literary text of the work, rather than the apparatus which displays it.

Descriptive and enumerative bibliographies tend to complement each other, allowing for the extrapolation of more and more general historical contexts. The history of the text is

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not vested in the book, but in the bibliography, as every salient feature of the book is annotated. Together, descriptive and enumerative bibliographies account for printed books in such a way that books and first editions are effectively removed from the scene of analysis: all possible information for the specialist is contained and systematically organised so as to eliminate the need to resort to the book. Books are historicised as objects quite distinct from literature, which is formulated as an ideal theoretically independent of its material transmission.

These projects give rise to an increasing awareness of the deficiencies of printed books and the extent to which their transmission results in the corruption of literature. The work of bibliographers reaches beyond the identification of books to include the identification of their errors and variants. The equation of material transmission and textual corruption is succinctly stated by McKerrow:

In all work so transmitted there has intervened between the mind and pen of the original author and the printed text as we now have it a whole series of processes, often carried out by persons of no literary knowledge or interests, almost any one of which may in one way or another affect the transmission of the text, and that a thorough understanding of these processes was a necessary preliminary to any attempt to reconstruct from the printed book the text as originally conceived by its author.50

This statement condenses the attitudes of the New Bibliography to authorship and to the relationship between the printed book and the author. The printed book is deemed a secondary account of the literary text. Literature is held to be the product of the mind of an author and the pen is understood to be the sole instrument of that author’s mind. The strength of the assumption that the printed book is an always imperfect rendition of the author’s text is clear. Composition and transmission are separated in such a way that it is impossible to absorb print into this definition of the text. This dislocation of the printed

book and the original text is fundamental to both the editorial and bibliographical exertions of the New Bibliographers. The properly literary text is that which disseminates from the ‘pen of the original author.’ Publication and the printed book interfere in the direct transmission of the ‘text as originally conceived by its author.’ Textual intermediaries, like printers, editors, compositors, copyists and other ‘persons of no literary knowledge or interest,’ obstruct the reader’s access to the author. Conceiving of a text, the author can be understood as the vehicle of an immaculate conception or as a reproductive body. The New Bibliography understands itself as a means of re-establishing an intimate relationship between reader and author by identifying all non-authorial, non-manuscript traces of transmission, in advance of their purgation by editors. The removals of illustrations and glosses in critical editions of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* are consistent with this definition of primary literary production as an exertion of the mind of the author, manifested through the pen. That the ‘series of processes’ which produce the text might bear on authorial intention is unimaginable within the scheme of authorship proposed by McKerrow.

The New Bibliography establishes a relationship between bibliographical description and the editing of texts through more rigorous attention to printed error, built on the evidence compiled in bibliographies. A general suspicion of the book develops into complete antipathy towards material transmission as the harbinger of textual corruption. Accounting for and rationalising the variations between printed books, the work of the bibliographer is increasingly focused on the accurate identification and classification of error, ultimately to be rectified by the adjudicating editor. McKerrow identifies four causes of error which may arise in the printing house: misreading, failure of memory, muscular errors and foul-
He treats printers and their functionaries as rogue elements in the transmission of printed books and is similarly inclined to suspicion of the information provided in trade manuals, dismissed as extraneous and unreliable aids to bibliographical work. Fundamental to the correction of texts is the distinction of authorial error from those introduced by printers, copyists, compositors and editors; it is the second type of error which the New Bibliography seeks to eliminate. This interest in the classification of error is sustained by Greg whose analysis of substantive and accidental error has served as an influential guide to editorial decision-making.

The definition offered of bibliography by Greg in a 1914 paper, ‘What is Bibliography’ does imply Pollard’s primary definition – the enumeration of books – as a component of its activities but widens the field to accommodate this new emphasis on error. Bibliography, he states, is:

the science of the material transmission of literary texts, the investigation of the textual tradition as it is called, in so far as that investigation is possible without extraneous aids.

These scientists draw conclusions from the data they tabulate. Investigation of the textual tradition results in an understanding of material transmission as inherently flawed and fundamentally detached from the properly literary business of composition. As the book is identified as a corrupt vessel of authorial intentions, its physical form effectively becomes extraneous to the analysis and understanding of literary texts.

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iii) The Ideal Book: Correction and Editing

Under the supervision of McKerrow, Greg and Bowers, the New Bibliography is oriented towards the provision of the basis for an editorial practice which seeks to recuperate authorial intention and reanimate it in a critical edition. States Fredson Bowers:

All that has been written hitherto in this book has been, or should have been, directed, immediately and remotely, to the elucidation of the single problem of the relation between the text of a printed book and the original MS. of its author.54

The description and enumeration of books is no longer an end in itself. The New Bibliography does not work to construct a body of knowledge about the book, but about the relationship of the verbal text of the book to its author. On the strength of the accumulated evidence of the problems of material transmission, the New Bibliography proposes itself as the vital precedent to critical editing. The New Bibliography is effectively a misnomer, the principles advanced by McKerrow, Greg and Bowers are in the primary service of editors. It is this shift in the focus of bibliography towards the editing of texts which has had the most significant implications for the reception of Modernist books.

Facsimile and diplomatic editions give way to eclectic editions, texts corrected according to a properly developed rationale. As the correction of Jonson and Blake by their nineteenth century editors demonstrates, eclectic and corrected editions are not an innovation of the twentieth century. The novelty of the approach of the New Bibliography is to undertake this process of correction with reference to manuscripts and authors, rather than to books or to the proclivities of the editor and reading public. The formal changes wrought by earlier generations of editors are not altogether different to those following the New Bibliographers: the decision taken by all editors to present only the verbal or dramatic text

54 Bowers, *Principles of Bibliographical Description*, p. 239.
of *Sejanus His Fall* is a case in point. The methodological innovations of the New Bibliography, most importantly the introduction of manuscripts into the purview of editors and the postulation of a theoretical fair copy, enforce an account of literary composition as the writing of texts, the hyper-valorised contact between an author and the page of a manuscript.

The production of any critical edition is governed by the selection of a copy-text. A critical editor emends the selected copy-text with reference to other documentation, indicating changes that the author intended to appear in the final text: revised editions, letters by the author, annotations on printers’ proofs and so forth. The first rule of emendation advanced by Greg establishes the author’s fair copy, whether it exists or not, as the standard which the corrected copy-text must ideally match:

> The aim of a critical edition should be to present the text, so far as the available evidence permits, in the form in which we may suppose that it would have stood in a fair copy, made by the author himself, of the work as he finally intended it.\(^{55}\)

The ‘fair copy’ is a theoretical standard which defines the signs of transmission as defects. The original connection between ‘the mind and pen’ of the author is presented as fundamental to the achievement of the objectives of the critical edition. McKerrow’s characterisation of transmission as an impediment to clear access to the intentions of the author is repeated by Greg in his discussion of the fair copy:

> A fair copy is postulated in order that the original may be supposed to have accurately represented the author’s intention, and that all obvious slips may be ascribed to defective transmission.\(^{56}\)

Defective transmission, like the static on a radio broadcast, interferes with the communion between the author and the text, and disrupts the exchange between the idealised literary


text and the reader. Books are represented as corrupt vessels whose corruption can be overcome by a methodological positivism, guided by the vision of an idealised ‘best text.’ A diligently corrected text is a panacea against the defects engendered by transmission. It is given that a critical text, which reverts to an abstract concept of the original text, defined by its priority to the book and proximity to the author, will ideally be an improvement on a printed text. Features which are indigenous to the printed book are conceptually excluded from the fair copy and so, from the edited text.

Reinforcing the independence of the fair copy from the printed book, Greg legislates for the divisibility of the copy-text, allowing several texts to act as the basis for the reconstruction of a text. A text representing an author’s final intentions can be corrected with reference to texts representing the first intentions of the author. The earlier texts act as the authority for accidental errors and the later text, for substantives. It is for the editor to adjudicate the weight of each variant. The Tillotson edition of *Vanity Fair*, which corrects the 1853 edition with reference to the author’s manuscript, is a good example of this approach. In the case of texts which are printed several times within an author’s lifetime, and for which manuscript material exists, like *Vanity Fair*, as well as *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, the first edition is effectively excluded from consideration. The approximation of the author’s original occurs through the splicing and reassembly of texts, a documentary equivalent of the editing of celluloid film. The divisibility of the material signs of textual origin does not fragment the unifying figure of the author and the fair copy. Indeed, the integrity of the postulated fair copy is fundamental to the validity of a proposed corrected text.

Following Greg, editorial sovereignty over the text is wholly circumscribed by the hand of the author:

> If the alterations are the author’s we have no right to pick and choose among them. Thus it may be laid down that in such a case all apparently intentional alterations should be accepted, provided that they are homogeneous in character.  

Inscription has binding authority over printed matter, handwritten authorial alterations are valorised as indisputable indications of authorial intentions. The use of the word ‘homogeneous’ in this context is telling: the New Bibliography understands the ideal form of literary texts to be consistent and stable. The editing of texts with such emphatic reference to the author effectively displaces the symbolic importance of the book as a representative of authorial intentions. As the editorial history of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* suggests, editors can pick and choose amongst non-verbal alterations to a text, or alterations to the physical disposition of the verbal text.

The scope of bibliographical inquiry is widened by Greg to included handwritten as well as printed documents. Manuscripts not only provide the image of the fair copy, they can act as copy-texts and so, as the basis of a critical edition. This is the most important methodological innovation of the New Bibliography: the manuscript displaces the generative authority of the book; the written word displaces the printed word. Literary intention is defined by the New Bibliographers within the actual and figurative boundaries of manuscripts. The elaboration of intention through the manipulation of print and its tropes cannot figure in this scheme of correct authorship. The glosses of *Sejanus His Fall* and the illustrations of *Vanity Fair* cannot be imagined with reference to an author’s

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continuous manuscript; their erasure in critical editions is consistent with the imagination of
the fair copy as an authorial manuscript. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is an
exceptional printed book in its embodiment of the author’s fair copy. Although it has not
altogether defied correction, it provides the model of absolute authorial integrity which the
New Bibliographers seek to recuperate.

The expansion of the editorial practices of the New Bibliography to include manuscripts
has the most considerable impact on the study of modern books. Considerably more
manuscript material exists for twentieth century books than for the books listed in the *Short
Title Catalogue*. A bibliographer who analyses modern printed books in order to map their
textual histories is supplied with a massive amount of supporting material. Not only is the
material which would provide the basis of the bibliographer’s work intact in archives, many
of the notebooks, manuscripts, annotated proof pages, revised editions, explanatory
correspondence and other records have been republished in documentary or facsimile form.
By contrast, McKerrow names only three fragments of corrected proof pages which predate
the end of the seventeenth century.59 Texts for which both first editions and extensive
manuscript material exist, like *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of
Americans*, require editors to make substantial choices in their nomination of a copy-text.
The dimensions of modern archives increase simultaneous to the nomination of the
manuscript by the New Bibliography as the best repository of authorial intention. There is
thus a mutually sustaining relationship between the development of editorial practices
oriented towards manuscript material and the retention of such material in archives.

In light of the privilege granted manuscript material and the theoretical importance of the fair copy, what significance remains vested in the physical form of the book? If the student attends to books ‘as an assemblage of parts, each of which is the result of a clearly apprehended series of processes’, McKerrow promises:

he will find that the material book, apart altogether from its literary content, can be a thing of surprising interest.\(^\text{60}\)

Greg relegates his attraction to books to a footnote:

I may confess to having strong ‘conservative’ instincts myself. I feel that a particular edition, and far more a particular manuscript in the case of a medieval work, possesses a certain individuality of its own which makes it a sort of minor literary creation, whose integrity I am loath to violate…I am conscious however that this is the bibliographer’s outlook, and that it is only a stepping stone, though an essential one, towards the truly critical position.\(^\text{61}\)

Printers and bookmakers are capable of ‘minor creation,’ in unspoken comparison to the greater creation of the author, the literary text. The ‘truly critical position’ will render the work of the bibliographer and the book invisible. The laws of bibliographical evidence deem the book an indirect and interrupted transmission of an authorial text. Being in a state of chronic imperfection, the special characteristics of books and first editions are determined to be peripheral facts. The image of original text guiding the author does not include the textual apparatus and so, these features are summarily excluded. The resolution of instinct in favour of the objective recuperation of the manuscript represses the book in the bibliographical imagination and replaces it with the corrected edition.

\(^{\text{60}}\) McKerrow, *Introduction to Bibliography*, p. 4.  
iv) Method and Impersonality

It is the rigorous observation of method which the New Bibliographers claim distinguishes their approach from that of their predecessors. The objectivity engendered by their methods secures their claims to the provision of an enduring body of knowledge. The New Bibliography understands itself as a pre-hermeneutic science, the objective precedent to a critical (read: subjective) immersion in the text. Speculation about the history of the book is foreclosed by the firm factual basis of bibliographical analysis, and the authority vested in its demonstrable standards of correctness. This reliance on objective method differentiates the pre-hermeneutic role of the bibliographer from the interpretations of more properly literary critics:

Before a critic can attempt a definitive evaluation of the contents of any book he must be in possession of every fact which has any bearing on the history of the text.62

To satisfy this injunction, what the critic really needs is contained within the parameters of a competent scholarly bibliographical description. In McKerrow’s account, bibliography promises a methodological release from subjectivity and a retreat from the uncertainty of literary criticism:

The virtue of bibliography as we used to count it was its definiteness, that it gave little scope for differences of opinion, that two persons of reasonable intelligence following the same line of bibliographical argument would inevitably arrive at the same conclusion, and that it therefore offered a very pleasant relief from critical investigations of the more ‘literary’ kind.63

A similar distinction between criticism, by implication an indefinite discipline, and bibliography, cast as a science of certainty, is described by Greg in The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare:

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63 McKerrow, Introduction to Bibliography, p. 2.
Bibliographers have in fact brought criticism down from the fascinating but too often barren heights of aesthetic and philosophic speculation to the concrete familiarities of the theatre, the scrivener’s shop, and the printing house.\textsuperscript{64}

Bibliographical analysis provides redress not only to the errors of ‘persons of no literary knowledge or interests,’ but also, apparently, to literary criticism. Bowers too professes critical blindness or bibliographical impersonality as the basis of the services rendered by textual scholars:

the function of textual bibliography is to treat these imprinted shapes, their selection and arrangement, without primary concern for their symbolic value as conceptual organisms – that is, not as words that have meaningful values – but, instead, as impersonal and non-conceptual inked prints.\textsuperscript{65}

Clearly though, some selectivity governs the treatment of imprinted shapes. In the first, the only inked prints approved for study are letters which are demonstrably part of the verbal and authorial text of a book. Secondly, their disposition on the page and within the book is generally not accounted for by either bibliographers or editors. Furthermore, the New Bibliographers do attribute meaningful values to printed forms in their insistence upon the relationship between texts and authors. This is witnessed in the classification of texts and variants according to the degree of error they transmit and their proximity to authors. In refusing to grant print the status of a conceptual medium, independent of its verbal content and its author, when applied to books which insist on the significance of specifically printed forms, the utility of the New Bibliography is weakened.

Bowers evinces great faith in the regulation of the New Bibliography by method, making allusion to legal standards of correctness:

\textsuperscript{64} Greg, \textit{Editorial Problem}, p. 3.
Strict bibliographical method must be assumed to be right, since step by step it rests on the impersonal interpretation of physical facts according to the rigorous laws of evidence.66

‘Impersonal interpretation’ is an oxymoron and Greg and McKerrow recognise as much in their concessions to the art of bibliography and editing. Exceptional circumstances can pique the most rigorous laws of evidence and when these objective tools have been exhausted, an element of personal interpretation must be admitted. The rigidity of the protocols of bibliographical interaction collapse when there is no material evidence upon which to base a judgment. In the absence of empirical evidence, the bibliographer must address the problems unique to an exceptional book, and an editor must step in to recapitulate the text. McKerrow makes the following provision for such extraordinary cases:

One thing I would say in conclusion, that nowhere have I attempted to lay down any rules for bibliographical investigation, for none are possible. There is no general course of inquiry to be followed. Every book presents its own problems and has to be investigated by methods suited to its particular case.67

Greg also acknowledges the paradoxical foundation of the principles he seeks to establish:

The fact is that there is only one general principle of emendation, which is that emendation is in its essence devoid of principle. At its finest it is an inspiration, a stirring of the spirit, which obeys no laws and cannot be produced to order. In other words, emendation is an art.68

The laws of textual analysis developed by the New Bibliography are always subordinate to the creative subjectivity of the author, and finally, on Greg’s admission, to the subjectivity of the editor. That editorial decision making can vary from editor to editor is borne out by the different editions of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* which have appeared since their first appearances in print. What is striking about

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67 *Introduction to Bibliography*, p 5.
McKerrow’s qualification of bibliographical method on the grounds of the individuality of books, and Greg’s admission of the ‘art’ in editing are the tremor of instability they induce in principles elsewhere so rigorously advanced.

If emendation is an art, of what value are the laws of evidence? A. E. Housman, a contemporary to Greg and McKerrow, criticises the New Bibliography for the duplicity of its investment in scientific method, stating:

Textual criticism is a science, and since it comprises recension and emendation, it is also an art. It is the science of discovering error in texts and the art of removing it.69

This comment is advanced in the context of correcting classical texts and Housman leans in favour of treating simply the earliest manuscripts of such texts as the most authoritative. A definition of textual criticism which acknowledges its twin function as science and art is better equipped to address texts which do not conform to a codified account of literary composition and transmission. Lest his definition of textual criticism be treated as a new formula, Housman refuses any scientific or empirical model of textual production:

The old unscientific days are everlasting; they are here and now; they are renewed perennially by the ear which takes formulas in, and the tongue which gives them out again, and the mind which meanwhile is empty of reflexion and stuffed with self-complacency.70

Editors and bibliographers who are responsible for the application and administration of formulas must always inflect the texts they reproduce. Authorial subjectivity cannot be regulated and codified, no more than editors can resist art, or subjective decision-making in their work. The laws of evidence which are relied upon by the New Bibliographers are further limited by their characterisation of the evidence of composition and transmission as

70 Housman, ‘The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism,’ p. 1069.
ideally and exclusively the verbal emanations of authors. The formulas advanced by the New Bibliography, as interested as they are in the production of standard texts, themselves propose a particularly limited account of textual production. The elimination of the most distinctive features of the first editions of *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair* – the glosses and illustrations – indicate the cost of such a narrow formula of literary production and literariness.
c) The New Bibliography, Modern Books and the Modernist book

The New Bibliographers evince little interest in the particular problems presented by modern books and printing. James Duff Brown complains of their failure to engage with modern literature in *Practical Bibliography*, a manual published in 1908 to counter what the author identifies as the deficiencies of the New Bibliography:

Practically the whole of the scientific, artistic and technical literature of interest to the previous generation dates from the nineteenth century, and, largely from its latter half. Yet, bibliographers do not trouble about recording and cataloguing the literature of their own time.\(^71\)

It is, Duff Brown claims, ‘this unnatural reverence for the old which has made the national bibliography of the United Kingdom so imperfect.’\(^72\) In defence, Bowers argues that ‘it cannot be denied that the natural predilection of scholarship is to the past,’\(^73\) making it clear that it is a Romantic ‘natural’ ideal of composition which the New Bibliography seeks to retrieve. The New Bibliography understands literature as an exclusively historical quantity: liaisons with contemporary authors are thus theoretically impossible.

The rules advanced by Greg in *Principles of Emendation in Shakespeare* and later texts are obviously most applicable to the editing of the texts included in *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration* and the *Short Title Catalogue*. Whilst acknowledging this limitation, Greg also envisages their eventual application in a wider context:

I shall endeavour to give a certain generality to my remarks in order that they may apply so far as possible to the Elizabethan drama as a whole and even to other literature of the time.\(^74\)

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\(^73\) Bowers, *Principles of Bibliographical Description*, p. 358.

\(^74\) Greg, *Editorial Principles*, p. x.
An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students makes no claims to apply indiscriminately to all books cautioning that:

Any attempt to treat books of all periods in the same fashion will quickly be found to be impracticable and to lead only to complications and inconsistencies.\(^75\)

The conditions of production of modern books thwart the development of consistent bibliographical principles, according to McKerrow:

If, however, we exclude modern books for the moment from our consideration we can perhaps discover a fairly satisfactory working formula, or at least one which will safeguard its user from the charge of bibliographical ignorance or insufficiency.\(^76\)

In spite of this disclaimer, it is modern books, for which there exists a greater quality of manuscript material, that the working formulas of the New Bibliography have most substantially redefined. Faced with modern methods of commercial publishers (and particularly their methods of imposition and collation), McKerrow’s tone is bemused:

The future bibliographer who interest himself in the almanacs and railway-guides of the twentieth-century will probably have to understand these matters, but I am glad to think that the time for this study is not yet.\(^77\)

He makes passing references to improved paper production, cloth binding, the introduction of the Stanhope Press and other nineteenth century technical innovations but not to any recent trends in printing which might appear to invite bibliographic attention. Similarly, the fine printing revival of the Arts and Crafts movement, the explosion of small experimental journals in Europe, and small presses and publishers bringing new works of English literature to light in Paris are not identified as potential points of bibliographical interest.

\(^75\) McKerrow, Introduction to Bibliography, p. 1.
\(^76\) McKerrow, Introduction to Bibliography, pp. 145-6.
\(^77\) McKerrow, Introduction to Bibliography, p 70-71. McKerrow was by no means ignorant of modern publishing. He served on the board of London publishing house Sidgwick and Jackson, and was its manager for many years.
There is no denial that the rules of the New Bibliography have themselves been influential in the reconstruction of seventeenth century texts, their chosen object. The methods advanced by the New Bibliographers have, however, been widely applied to reconstruct books of all periods, the effect of which has been the homogenisation of the literary text and the eradication of the specifying complications and inconsistencies of particular editions. Their greater influence, insofar as the books in this study are concerned, is theoretical. Modern books are precluded from being considered properly literary because of the incompatibility of their production to the working formulas of the New Bibliography. In spite of this, it is to authorial manuscripts that scholars of Modernist books regress, following the estrangement of the book from an understanding of literary composition secured by the New Bibliographers.

The semantic shift governing understandings of bibliography and the book has shaped the reception of the Modernist book. All books which submit to an editorial process are so shaped; the implications of my critique of the New Bibliography resonate beyond the historical limits of the Modernist book. I understand the New Bibliography to be the most important influence on the editing of texts in the twentieth century. Although its claims to objectivity have been questioned, as have the protocols for the emendation of texts, the legacy of the New Bibliography is the valorisation of manuscript material. The indiscriminate priority granted manuscript material has a more substantial impact on the editing of texts published in the twentieth century, for which an enormous amount of manuscript material exists. The author’s manuscript, actual or postulated, continuous or divided, provides the means of establishing a verifiable connection between the text and the author.
The attentions paid to the physical form and production of the book by collectors and bibliographers pre-empt the close monitoring of the body of the book by Modernist authors. The Modernist book imagines all kinds of readers in advance and appeals to the bibliophilic sensibility of the collector and librarian so as to assert the prominence and primacy of the book at hand, rather than the abstracted figures of the text and author. Lapses to bibliolatry are precisely the response the Modernist book seeks to provoke. *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* are impersonal, insofar as the subjective figure of an author writing is absented from composition. First publication convincingly detaches the printed text from a productive relationship to the controlling figure of the author.

In a typical claim of bibliographical indifference, F. P. Wilson writes:

> To a formal bibliographer, a book is not the life-blood of a master spirit but a collection of pieces of paper with printing on them.\(^78\)

The increasing significance of authors and manuscripts to editors and bibliographers brings Wilson’s claim into some doubt. Taken at face value though, Wilson’s description of the attitude of the formal bibliographer to the book is exactly that which Modernist books invite: the reception of printed books as independent of the ‘life-blood’ of an authorial master spirit. As such, they demand that the errors imprinted on the pages of their first editions be read as equivalent to the other forms which appear on the page. Modernist books valorise every printed shape on the page, not as emanations of their authors, but as the first and final representation of the text as an object. The symbolic value of the printed letters of Modernist books is built on their detachment from the subjective, manuscript

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origins of the text. The taxonomies of error evolved by the New Bibliographers are antithetical to the impersonal, objective intentions of the Modernist book.

The bibliographical and philological debates of the late nineteenth century are an important point of reference for Modernist books, seen for example, in Stephen’s discussion of Shakespearean biography and bibliography in the ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ episode of *Ulysses*, and the philological turns of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The rejection of personality as the foundation of composition in *The Making of Americans* stands in direct contradiction to the model proposed by the New Bibliographers. Modernist books contest the priority the New Bibliographers grant manuscripts in their disavowal of the literary apparatus of authorship. As interested as *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* are in books, bibliography and composition, they treat books as objects which, once in print, are wholly independent of their authors. They insist that the relationship between the printed book and original manuscript is severed on publication. The efforts of the New Bibliographers to elucidate this relationship are in direct contradiction to the declared bibliographical principles of the Modernist book. I reconstruct the bibliographical principles of Modernist books in the following chapters of this thesis, considering the particularities of their digressions from the models of authorship and textual production proposed by the New Bibliographers.
Chapter Three: *Ulysses* (1922)

The desire to be in print, to occupy the body of a book, is the vital aesthetic and intellectual aspiration of *Ulysses*. The physiognomy of the first edition of *Ulysses*, published in Paris in 1922, displays the conflict between the ideal form of the text and its actual form in print, a breach which is sustained on examination of the extant manuscript and archival material. Publication places a finite limit on composition, it marks the final circumscription of the form of the text by material circumstances. The publication of *Ulysses* commemorates the end of the involvement of the author with the text and the beginning of its actual and symbolic integrity as a book. Once released to readers, the first edition is an independent entity which, following the commitment to materiality articulated in the text, should be left to stand for itself.

*Ulysses* embodies the conflict of beginning and ending of the novel at the turn of the twentieth century. The Modernist book is launched as an autonomous, anonymous object whose evolution and authorship are concealed through the mechanisms of print. The tension between the manuscript and the book participates in a broader conflict between subjectivity and objectivity, content and form. *Ulysses* lays the foundations of an objective theory of the Modernist book in which style – the mode of literary production – determines the form of the narrative. Its commitment to this principle wavers; the anxious publication of the first edition of *Ulysses* reflects a residual ambivalence towards the mechanical reproduction of art, described in the narrative through the mouthpiece of Stephen Dedalus.
Intrusions into the form of the first edition mandated by James Joyce – the bibliographical apparatus, re-editions and behind the scenes critical work – violate the code of aesthetic autonomy set out in *Ulysses*. The unwillingness of critics to accept the printed package which contains the first edition of *Ulysses* as an adequate representation of authorial intentions has strengthened the turns made by Stephen towards a spiritual, Romantic economy of textual production. The ultimate gesture of the first edition of *Ulysses* assents to materiality. Molly’s final ‘yes’ signifies the compliance of the author to the form of the book, marking the diremption of the manuscript and printed text and theoretically precluding any further authorial intervention.

*Ulysses* declares itself an historical artefact, located in the just memorable past. There are eighteen years and eighteen episodes between Bloomsday, June 16th, 1904, and the publication of *Ulysses* on the 22nd February, 1922, the fortieth birthday of James Joyce. If the history of a book is its life-cycle, *Ulysses* is mature on publication and ready to read. The symmetrical distance between the first dawn of *Ulysses* and its publication mark a gradual and measured dislocation of the author and composition from the printed book. The day that James Joyce met Nora Barnacle contains and is contained by *Ulysses*. The book makes literature of a momentous day in its author’s life: autobiography is sublimated by impersonality, history given literary form in print. Bloomsday might mark the meeting of Joyce and Nora Barnacle, but that particular encounter is extrinsic to the narrative, a historical moment as distant from *Ulysses* as the voyage of Odysseus. The book is constructed as a self-contained and self-reflexive history which exceeds both the image of its author and the limits of his experience.
In this chapter, I examine first the form of the first edition of *Ulysses* and the circumstances governing its production, arguing that they vitally animate the conflict explored in the book between actual and ideal forms. I move then to a reading of two episodes, ‘Aeolus’ and ‘Scylla and Charybdis,’ in which Bloom and Stephen reflect upon the modes and mechanisms of textual reproduction. ‘Aeolus’ and ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ signal key locations for bibliographers and textual scholars: the print shop and the library. The passage from ‘Aeolus’ to ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ partially repeats the allegory of textuality represented in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Books are made of base forms and metal and arrive in the library, where they are ‘arrang’d by Men.’ I read ‘Aeolus,’ one of the episodes most revised by Joyce in the final stages of composition, as an index of the book’s commitment to and anticipation of its printed form. Bloom’s observation of the operation of the printing press stands in ironic contrast to the account of textual provenance advanced by Stephen in ‘Scylla and Charybdis.’ Stephen’s suspicion of women and material things leads him to a theory of the text which substitutes the artist for the God and Father of the Catholic Church. His idealistic account of creative genius is denied by the progress of *Ulysses* and its investment in the capacity of the things on the page to speak for themselves. Throughout, the impact of the press on the manuscripts of *Ulysses* is awaited. First publication entails a submission to the imperfection of material things and as such, the typographical errors of the first edition are vital to the achievement of its form.

Finally, I consider the way the first edition has been gradually displaced by the *James Joyce Archive*. This tendency culminated on the appearance of the Gabler edition in 1984, an edition which vindicates the theoretical investment of the New Bibliographers in manuscripts and authorial inscription. *Ulysses* is, apparently, an ideal critical object and
has, as Joyce predicted, kept the professors busy since first publication. The composition and transmission history of *Ulysses* presents a set of exemplary textual problems and has been the focus of an extraordinary amount of subsequent critical debate. No English text of the twentieth century has been the object of such sustained and antagonistic bibliographical analysis. Critics have declined the biological and mechanical metaphors which govern the production of the text in favour of a Romantic account of textual provenance located in the subjectivity of the author, sustaining the privilege accorded by the New Bibliographers to the manuscript descent of texts. Bibliographically, *Ulysses* has been made the exemplar of the Modernist textual condition, with innumerable different versions contesting the title. Critical turns back to the archive by Joyce and his editors re-establish a Romantic continuity between the author and text which is denied by the self-definition of *Ulysses* as a thing, an irresistible object for interpretation.
(a) The First Edition

The pages of the first edition of *Ulysses*, published by Shakespeare and Company in Paris in 1922, are densely, thickly printed, with thirty eight lines of print squeezed into each full page. The page margins are small and there is very little white space surrounding the text. The typography enshrines the urgency with which *Ulysses* was rushed to press, as if each page must be pushed to hold at maximum capacity. The book seems only just capable of containing the text. The dimensions of this volume are somewhat unconventional. Measuring 237 by 185 millimetres, *Ulysses* is oddly larger than a standard octavo, but well short of quarto dimensions. *Ulysses* presents itself as a book incommensurate to any other, a prime number or irreducible quantity which does not fall within a standard taxonomy of literary size or bibliographical form.

The blue of the cover is also somewhat particular, its hue delayed publication due to Joyce’s insistence that it be the blue of the Greek flag in honour of Odysseus and Homer’s epic. The colour of the cover is the first sign of the parallel narrative which gives literary form to the perambulations of Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus and Molly Bloom. These blue paper covers mark the material limit to the theoretically illimitable process of literary composition. The paper of the covers is brittle and the spines of the copies I have examined bear the wear of eighty years worth of readers.1 Over time, the image of the title and author’s name, printed in white, has lost some of its starkness as flakes of colour fall from the cover, and fly-spots, stains and creases appear. The first edition of *Ulysses* is delicate,

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1 I have examined the following copies of the first edition: Number 739 in the British Library; Number 367 and 853 in the Beinecke Library, Yale University, and an unnumbered press copy held in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. All references to *Ulysses* in this chapter are to the first edition, reproduced in facsimile as *Ulysses: The 1922 Text*, intro. and ed. Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
rare and extremely valuable and so housed within rare-book libraries and in private collections, effectively removed from circulation.

The conflict between ideal literary form and its corrupt material instantiation is well represented by the first edition of *Ulysses*. Alan Parker makes the following observation of the book, already a fragile object in 1948, in an early Joyce bibliography:

> The fortunate combination of printer and publisher resulted in the appearance of *Ulysses* as a book whose physical aspect is particularly suited to its content. It is a fat and inviting volume, the blue and white of its covers subtly evocative of the Greece whose epic it so closely parallels. Unfortunately the fragile wrappers have proven unequal to the demands of its great bulk, and are today usually found in a badly chipped state.

Transmission has materially affected the first edition of *Ulysses*. The brittle pages have fragmented and deformed under the pressure of reading. It is as if another mason has chiseled away at the edifice of the first edition. Is this the author, trying to escape the sarcophagus of the book and answer his critics? The book, ideally, performs the manuscript. A deficient bibliographical form which only just contains the text suggests that the capitulations of the manuscript and author to the book are not quite complete.

The image of the pages bursting from the chipped covers of the book is an entirely appropriate figure for the composition history of *Ulysses* in which the manuscript and printed text compete for significance. The content of this book will not, it seems, be subordinated to the ‘fragile wrappers.’ The decomposing binding renders the conclusive end to composition marked by publication somewhat less convincing. The text appears to

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be transgressing the boundaries of first publication and indeed, the editorial history of
_Ulysses_ is a movement away from the first edition, through reference to earlier manuscripts.

The theoretical significance of first publication – marking the end of the author’s
relationship to the manuscript – is undermined by the publisher’s disclaimer which appears
as a suffix to the first edition. This elementary bibliographical addition is the final verbal
frame of _Ulysses_, the paradoxical sign of its completion and incompletion:

The publisher asks the reader’s indulgence for typographical errors unavoidable in the
exceptional circumstances. S.B. ³

The first edition of _Ulysses_ is excused as an unfinished, flawed text by this bibliographical
intervention. It is condemned in advance as an imperfect rendition of authorial intentions.
Clearly, this book is not consubstantial to the intentions of its author. Added once the text
had been type-set, the note, a kind of colophon, is a post-partum supplement to the book
which struggles to finally subordinate the text contained within to the framing figure of the
author. In hindsight, this has been a remarkably successful manoeuvre as readers have
exerted themselves to separate the image of the correct verbal text of _Ulysses_ from the
corruptions borne by the circumstances of first publication.

Throughout the narrative of _Ulysses_, attention is drawn to the capacity for printed texts,
produced under exceptional circumstances, to misrepresent their author’s intentions, for
material forms to corrupt their ideal types. The note asserts a schism between the printed
text and authorial intention. This schism is anxiously anticipated by the text, particularly in
‘Aeolus’ and ‘Scylla and Charybdis,’ episodes in which the composition and production of

³ This note appears on an unnumbered page of the first edition of _Ulysses_, the recto immediately following the
title page.
literary texts are foregrounded. Although the colophon defers to a non-existent ideal form of the text, *Ulysses* does not support such an idealised account of literary production from which all error is expurgated. Exceptional circumstances and the errors they introduce are a vital element of the book’s literariness, an index of its departure from literary models entirely orchestrated by authors and the dream of the ‘formless spiritual.’ The meaning of *Ulysses* is bound together on first publication: the transformation from manuscript to print makes a solid monument of composition, a tomb for its author. The signs of a hand like Blake’s on the facsimile pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* are invisible on the pages of the first edition of *Ulysses*, and necessarily so. At every turn, *Ulysses* relies on the aesthetic distance and appearance of objectivity mandated by print. The tensions and errors of the manuscript and the author are sublimated in the book. The publisher’s note draws attention to their presence and necessary repression in the printed text. Without the errata lists issued with later impressions and editions, the typographical idiosyncrasies of the first edition speak for themselves, freed from external standards of correctness.

The colophon prompts the expectation that the text will be flawed and full of perceptible typographical errors. The ‘exceptional circumstances’ referred to describe the revision, transcription and correction of the manuscript, and its composition by French printers. The colophon does not only function as an apology for errors that might interrupt the reader, it effectively serves to destabilise the verbal text of the book, bringing into question whether the orthographical novelties which are so important to the style of *Ulysses* are deliberately placed, or printer’s errors. Determining the standing of textual error is complicated by the appearance of error as a stylistic device and deliberate literary effect, an ambiguity
heightened by the colophon. An early reader, Robert Forrest Wilson registers this confusion:

> It is full of typographical errors, although one can never be certain in ‘Ulysses’ whether a printing affront is a mistake or one of Mr Joyce’s eccentricities — what his followers call his originalities.⁴

One of the originalities of *Ulysses* is that typographical errors are part and parcel of the textual bargain, complicating any attempts to clean up or purify the text. To be sure, the colophon is *a mea culpa* but it draws attention to the *felix culpa* of the text. Publication synthesises deliberate and inadvertent error into the integral form of the book. To the bibliographically untutored eye, these errors are indistinguishable. The first edition of *Ulysses* declares its complicity with the technologies of its realisation (and corruption). The errors of the first edition are thus figuratively integrated into the book and disjunct from both the author and the process of composition. The fallen letters in *Ulysses* have a significant function. They mark not textual corruption but the lack of final authorial control over the printed page, the displacement of literary authority from the author to the book.

Sylvia Beach’s note has inaugurated a tradition of editorial disclaimers to *Ulysses* which dislocate the form of the first edition from the final intentions of publisher and author. Importantly, it is the publisher who speaks for the author: a direct and literal address from the author or narrator of *Ulysses* is unimaginable. The request for indulgence, a remission of sin, places the reader as the judge of a text whose earthly form is corrupt, an ineluctable consequence of publication. Just as the physical form of the first edition cannot be easily categorised, the colophon immediately alerts the reader that the production of the book and its contents are also out of the ordinary. There can be no innocent approach to *Ulysses*. Its

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⁴ Robert Forrest Wilson, ‘Paris for Young Art,’ *Bookman* 61, no. 4 (June 1925): 405.
itinerant textual history and exemplary literary standing are flagged in every edition, either by means of a rudimentary disclaimer like that which appeared in the first edition, a list of previous editions of *Ulysses*, or a long and detailed editorial introduction. A certain amount of textual indulgence is required to read any edition of *Ulysses*, the ideal of the correct text of Joyce’s work inimical to the always flawed blue body of the first edition.
b) Into Print: The Publication of *Ulysses*

*Ulysses* was first published in Paris on the 22nd February, 1922 and is based on a day eighteen years hence. In the intervening period, *Ulysses* occupied a linked sequence of preliminary manuscript and printed forms, with manuscript and print co-existing on the compositional page for most of the process. In charting the transition of *Ulysses* from manuscript to print, what becomes apparent is that composition and publication can only be theoretically separated. Episodes which fall later in the book were being written as the earlier ones were being printed and much of the manuscript, the text handwritten by Joyce, was written not onto a *tabula rasa*, but onto pages already printed. There is no continuous manuscript of *Ulysses* or any other integral physical precedent: the first tangible and complete version of the text is that which was published in 1922.

The first fourteen episodes of *Ulysses* were published from 1918 in the New York based *Little Review*, under the editorship of Jane Heap and Margaret Anderson. The serialised appearance of *Ulysses* in the *Little Review* was halted when obscenity charges were successfully brought against the magazine in 1919. Negotiations in train with Ezra Pound and Harriet Weaver to introduce *Ulysses* to a British audience by serialisation in the *Egoist* also collapsed at this point. Following the court’s finding of obscenity in 1921, to print or publish the text in an English speaking country was to risk indictment.

Enter Sylvia Beach. Contracting to publish *Ulysses* in Paris in June, 1921, Beach served as Joyce’s publisher, editor and secretary for the rest of the decade. Her memoir, *Shakespeare and Company*, is almost wholly devoted to the difficulties of publishing *Ulysses*.\(^5\) The

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initial prospectus released by Beach promised the publication of *Ulysses* in Autumn, 1921 but the revision of the text consumed a further three months and the book did not appear until February, 1922, after nine months of contractual gestation. The book was printed in Dijon by Maurice Darantiere whilst Joyce corrected and amended *placards* and page proofs in Paris. The corrections add ninety thousand words to the manuscript, which finally measures around three hundred and twenty thousand words. Each newly printed *placard* proposes a new indelible page for revision. The fragmentation of composition by the gradual appearance of the revised proofs signals the encroachment of print, and the submission of the manuscript and author to the final form of the book, whose final incarnation is anxiously anticipated.

The versions of *Ulysses* presented to the editors of the *Little Review* and to Sylvia Beach differ substantially from that eventually published in February 1922. As has been well documented, the enormous additions to *Ulysses*, made under the auspices of revision in the months preceding publication, delayed the eventual appearance of the book and changed its final shape. These revisions constitute the core of the bibliographical complexity which has dogged Joyce scholars. The frantic movement of Joyce’s pen and pencil over the proof pages delivered again and again by Maurice Darantiere records the author’s efforts to perfect the printed form of the text before the finality of first publication. Unlike Thackeray, Joyce did not easily relinquish his pages to the press, electing to keep on revising them after their appearance in serial form. In this way, the printed page itself becomes the foundation of the later stages of composition.
The *placards* and proof pages present an odd bibliographical hybrid in which the printed text and handwritten annotations and corrections are accorded equal authority. *Placards* upon which eight pages of text were printed appeared first, followed by proof pages.\(^6\) It is upon these hybrid pages that the growth of *Ulysses* is graphically represented and the conflict between manuscript and printed letterforms clearly visible. Figure 5, overleaf, reproduces the first placard pulled for the ‘Aeolus’ chapter, based on the text published in the *Little Review*, and demonstrates the continuity of printed and manuscript letter forms on the page. The revisions to ‘Aeolus’ break up the convention of a continuous narrative, fragmenting the text on the page. Michael Groden emphasises the radical textual development of this episode, arguing that ‘the composition of ‘Aeolus’ serves as a microcosm of the entire book.’\(^7\) The three stages of revision identified by Groden in ‘Aeolus’ are an historical sequence made simultaneous to each other on first publication. In ‘Aeolus,’ Joyce’s later revisions constitute a strategic reorganisation which bring the episodes published four years earlier in the *Little Review* into line with the now developed scheme for the rest of the book, securing the Homeric parallels and reinforcing the symbolic scheme within the episodes and across the whole book. It is a consolidation of style, rather than of narrative content which establishes the book as a self-reflexive entity. All the headlines in this episode were added when the pages were printed in *placards*, as were the rattling trams framing the episode, rhetorical set-pieces and most of the references to wind. Scrutinising the proofs and *placards*, it is possible to witness errors which were introduced into the proofs during composition and disappear before first publication, like

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Figure 5: James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ‘Aeolus,’ first placard.

Grossbooted draymen rolled barrels dullthudding out of Prince's stores
and bumped them up on the brewery float. On the brewery float bumped
dullthudding barrels rolled by grossbooted draymen out of Prince's stores.
— There it is, Red Murray said. Alexander Keyes.
— Just cut it out, will you? Mr. Bloom said, and I'll take it round to the
Telegraph office.
The door of Ruttledge's office creaked again,
Red Murray's long hands sliced out the advertisement from the newspaper in four clean strokes.
— I'll go through the printing works, Mr. Bloom said taking the cut
— Of course, if he wants a pen, Red Murray said earnestly. A pen behind
his ear, we can do him one.
— Right, Mr. Bloom said, with a nod. I'll rub that in.
We 3
Red Murray touched Mr. Bloom's arm with the shears and whispered:
— Brayden.
Mr. Bloom turned and saw the liveried porter raise his lettered cap as a
stately figure entered from Prince's Street. Dullthudding Guinness's barrels. It
passed stately up the staircase steered by an umbrella, a solemn beardframed face. The broad cloth back ascended each step: back. All his brains are in the
nape of his neck, Simon Dedalus says? Folds of neck, fat, neck, fat, neck.
— Don't you think his face is like Our Saviour? Red Murray whispered.
The door of Ruttledge's office whispered: ee: ere.
Our Saviour: beardframed oval face: talking in the dusk Mary, Martha.
Steered by an umbrella sword to the footsteps: Maria the tenor.
the headline ‘A DAYFATHER’ (118). Introduced into the text in the first placard and correctly set in bold face, the headline appears in the third reset placard as ‘A DAYTFAHER’ and is not corrected until the final stage of proofs. Each new setting of type alters the text, introducing the author’s corrections and a raft of new errors. These developments appear as equivalent forms on the page of the first edition, the history of the text flattened onto the page. See Figure 6, overleaf. The intimate relationships between writing and print witnessed on the pages of the placards are severed on first publication.

On the placards and proof pages, Joyce corrects the text and adds to it, altering the visual and literary disposition of the text to fit the page. Figure 5 records both corrections to proof and substantial additions. Three sets of placards and three sets of proof pages were pulled for the ‘Aeolus’ episode, a comparison of the first page of this episode at the first placard stage and the version printed in 1922 reveals the extent to which Ulysses was transformed through the publication process. It is ‘proof fever’ (117) indeed, a phrase added to ‘Aeolus’ relatively late in the piece, on the first pulling of proofs. Not all errors were eliminated, note for example, the spelling error ‘lettecards,’ a misplacement of the manuscript entry ‘lettercards,’ added at the third placard stage.

Joyce orders and reorganises the printed page with his pen, as if to re-inscribe the proofs with his authority. The revisions and additions to the manuscript of Ulysses, as much as they assert an intimate relationship between Joyce and the printed page, do not represent the author’s final vision of the page. Authorial intention is embodied in the book which the author intended to be in print and in circulation. Just as each new print run of proof pages

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8 See James Joyce Archive, vol. 18, pp. 7, 17 and 26; vol. 23, pp. 11, 27 and 44.
IN THE HEART OF THE HIBERNIAN METROPOLIS

Before Nelson’s pillar trams slowed, shunted, changed trolley started for Blackrock, Kingstown and Dalkey, Clonskea, Rathgar and Terenure, Palmerston park and upper Rathmines, Sandymount, Green Rathmines, Ringsend, and Sandymount Tower, Harold’s Cross. The hoarse Dublin United Tramway Company’s timekeeper bawled them off:
— Rathgar and Terenure!
— Come on, Sandymount Green!
Right and left parallel clanging ringing a doubledecker and a singledeck moved from their railheads, swerved to the down line, glided parallel.
— Start, Palmerston park!

THE WEARER OF THE CROWN

Under the porch of the general post office shoeblacks called and polished. Parked in North Prince’s street His Majesty’s vermillion mailcarts, bearing on their sides the royal initials, E. R., received loudly flung sacks of letters, postcards, lettecards, parcels, insured and paid, for local, provincial, British and overseas delivery.

GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS

Grossbooted draymen rolled barrels dullthudding out of Prince’s stores and bumped them up on the brewery float. On the brewery float bumped dullthudding barrels rolled by grossbooted draymen out of Prince’s stores.
— There it is, Red Murray said: Alexander Keyes.
supersedes the previous, the first edition consolidates all these stages of revision into the synthetic object necessary for readers. The corrections convey the author’s anxious awareness that once the book is in print, its basic form cannot be altered. This is not an illusion of coherence. The bound book is an intractable material representation of the complete text, an actual form which did not exist prior to publication. *Ulysses* can only be viewed as a work in progress up to the publication date, at which point the dynamic relationships between written and printed letters are wholly absorbed by the closed system of the book.

The manuscript and each successive proof-stage is supplanted by the next set of proofs presented for Joyce to correct, following the logic of the series described in ‘Ithaca:’

To reflect that each one who enters imagines himself to be the first to enter whereas he is always the last term of a preceding series even if the last term of a succeeding one, each imagining himself to be first, last, only and alone whereas, he is neither first nor last nor only nor alone in a series originating in and repeated to infinity. (683)

The forward logic of composition is sequential, each new stage provides the secure basis for the next term of the series to emerge. The original term in this historical series is not the author, himself preceded by all the authors and texts which feed into *Ulysses*, a ‘series originating and repeated to infinity.’ There can be no first or last text of *Ulysses*. The variation between the first and subsequent editions sustains the ongoing sequence in which each new stage is a function or derivative of the previous. Establishing the sequentiality of manuscripts, proof pages and editions of *Ulysses* is fundamental to any editorial approach to the text. To turn back to the manuscripts, however, is to break the continuity of this sequence and hence to deny the history which secures the book such that the most recent term contains all predecessors. So imbricated are composition and publication that they are indivisible. To separate them by the postulation of a best-text is to position the book within
an altogether new paradigm of production. Rather than the publication of a text interfering with its composition, the understanding of textual provenance advanced by the New Bibliographers, in *Ulysses*, the composition of the text interrupts its publication. It is towards the faceless production of the book, the final term, ‘cast by Unnam’d forms’ that composition is directed.

The manuscript of *Ulysses* was physically fragmented and dislocated as episodes in various states of revision moved between Paris, Dijon and New York, and Joyce corrected and added to proof pages. These episodes combine to form a continuous whole only on first publication. Once Sylvia Beach agreed to publish *Ulysses* in June 1921, there is no doubt that Joyce’s process of revision was wholly oriented towards the composition of a book. By the time Beach contracted to publish the book in 1921, the manuscripts already printed in the *Little Review* had been sold to John Quinn and were housed in New York. The sale of the manuscripts is certainly a sign of Joyce’s impecunity but also strongly suggests that once the manuscripts of *Ulysses* were set in type, their purpose had been served. The author did not retain a continuous holograph manuscript of his text for reference. Joyce corrected from memory and at each new impression, the previous manuscript or proof sheet is made redundant. Joyce exerted himself to buy back the manuscript from Quinn but it was eventually sold to A. W. Rosenbach and has since been referred to as the Rosenbach manuscript. The standing of the Rosenbach manuscript as a genuine first copy of the text, rather than a fair copy, has been in dispute but, as the extent of the proofing revisions
reveal, at best it can claim to be a provisional version of the text, a composite document rather than a continuous representation of an unbroken image of the text.⁹

The typesetting of *Ulysses* has been understood to have introduced a raft of new errors into the text because of the complex nature of these revisions, and because it was undertaken by French compositors who were unable to read the English text, persons of ‘no literary interest’ typically castigated by Greg and McKerrow. Jean-Michel Rabaté argues convincingly that the setting of the type of *Ulysses* in Dijon resulted in a less corrupt text because the French compositors would have not been tempted to normalise or correct the text.¹⁰ A book printed by compositors who are unable to read it is reduced to a set of unidentifiable letter-forms, an appropriate first imprint for a book which so tentatively submits to the press. The Darantiere printing house was well established in French literary circles as a printer of fine books for collectors in the late nineteenth century, and as a printer of *avant-garde* French books, including those associated published by the bookshop ‘La Maison des Amis des Livres,’ across the Rue Odéon from ‘Shakespeare and Company.’ Darantiere was a job printer with literary contacts in Paris who was able to print *Ulysses* more cheaply than the Parisian printers. *Ulysses* was not the first complex *avant-garde* text to be published by Darantiere, although it was the first of its length in English. After the success of *Ulysses*, many other books in English were printed in Dijon, including *The Making of Americans* and most other Contact Editions. Although these

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books are not entirely without typographical error, the accuracy of French compositors has not been raised as a serious bibliographical point.

What is more exceptional about the publication of *Ulysses* than its printing by a French firm is the extraordinary licence granted Joyce to revise the text. No editorial limit was imposed on the composition of *Ulysses* by Sylvia Beach. She writes to Joyce in a 1927 letter:

> The truth is that as my affection and admiration for you are unlimited so is the work you pile on my shoulders.\(^{11}\)

Of the many limits transgressed by *Ulysses*, its transgression of the print deadline and the proprieties of the author-publisher relationship is the most generative. The valorisation of every single word of *Ulysses* is a tradition which begins with Sylvia Beach. If Joyce’s full manuscript intentions are not reflected in the first edition, it is surely not for want of revision or close attention. That Joyce closely and repeatedly verified the progress from manuscript to book is not seriously in question. It is a reassuringly comprehensive process of revision which validates and accounts for the position of every word of the first edition. Ellmann weighs twelve kilos of composition material for *Ulysses*, solid evidence of the author’s devotion to the text.\(^{12}\) If it is proper literary behaviour to intensely revise manuscripts, Joyce’s attention to and anxiety over the words on the page affirm the literary status of the work.

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The errors that slip through the net are those which eluded Joyce and his assistants by their appearance of legibility, blending into the text. The style of *Ulysses* is particularly able to absorb such errors, playing upon linguistic variation and corruption throughout. The publication process is a vital component of the composition of the book and as such, the errors of the first edition – those overlooked by Joyce, and introduced by his copyists and the compositors in the Darantiere printshop – are an important reflection of its evolution, as significant as the historical, literary and biographical parallels consolidated throughout the composition process.

Jack Dalton and Philip Gaskell have both argued that the first edition is that which contains the least typographical errors and that the editorial history of the book, within Joyce’s lifetime and beyond it, has served to introduce more errors into the text, rather than to correct them. My concern is neither the nature of these errors nor their correction but their significance to an understanding both of the composition of *Ulysses* and the model of literary production to which the text finally, albeit reluctantly, concedes.

Although Joyce attended to the typographical errors of *Ulysses* in later editions, it was the first edition which held its author’s attention most intensely and fully occupied his energies. A second impression of the book was printed later in 1922 for the Egoist Press and was issued with a preliminary list of errata to correct some of the typesetting errors of the first edition. The fourth reprint in January, 1924 contained another errata insert. The eighth reprint, in May, 1926, is the second edition of *Ulysses*. The text was entirely reset and

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incorporated significant revisions and corrections, which were retained until the eleventh impression in 1930, the last published by Shakespeare and Company. Further revisions were undertaken for a 1932 volume, the fourth edition, published by the Odyssey Press in Germany which contained a final list of errata compiled by Joyce. The publishing relationship between Joyce and Sylvia Beach dissolved soon after *Ulysses* was freed for publication in the United States by Judge Woolsey’s 1934 decision that the book was not obscene. Beach relinquished her publisher’s rights to Random House but the basis for the unlimited American edition was a pirated edition, the third unauthorised edition, published by Samuel Roth rather than one of those published by Shakespeare and Company. The edition published for release in the United Kingdom in 1936 by John Lane was set from the fourth edition, reflecting the last corrections made by the author.

The author’s return to the book promotes the ideal of a correct text wholly determined by a unified subjectivity, independent of exceptional circumstances, an ideal which the text itself repudiates. The cumulative revisions break the sequential movement of composition and breach the division between author and text marked by publication, harking back to a Romantic model of textual production, in which the text is continuous to its author, existing in a time out of time. These corrections are, however, of a fundamentally different order to those undertaken before publication. Joyce’s corrections after 1922 emend the printed text but do not substantially revise, reorganise or add to it, suggesting the basic formal integrity attained by the first edition. The multiple re-settings of type do suggest a reluctance to

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15 I rely on the stemma compiled by Jeri Johnson which clearly displays the sequence of editions in *Ulysses: The 1922 Text,* Appendix B, pp. 740-745.
release the first published form of the book from the author’s grasp but do not significantly undermine this formal integrity. Further, as later editions, most importantly the Gabler edition, have revealed, the corrections administered by Joyce do not bring the text into line with the manuscript text. For all the correction of *Ulysses* by its author, no edition published in his lifetime has been accepted as an absolute version of the text.

Joyce monitored the reception of *Ulysses* closely, withholding the scheme for the novel until several years after its publication. Joyce’s close involvement with the writing of two important books of criticism – *James Joyce’s Ulysses: A Study* (1930) and *James Joyce and the Making of Ulysses* (1934) – respectively penned by his friends Stuart Gilbert and Frank Budgen undermines the professed autonomy of *Ulysses* from its author.\(^{16}\) Their titles make it clear who is orchestrating the meaning of their contents. Other influential early readers of *Ulysses* also corresponded with Joyce on the meanings of his long book, and here I am thinking of Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Paul Valéry and Carlo Linati in particular, as well as Gilbert and Budgen. Early criticism of *Ulysses* holds tight to the imprimatur of the author and certainly those readings ratified by Joyce have been marked by an extraordinary longevity. Fidelity to Joyce’s expressed intentions has framed both the critical and textual reception of *Ulysses*.

The imperfections of the slightly shabby first edition of *Ulysses* suggest a sense of urgency and dynamism to publication, that getting the book into print is more important than particular details and errors. The valorisation of every word of the first edition of *Ulysses*, evinced by the close attention of the author to the manuscript and typescript at

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every stage of composition, implies that the Ready to Print text of the first edition substantiates Joyce’s most basic intention: for publication to bind composition into a book. *Ulysses* enters into an economy which it recognises as bound by historical contingency: the print deadline. As if in response to an atmosphere of acute intellectual relativity, the text is standardised on publication, shaped into meaningful and recognisable blocks of literary text. The rushed bibliographical form of the first edition of *Ulysses* corresponds with its agonised rendition of the transition from manuscript to printed form. It is a book which defines its literary self wholly within printed parameters.
c) Producing the Narrative

(i) ‘Aeolus’: Bloom and the Press

The transformations of manuscripts and itinerant sheets of paper into printed texts are closely monitored in ‘Aeolus.’ It is Bloom who is most intrigued by the production of printed texts and most attentive to the productivity of typographical slips and errors. Submitting a text to the printing press entails its complete transformation and, as Bloom is aware, standing too close to the machine runs the risk of destroying the observer. In ‘Aeolus,’ Bloom recognises that the print shop has replaced the scriptorium as the modern scene of textual reproduction, and that finally, it is the printing press which will determine the form of a text. I read this episode as a commentary on the composition and production of *Ulysses*. The pages which are buffeted around the newspaper office are analogous to the manuscripts and proof-pages circulating between Paris, New York and Dijon. In ‘Aeolus,’ Bloom is drawn to contemplate the printing press and appreciates its total control of printed texts, from which authors and any other human subject are alienated. It is into this mechanical economy that *Ulysses* enters. The proliferation of visual puns and printed effects in this episode and throughout *Ulysses* is a sign of the book’s imminent capitulation to a mode of textual production which finally relies on the press and not on the author.

‘Aeolus’ describes the exceptional circumstances which produce *Ulysses* and characterises the press, through Bloom’s eyes, as that which finally controls and generates the text. The sovereignty and power of the press stand in ironic contrast to the debate which occurs in the inner sanctum of the newspaper office. Printed texts are distant from the ‘formless spiritual’ eulogised by Professor Mac Hugh, all are second hand and dislocated from the
author by the time they are fed into the press. The material forms of the printed page are highly visible and it is to these that an account of the literary text of *Ulysses* must attend.

The winds that Aeolus gives to Odysseus are let out of the bag in this episode. The sails of the ship which must be filled with wind for Odysseus and his crew to return home are transformed into the pages of *Ulysses*, blown between ports until they reach their final destination: the printing press. The wind gives the pages rhetorical gusto and provides sufficient momentum to blow them together and arrange them. The episode enacts a scene of constant textual dissemination. Bloom gets ‘caught in a whirl of wild newsboys’ (140), the Palace of the Winds is the office of the *Freeman’s Journal and National Press* and Aeolus the erratic editor. The winds of Aeolus literally fling the text across the page, the bold face headlines breaking up the narrative into apparently arbitrary episodes, pieces of textual flotsam. Windy puns, termed ‘Aeolisms’ by Stuart Gilbert, are scattered through the text and enhance the environment of movement, in which pieces of paper never stay in their place.

It is not only the gods generating the wind which blows around this episode, the characters speak, shout, argue and banter with one another incessantly. The *techne* of the episode is rhetoric and the talk of the characters is breezy. ‘He wants just a little puff’ (140), Bloom tells the Editor, exerting himself to keep the ships of commerce afloat. Such is the rhetorical flourish of this episode that Joyce chose excerpts from it for recording in 1923. The rhetorical structures which are strewn through the episode imply the imposition of an artificial form upon content and draw attention to the objective manipulation of language for literary effect. The episode relies, however, on the spectacle of the page to display the
dispersal of the text by the headlines and the winds of Aeolus. Reading ‘Aeolus’ aloud does not capture the imago of the text. It is the headlines, bold faced and in capital letters which separate and arrange the scraps of narrative, evoking the forms of mass media and bringing the appearance of the episode into accord with its content. The visual consistency of the page and the attention-grabbing headlines interrupt the continuous flow of narrative, as if placed by another hand, a sign that it is printing which determines the final form of composition. The space of the page is defined by the windy movement through it. The plan of the newspaper’s partitioned offices is drafted onto the page, its architecture described by the interplay of head-lines and solid blocks of text. The spatial organisation of the text – its visual rhetoric – is a vital supplement to the windy rhetoric of the characters and secures the text to the page. Composition, as the placards and proofs show, blows the text all over the page; on publication, its place is set and resistant to any further authorial gusts.

Every surface in this chapter is a potential text, already inscribed by another hand – ‘Who the deuce scrawled all over these walls with matches?’ (118) – and the characters carefully track the movement of their chosen texts – letters, telegrams, articles, reviews, advertisements, books – towards the press. The printing press is the terminus of the House of Keyes advertisement, Garrett Deasy’s letter and Patrick Dignam’s funeral notice. Bloom worries that it will consume him too. *Ulysses* revels in the quotation, citation and allusion to other texts. The dashes and italics used to signal quotation also demarcate direct speech and the characters’ streams of awareness. The narrative is a paratactic collage of quotation, its elements typographically indistinguishable from each other, rendered equivalent forms by the composition of type. There were certainly no footnotes appended to editions of
*Ulysses* published in its author’s lifetime. Quoted texts are of equal status to the reflections and utterances of characters in the narrative.

‘Aeolus’ begins and ends with the rattle of trams around Dublin; the noise of industry and machines is incessant throughout. It is the clanking, thumping and ‘sllt’ of the printing press which determines the rhythm of this episode and, as Bloom recognises, the form of any printed text. When he tells Red Murray, ‘I’ll go through the printing works’ (113), Bloom indicates not only his path through the episode but the fate of all characters and texts in the book: to be processed by the press. The machine is personified as a productive body, consuming and generating texts apparently independently:

> Sllt. The nethermost deck of the first machine jogged forward its flyboard sith sllt the first batch of quirefolded papers. Sllt. Almost human the way it sllt to call attention. Doing its level best to speak. That door too sllt creaking, asking to be shut. Everything speaks in its own way. Sllt. (117)

‘Everything speaks in its own way;’ there are an infinite number of texts and voices for this narrative to accumulate to itself. As such, ‘Aeolus’ provides the reader with a text for every possible occasion: ‘obituary notices, pubs’ ads, speeches, divorce suits, found drowned’ (118). The sibilant rhythms of this catalogue echo the ‘sllt’ of the printing press, calling attention to the rhythms imposed on the narrative by its composition and publication. It is the siren song of the press which speaks to Bloom and the reader, transforming the disparate collection of texts gathered in the newspaper office into printed pages. It is an ‘almost human’ process but finally, authors, like readers of *Ulysses*, must relinquish the fiction of a human subject writing and producing the text. Just as the printing press ‘speaks in its own way,’ the cap, the gramophone, the gasjet, the moth and the flybill, and the fan are all assigned speaking roles in ‘Circe’ (474, 478, 480, 491, 495). The
quiddity of things and texts are the foundations of the narrative, signaling the aesthetic autonomy of the book from the unifying figure of an author or narrator.

Bloom is both intrigued and repelled by the printing press and its capacity to endlessly consume and produce texts:

Mr Bloom, glancing sideways up from the cross he had made, saw the foreman’s sallow face, think he has a touch of jaundice, and beyond the obedient reels feeding in huge webs of paper. Clank it. Clank it. Miles of it unreeled. What becomes of it after? O, wrap up meat, parcels: various uses, thousand and one things. (116)

‘Thing’ is an anagram of night, giving ‘thousand and one nights,’ the endless and continuous narrative produced by the press. These ‘webs of paper’ are destined to ‘wrap up meat,’ finally containing and surpassing the flesh which produces them. Bloom pauses to watch ‘a typesetter neatly distributing type’ (118), imposing order on the chaotic scene.

Like Blake’s method of illuminated printing, typesetting must invert the text to finally print its reverse image: ‘Reads it backwards first. Quickly he does it. Must require some practice that. mangiD. kcirtaP’ (118). It is inconceivable that a text so processed return to its original form.

Curious, Bloom imagines falling into the press and being completely consumed, like the reels of paper: ‘Machines. Smash a man to atoms if they got him caught’ (114). The printing press flattens everything it processes, indiscriminately impressing the image of the text, already reversed by the typesetter:

The machines clanked in three four time. Thump thump thump. Now if he got paralysed there and no one knew how to stop them they’d clank on and on the same, print it over and over and up and back. Monkeydoodle the whole thing. Want a cool head. (115)
The waltzing machine imposes its own regular rhythm, visible in ‘Aeolus’ as headlines, which are beyond the control of the ad-man. Mechanical reproduction proceeds oblivious to the presence of authors and clanks on regardless of their presence or proximity. To prepare documents for the press requires a ‘cool head.’ Of the author is demanded objectivity and an awareness of the transformations that all texts must undergo when they enter the print shop.

J. J. Molloy, passing through the newspaper office asks, ‘Is the editor to be seen?’ (120). In ‘Aeolus’ the intervention of the newspaper editor can be clearly discerned, cutting up and reconstructing the text with ‘scissors and paste’ (113). The narrative voice of *Ulysses* is termed the ‘Arranger’ by Hugh Kenner with particular reference to ‘Aeolus.’ In this episode, the composition of the text clearly appears as the work of an editor or ‘Arranger,’ recording, organising and filing scattered notes from disparate sources. Editorial and authorial subjectivity are irrelevant to this mode of composition, the cutting and pasting together of a set of pre-existing documents. The vaudeville ‘guv’nor,’ another fallen authority figure, has left the building and the reader must make do with the decisions of the Arranger to recompose the notes. In turn, the Arranger can organise the material given to him – all those texts delivered to the newspaper office – following circular laws like those described by Vladimir Propp as governing folklore:

> The nonobligatory character of external motivations is inherent in all types of folklore, both prose and poetry. Logic is possible, but not mandatory. The artistic logic of the narrative does not coincide with the logic of causal thought. It is the action that is primary, not the reason for it. In comparing variants of the same plot, we discover that the motives for identical actions can be very different.¹⁷

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External reality manifestly shapes the progress of *Ulysses* through Bloomsday but the passage of the characters through this plot does not directly correspond to a causative reality, nor does it follow the guiding figure of a single character or narrator. The layering of parallel plots requires the reader to determine the motives of the characters. There is no author or unifying narrator to impose a logical structure on the text. Transposing Propp’s comments onto the textual standing of *Ulysses*, it is the book which is primary, and not the reason for it: the action of the text cannot be rationalised beyond the covers of the book.

The function of the absent author is as of an editor, recording, organising and arranging the voices of its characters, understood as both textual subjects and printed letters. Authorship is distributed through the text and detached from its scriptive, subjective origins. *Ulysses* does not represent a singular author whose intentions are inviolate, rather, everything and everyone ‘speaks in its own way.’ Propp relies upon the Russian *sjužét* in describing the morphology of the folklore, rendered as ‘plot’ in English. The translation loses the sense in which the nascent subject is at the centre of the plot. It is the characters, textual subjects, who direct its *sjužét*. As such, the content of the narrative is inseparable from its form and structure. If, as Propp writes, ‘the highest goal of every science is to discover laws,’ those discovered by *Ulysses* and Propp himself do not serve to order but to disorder the conventions of literary usage and narrative authority.

Readers can, and have equated the authority of James Joyce with both Stephen and Bloom. Within the text, it is the relationships of Stephen and Bloom to each other, two variants of the same plot, which are more important than the relationship of Stephen and Bloom to

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18 See Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, p. 76, for closer comments on this usage.
19 Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, p. 68.
James Joyce. The biographical turn towards two different characters effectively divides the author in two. The narrative voice, its identity, location and origin all shift throughout *Ulysses*. This effect is not merely literary ventriloquism – a narrator urging the characters to speak – but the occupation of the book by an entirely new set of voices. The documentary verification of the details of Bloomsday by Joyce indicate not a fidelity to an original realist scene, but a desire to let each character and object speak for itself. These fictional characters are the function of a narrative which constantly acknowledges its contingency and reveals its influences.

— Bosh! Stephen said rudely. A man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery. (182)

Unfortunately for Stephen, there is no infallible man of genius actually or ideally writing *Ulysses*. Error is vital to the realisation of the book as a product of fallible characters and technologies which are beyond their control. Stephen’s refusal to identify genius with error is an ironic reflection on printed error in the text. Men of genius are no more infallible than printers, and the manual and copying errors of James Joyce pervade the text of the first edition *Ulysses* as readily as those of the compositors in Dijon. The manipulation of the appearance of error is a ‘portal of discovery’ in the text. Typographical errors in the first edition are continuous with the deliberate representation of printed error as a literary effect.

Walking through the streets of Dublin in ‘Lestrygonians’, Bloom is confronted with the spectacle of typographical error creating a pun which only works visually: ‘POST NO BILLS. POST I I O PILLS’ (146). This aperçu is a ludic lesson on typographical error and it is readers, not listeners, who are in on the joke. The errors of the first edition offer no greater
challenge to the legibility of *Ulysses* than those which intrigue Bloom. He displays a
resignation towards them, enjoying them in a way that Stephen and editors of *Ulysses* are
unable to countenance. Bloom repeats the visual gag of the House of Keyes advertisement
dismissed by the editor of the *Freeman’s Journal* but included by the Arranger of *Ulysses*
as a headline which draws attention to the pun, ‘HOUSE OF KEY(E)S’ (116). He observes
that printed language can be distorted to twist apart one’s own name, but can also create
encounters and characters where there have been none:

Nettled not a little by *L. Boom* (as it incorrectly stated) and the line of bitched type,
but tickled to death simultaneously by C. P. M’Coy and Stephen Dedalus, B.A., who
were conspicuous, needless to say, by their total absence (to say nothing of M’Intosh),
L. Boom pointed it out to his companion B. A., engaged in stifling another yawn, half
nervousness, not forgetting the usual crop of nonsensical howlers of misprints. (602)

Bloom is ‘tickled to death’ by the errors in the newspaper. This ‘line of bitched type’
provides an opportunity for another spectral encounter between Bloom and Stephen,
L. Boom and B. A. ‘The usual crop of nonsensical howlers of misprints’ is what Bloom
expects from printed texts: they cannot exist in any other state. Bloom worries about ‘the
usual splash page of letterpress’ (608) but seems resigned to its economy: ‘The pink
edition, extra sporting, of the *Telegraph*, tell a graphic lie, lay, as luck would have it, beside
his elbow…’ (601). The ‘graphic lie’ of the printed page is a quotidian event and one
which Bloom embraces, recognising the delivery of all texts by proxy.

The narrative asks in ‘Ithaca’:

> In what common study did their mutual reflections merge?
The increasing simplification traceable from the Egyptian epigraphic hieroglyphs to
the Greek and Roman alphabets and the anticipation of modern, telegraphic code in the cuneiform inscriptions (Semitic) and the virgular quinquecostate writing (Celtic). (641)
The history of literary technology is covered by *Ulysses* and attention is constantly drawn to the history of its own production. In the excerpt above, the interplay between written and printed forms on the *placards* of *Ulysses* is obliquely referenced. The typographical pun, the fallen letter, suggests that the characters which have mistakenly fallen upon the pages of *Ulysses* are anticipated in advance of publication. They are a necessary consequence of the historical development of printed letterforms, and the briefer history of the composition of *Ulysses*.

The detachment of the professor and editor from the exceptional circumstances which surround them predicts the attitude towards composition of *Ulysses* taken by many scholars. In ‘Aeolus,’ it is clear that textual production is not the work of human subjects, but the product of a machine into which texts drawn together, cut, pasted and corrected by an author acting as an editor are fed. The reliance upon the mechanisms of the printing press to order and disorder the pages of ‘Aeolus’ is a reminder that *Ulysses* too submits to this mode of production. Like the arrangement of documents blowing around the newspaper office, the composition and publication of *Ulysses* involves the collation, arrangement and transposition of manuscripts and secondary texts to be finally reproduced by the press.

(ii) ‘Scylla and Charybdis’: *Stephen and Textual Corruption*

The certain logic of material reproduction witnessed by Bloom in ‘Aeolus’ is confused and refused by Stephen in ‘Scylla and Charybdis,’ as he attempts to reconcile a materialist world view with his veneration of the productive capacity of the artistic imagination and his inveterate suspicion of desire, the female body and materiality. Drawing together the world
of the artist and the words he writes, Stephen attempts to excise spiritual and physical
corruption from his account of literary production. Stephen’s preoccupation with and
efforts to deny maternity and sexual desire are foregrounded in ‘Scylla and Charybdis,’ a
preview of the narrative progress into Bella Cohen’s house. In ‘Circe,’ Stephen continues
to berate the infidelity of women: ‘We have shrewridden Shakespeare and henpecked
Socrates. Even the allwisest stagyrite was bitted, bridled and mounted by a light of love’
(411). His is an exclusively male account of genius which posits the artist as the infallible
father of a perfect text, substituting one patriarchal spiritual authority for another.
Stephen’s failures to hold to a material account of textual production and to the atheism he
professes are consistent with his denial of history throughout the book: ‘a nightmare from
which I am trying to awake.’ Whilst Stephen’s secular materialism collapses into idealism
through his elevation of the creative genius of the artist, the revelation of his ironic self-
deception, and the reliance of the narrative on material, physical modes of production
places *Ulysses* as precisely the kind of corrupt text that he denies.

In the discussion on the provenance of Shakespearean texts in the National Library,
Stephen’s argument commences in favour of historical determinism and closes with a
idealised portrait of the artist as a universal figure, able to transcend the ‘composition of
place’ (180) through art and so endlessly reproduce his own image. Initially, he is
positioned as the Aristotelian counter to Russell’s Platonism, rebuffing Russell’s suggestion
that ‘Art has to reveal to us ideas, formless spiritual essences’ (177) in pursuit of ideas
vested in form. Stephen re-enacts Elizabethan London and, trying to keep pace with
Darwin and the scientific humanism of the turn of the century, argues that Shakespeare and
his plays were determined by the social situation of the artist:
The son of a maltjobber and moneylender he was himself a cornjobber and money lender with ten tods of corn hoarded in the famine riots. His borrowers are no doubt those divers of worship mentioned by Chettle Falstaff who reported his uprightness of dealing. He sued a fellowplayer for the price of a few bags of malt and extracted his pound of flesh in interest for every money lent. (196)

In Stephen’s contrived account, which he confesses he does not believe, the ‘formless spiritual’ is compromised and circumscribed by historical circumstances. Art is therefore cognate with the life of the artist, its product an endless transcription of his experience:

— As we, or mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies, Stephen said, from day to day, their molecules shuttled to and fro, so does the artist weave and unweave his image. (186)

It is ‘mother Dana,’ Penelope and her parallel in Ulysses, Molly Bloom, who weave and unweave their bodies, not Stephen, the would-be artist. The text of Ulysses is embodied as a physical form, once shuttled into place by the printing press, it cannot be unwoven.

The figure of the cuckold is at the centre of Stephen’s theorisation of the provenance of Shakespearean texts: ‘Cuckoo’ (365). Stephen argues that Shakespeare identifies himself first with Hamlet’s father (whose role the playwright took in the first productions of Hamlet), cuckolded in death, rather than the prince Hamlet. Like Bloom, Stephen harbours jealous suspicions that the body which bears his book-child might be unfaithful, thus corrupting his textual offspring. Following Stephen, the genius of Shakespeare was led astray by his relationship with his wife, Ann Hathaway, like Molly Bloom and Penelope, left at home by the wandering artist. The alleged seduction and betrayal of Shakespeare by Ann Hathaway is at the heart of Stephen’s biographical analysis of Hamlet:

He chose badly? He was chosen, it seems to me. If others have their will Ann hath a way. By cock, she was to blame. She put the comether on him, sweet and twentysix. The greyeyed goddess who bends over the boy Adonis, stooping to conquer, as a prologue to the swelling act, is a boldfaced Stratford wench who tumbles in a cornfield a lover younger than herself.
And my turn? When? (183)
The audience in the library is impressed by Stephen’s rhetoric as he makes them accomplices in his rejection of the feminine but the reader remains aware of the tension between his argument and desire to be so seduced. Stephen’s conviction is betrayed by agenbite of inwit, remorse of conscience as his thoughts are drawn to the deathbed of his mother: the undeniable certainty of maternity and mortality.

In treating the author as the ghost in the text, Stephen abandons the determinist position he took at the beginning of the discussion. His revised stance echoes the Nicene creed, structuring the relationship between authors, texts and their meanings along the lines of the trinity:

He is a ghost, a shadow now, the wind by Elsinore’s rocks or what you will, the sea’s voice, a voice heard only in the heart of him who is the substance of his shadow, the son consubstantial with the father. (189)

The ghost of the father speaks through the son: Prince Hamlet is consubstantial with the ghost, William Shakespeare with Hamlet. The women who betray the artist are exiled from this account and Shakespeare redefined as a man who ‘felt himself the father of all his race’ (199), a new spiritual father. Fathers and sons are consubstantial, argues Stephen, but their relationships, like the encounters between Stephen and Bloom, remain mysterious. It is ‘on the mystery and not on the madonna’ that the Catholic church is founded and Stephen extrapolates the ‘legal fiction’ of paternity in aid of a denial of the relationships between fathers and sons: ‘Who is the father of any son that any son should love him or he any son?’ (199). For the son to be explained without reference to the father requires faith in the mother, a turn that Stephen will not complete. Stephen cannot countenance the replacement of the fiction of paternity with the actuality of maternity, treating women and the body as fundamentally corrupt, a sign of ‘the original sin that darkened his
understanding’ (203). Stephen’s spiritual father in *Ulysses* is Bloom and he, like Prince Hamlet, gives voice to Bloom’s anxieties about infidelity. Unlike Bloom, Stephen can conceive of no indulgence for the corrupted forms which confront him.

The mystical estates of fatherhood and authorship converge in Stephen’s theorisation of the composition of *Hamlet*. According to Stephen, literary composition is the immaculate intellectual conception of a child-book, a theory mockingly repeated by Buck Mulligan, the usurping brother who exposes Stephen’s theory as a rejuvenated argument in favour of the artistic imagination:

— Himself his own father, Sonmulligan told himself. Wait. I am big with child. I have an unborn child in my brain. Pallas Athena! A play! The play’s the thing! Let me parturiate!

He clasped his paunchbrow with both birthaiding hands. (200)

Stephen understands literature as the narcissistic reproduction of the self, ‘an unborn child in my brain,’ a self which reverberates throughout the text. As if in response to Stephen’s fixation upon the text as the immaculate product of a single author or subjectivity, the dialogue on pages 200-1 of ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ is broken by the character’s names and presented in dramatic form, a device repeated in ‘Circe,’ making it clear that this text animates many voices, rather than just one.

The suspicion of female bodies manifest in ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ reaches a critical point in ‘Oxen of the Sun.’ Stephen and the medical students resolve their maternal instincts in the elevation of an abstract, immortal literature. Literary composition is imagined in this episode as ‘ovoblastic gestation in the prostatic utricle or male womb’ (384), its progeny placed ‘*Entweder* transsubstantiality oder consubstantiality but in no case substantiality. And all cried out upon it for a very scurvy word’ (374). The ‘male womb’ is the artistic
imagination through which Stephen attempts to suppress genealogical metaphors of textual production, exiling both spiritual fathers and real mothers. The catalogue of English prose styles in ‘Oxen of the Sun’ condenses the long parturition of Joyce’s literary offspring as the history of the novel, a figurative parallel to the compositional development of *Ulysses* in advance of its delivery by the press. The birth by forceps witnessed in the Holles Street Maternity Hospital is analogous to the agonistic publication of *Ulysses*, a delivery which cannot be returned to sender. Bloom contemplates Mrs Purefoy’s lying-in over lunch:

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Sss. Dth, dth, dth! Three days imagine groaning on a bed with a vinegared handkerchief round her forehead, her belly swollen out! Phew! Dreadful simply! Child’s head too big : forceps. Doubled up inside her trying to butt its way out blindly, groping for the way out. Kill me that would. (154)
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The primal sounds emitted in labour resemble nothing so much as the ‘Sllt sllt’ of the printing press. This reproductive body is in conflict with the child, imagined by Bloom as trying to escape terrifying confines. Substantiality might be denounced as a scurvy word by Stephen and the medical students but it is material processes like the gestation and birth of a child, and the printing of texts which generate *Ulysses*. The ambivalence evinced by Stephen and Bloom towards reproductive female bodies, mothers, publishers and printing presses does not overcome the narrative. The final submission of *Ulysses* to its printed form signals an acceptance of the law of the ‘bounty of increase,’ a capitulation to the material reproduction of the text.

*Ulysses* is a book published, delivered, by a woman, Sylvia Beach, encouraged by Adrienne Monnier and Joyce’s other female patrons like Harriet Weaver. The relationship between the female publisher and male author functions according to standard patriarchal laws: the female publisher is responsible for the body of the text, the male author for its literary content. This Cartesian division of literary form and substance is repeated by Stephen but
overcome by the imminent, immanent form of the book. The narrative is shaped by physical cycles, the structure of ‘Oxen of the Sun’ follows the gestation of an embryo, and Molly’s menstrual cycle structures ‘Penelope.’ Time is finally measured according to the cycles of the female body; the reproduction of the text succumbs to the maternal logic of human generation. The antipathy and (confusion) of Stephen towards female bodies is defied by Molly Bloom, the book’s answer to the problem of materiality. ‘Penelope’ is not a microcosm of the book’s attitude to reproductive bodies, it is its final answer as the muse herself speaks back.

Molly pens the final image of *Ulysses*, marking the final dislocation of the author and his doubles from the text, a renunciation of his part in producing the text. It is to the bodies of the printing press, Molly Bloom and Bella Cohen’s sirens that the book is faithful and this allegiance sets a standard for readers to negotiate. The book, its composition and finally Molly are unable to deny the substantiality of the book: ‘and yes I said yes I will Yes’ (732). ‘Yes’ answers to any doubt about the complete form of the book. *Ulysses* is sufficiently informed about eschatology to ensure that its last word is the right one, Molly’s terminal ‘yes’ is the final assent of the book to publication and signs the contract which binds Bloom and Molly, Joyce and *Ulysses*. Substantiality may be a scurvy word to Stephen, but the book must ultimately be left to stand not as the spiritual progeny of the author, but as the product of the printing press.
d) The Reception of *Ulysses*

i) Scholars and the Archive

The difficult transition marked by *Ulysses* from a subjective model of textual production to the objective generation of the Modernist book is one that has not, apparently, entirely convinced editors, who declare their allegiance to James Joyce, rather than to the first edition of *Ulysses*. The proximity of Joyce to the publication of *Ulysses* and particularly to the proof pages and *placards* has sustained readings of Joyce as a writer maintaining the intimate relationship of Blake to the pages of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

Concomitant to the interest of the New Bibliographers in manuscripts as the best source of an author’s intentions, it is manuscript material which has been used to adjudicate the first edition of *Ulysses* and later versions reconstructed by editors.

There is an enormous body of work devoted to the study of *Ulysses* and its individual episodes:

> Despite the miles and miles of words written about it, it still defies definition, remaining open to each new reader and susceptible to new approaches.\(^\text{20}\)

*Ulysses* has indeed been ‘susceptible’ to new approaches and the Joyce industry shows no signs of going out of business anytime soon. Hayman’s choice of word suggests a weakness to *Ulysses* which allows these new approaches to proliferate, allowing them to escape from the chipped covers of the first edition. Critics have been disinclined to accept that publication closes composition, that the text of *Ulysses* might be somehow finite. The recondite meanings of *Ulysses* are not understood as embedded in the crumbling monument of the book, but as spiritually encrypted in the pluripotential, neo-sublime text. This is

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particularly true of bibliographical studies and editorial treatments of *Ulysses*, which are
guided not by the mechanical and biological metaphors which structure the text, but by an
idealised account of authorship which most resembles Stephen’s convoluted and
narcissistic theory of Shakespearean composition: the text as an immaculate function of the
author.

Like the sheets blowing around ‘Aeolus,’ the pre-publication scattering of drafts, proof-
pages, placards and manuscripts is now matched by its dispersion into libraries and research
institutions over the world. This material has been reintegrated and reproduced as the
*James Joyce Archive*, a reference work which effectively displaces the first edition, turning
back the clock on a process of composition which defines itself as historically bound and
determined.21 Until the re-issue of the first edition by World’s Classics in a widely
available facsimile form in 1993, the manuscripts and proof pages of *Ulysses* were more
readily available to readers than the first edition. This material is valorised for its proximity
to the creative subjectivity of the author and treated as an embodiment of Joyce’s intentions
precedent to the first edition.

The organisation of the pre-publication material into consecutive and ordered stages by the
editors of the *James Joyce Archive* constructs a narrative of progress which suggests that
*Ulysses* gets qualitatively *better* at each stage of revision, that composition is a process of
textual perfection of which the author is the determining figure. No critic has seriously
questioned that Joyce’s revisions of *Ulysses* before publication constitute an improvement

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21 In addition to the *James Joyce Archive*, see *Joyce’s Ulysses Notesheets in the British Museum*, ed. Phillip F. Herring (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1972) and *Ulysses: A Facsimile of the Manuscript*, ed. Driver.
on earlier versions. The revisions are treated as evidence of a thickening of the book’s intellectual and aesthetic concerns. Would the version of the episodes of *Ulysses* published in the *Little Review* serve as any kind of substitute for the reified final intentions of the author as represented by the first edition? Clive Driver has marked up the difference between the Rosenbach manuscript, the episodes which were published in the *Little Review* and the first edition to clarify the extent of the revisions which occurred throughout typesetting. He comments of the archival material that ‘Joyce can be seen here altering and refashioning not only concepts and images but every form of minutiae as well.’

This reference tool graphically displays the evolution of the text up to the date of first publication, drawing attention to the extent of the accretive revision of the text. To look for an author, however, and to ‘see’ the author in the text, like Stephen does, is to reach into a speculative realm of ghosts and ideal forms which in *Ulysses* only exist as literary forms, on the printed page.

The very availability of the archival material detracts from the significance of the first edition, drawing attention both to the complexity of the composition process and to the at times tenuous correlation of the manuscripts to the first edition. What is fragmented by the reproduction of the manuscript material is the appearance of absolute coherence marked by publication, of a text in which every element is so placed not by an author but by its necessary place in the book. On the re-appearance of the manuscript, the author is not smashed to atoms, but reanimated as the ghost in the text, speaking not through the press but through the manuscript. To a large extent, archival material and its facsimile counterparts have been used to confirm the relationship between printed and handwritten

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texts legislated by the New Bibliographers, installing the author and manuscript as of superior textual authority to the first edition. By contrast, the first edition has not been used as a copy-text for any corrected edition of *Ulysses*. Fidelity, in bibliographical terms, suggests a transparent and submissive relationship to authorial intentions. Critical readers and editors of *Ulysses* have stressed their fidelity to Joyce’s intentions rather than those represented by his bastard child, the first edition of *Ulysses*.

The availability and visibility of archival material in facsimile form entrenches the privileged position of artistic creation. On the strength of this scrupulously monitored composition material, Joyce is taken very seriously as a creative *animus*, whose every word is precisely placed. Instead of being read as literary or bibliographical effects, like the errors, neologisms, and onomatopoeic rendition of the printing press in ‘Aeolus,’ error in the text of the first edition of *Ulysses* is read as corruption. Even though *Ulysses* flouts the protocols of correct usage at every turn, the only errors allowed by readers in the text are Joyce’s, rather than those introduced by intermediaries. The reading of Joyce’s prose as deliberately literary is affirmed by the visible record of a revision process sufficiently thorough to reassure readers and scholars that Joyce wanted *Ulysses* to appear in the form it did (or very close too). Of the scholars who have examined the manuscript material, A. Walton Litz is isolated in his statement that ‘the irreducible gap between the creator and his work faces one at every turn,’ disclaiming his own genetic analysis of the work which follows. Authorship is a moot point in *Ulysses*, the logic of the text – the work bound by circumstance – cannot be deciphered through reference to the author.

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The first edition of *Ulysses* bears a passing bibliographical resemblance to the cheap and necessarily inconspicuous erotica published in Paris. The image of *Ulysses* as a chronically damaged or dirty book has proved resilient. Readers have adjusted to the filth in the narrative, but the text of the first edition of *Ulysses* has been received by scholars and editors as tarnished and disordered. As if to regulate the book’s errant polysemy, the faithful stewards of *Ulysses* have generated a protective apparatus of supplementary texts: platforms from which to survey the text. Extra-textual references, like the episode titles, publication history, composition stages, early critical responses, biographical details, are grafted onto the text as standard empirical indices of Joyce’s intentions. As Johnson observes, ‘virtually every Joyce critic expects one to know already things about the book which aren’t to be found within it.’ These bibliographical advances effectively re-open the closed system of the book and shatter the illusion of coherence and self-containment achieved on publication. The prophylactic critical apparatus shields *Ulysses* both from further corruption and from corrupt readers.

(ii) Returning to the manuscripts: The Gabler edition

Sylvia Beach’s disclaimer to the first edition of *Ulysses* has been taken very seriously by editors who have since exerted themselves to call for the suppression of all non-authorial error in the text. By and large, textual scholars and editors have shared Sylvia Beach’s reverence for Joyce’s composition process, repeating Stephen’s veneration of the mystical estate of authorship and his suspicion of the organs responsible for reproducing the book. The concept of the author’s fair copy, legislated by Greg, is in the foreground of the debates constellating around *Ulysses*. Even commentators like Dalton and Gaskell, who recognise

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that the first edition may contain relatively fewer errors than later editions, argue for a corrected edition to better convey Joyce’s intentions to readers. In 1961, Random House released a corrected edition of *Ulysses* in the United States. This is not and does not claim to be a critical edition but its appearance prompted much closer attention to the correct text of *Ulysses*, culminating in the 1984 Gabler edition.

The most important corrected edition of *Ulysses* and the only critical edition of the text is that compiled and edited by Hans Walter Gabler with Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior, and published in 1984. It is a response to the perceived deficiencies in all printed editions of *Ulysses* which installs the manuscripts and author of *Ulysses* as the productive origin of the text. This edition is the most significant departure from the text and form of the first edition and seeks to make a new *Ulysses*, historically equivalent to the first edition but textually its superior. It is this edition which has generated the most fervent discussion of the composition of *Ulysses*. What emerges from the edition and its reception is the absolute importance granted by both Gabler and his detractors to manuscripts as the highest source of textual authority and the consequent subordination of printed and typed texts to those written in the author’s hand.

Gabler’s method seeks to make the relationship between reader and author most direct and immediate through as close reference to the extant manuscript material as possible. This edition embodies a structuralist theoretical orientation which ‘endeavours to recover the ideal state of development as it was achieved through the traceable processes of’

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composition and revision as the time of the book’s publication on 2 Feb 1922. Gabler recognises the orientation of composition towards the publication of the 1922 edition but objects that ‘it does not present the text of the work as he wrote it,’ an objection which provides the rationale for the edition. In place of the actual published text, the Gabler edition reconceives of publication as ‘an ideal act…freed of the errors with which Ulysses was first published.’

Gabler and his collaborators assemble a ‘continuous manuscript’ of Ulysses from the Rosenbach manuscript and from the manuscript text added in proof-pages and placards. Gabler states unequivocally that:

the text of highest overall authority on which to base a critical edition of Ulysses resides in Joyce’s autograph notation.

His focus is texts written by the author rather than documents typed or printed by others, following the elevation of authorial manuscripts by the New Bibliographers. As Gabler’s edition judiciously demonstrates, the only way to construct a continuous manuscript of Ulysses is to cobble together the disparate and discontinuous fragments scattered during composition thus postulating a theoretical manuscript whole derived in the first from the Rosenbach manuscript. Limiting his account of composition to Joyce writing, Gabler’s methodology aims to protect Joyce’s text from cuckoldry and allay Stephen’s paranoia about betrayal by the forces of ignorance, malevolence or history:

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Any incisive attempt to correct the first and subsequent printings reveals that mere correction falls short of the critical demand on an edition of *Ulysses*. By its nature and extent, the corruption of the text in print goes far beyond ‘all those printer’s errors’ about which Joyce complained. The printers often merely compounded errors made earlier over a span of years by a motley succession of amateur typists and sometimes even by the copying author himself in the final draft manuscripts from which the transmission into print originated.30

Following Gabler, the authorial text of *Ulysses* is contaminated by its encounters with intermediaries and even by an inattentive Joyce: the sublime text transcends even the fallible author. Fundamental to Gabler’s methodology is the following principle, which he acknowledges as a corollary of Greg’s leading text, ‘The Rationale of the Copy-Text:’

> Although there can be no textual transmission without documents, no document as document self-evidently defines the text it carries as a text, that is, as a separable and individually circumscribed textual state or version.31

The interest of the text in error and ‘a motley succession’ of mortal and imperfect characters is subordinated to the image of the correct text, as distinct from the ‘carrier document.’ Removing *Ulysses* from the exceptional circumstances of composition suggests that even though history is a nightmare from which Stephen cannot awake, readers can nod off to the dream of the idealised correct form of the text.

The edited version of this constructed continuous manuscript is the critical edition: the text is unified through the postulation of an author writing, rather than the arbitrary event of publication. It is the continuous reading, or critical text, based on the assembled manuscript and glossed as the ‘corrected’ text, which appears on the recto pages of Gabler’s edition. The ‘synoptic’ text on the verso is scrupulously annotated to display the provenance and evolution of the clean critical text on the opposite page. The contrast between the two reflecting pages suggests that the new and improved corrected text is the

ideal version of the fragmented synoptic text, presented as a reference aid rather than as a reading text. The synoptic page, as the name suggests, encapsulates an overview of composition, conflating the *logos* and *imago* of the text by means of visual encryption. The diacritics on the page of the synoptic text re-encrypt the development of *Ulysses* and graft it on to the text. The appearance of the synoptic text, spattered with notes, which displays this evolution, heightens the contrast to the static corrected text on the opposite page. The key to the synoptic text is at the beginning of the text, the key, as it were, adjacent to the portal to the text. The more stringent protocols for accessing the text mark the elevated and secure status of this new text. This mode of display evinces a confidence in method which takes as its premise the certain figure of an author writing, a repetition of the convergence of authorial subjectivity and rational method proposed by the New Bibliographers.

This is a visible, accountable editorial process which closely documents and displays its fidelity to Joyce’s authorial intentions, as embodied by his handwriting. Every word of the text is glossed, each element of the first edition is reconnected to the scene of composition through identification of its documentary origins. The editorial process and the apparatus work to limit the composition of *Ulysses* and contain it within the finite covers of the critical edition. It is not the history of the book which leads the editor to the correct text, but the history of the author. The reliance on the manuscript is regressive; composition occupies the book in a very different way to that described and eventually acceded to in *Ulysses*. The impetus of the composition of *Ulysses* is to the book, a coherent object which totalises all errors and flattens all the historical stages of composition onto the page. This symbolic coherence and equivalence is undone by the constant reflection of the manuscript descent of the text in the Gabler edition.
The most discussed restoration of the Gabler edition is made in ‘Scylla and Charybdis,’ in which ‘the word known to all men’ is revealed to Stephen to be love. In the quotation below, I add Gabler’s restoration to the first edition in brackets:

— Marina, Stephen said, a child of storm, Miranda, a wonder, Perdita, that which was lost. What was lost is given back to him: his daughter’s child. My dearest wife, Pericles says, was like this maid. Will any man love the daughter if he has not loved the mother?
— The art of being a grandfather, Mr Best gan murmur. L’art d’être grand.....
[— Will he not see reborn in her, with the memory of his own youth added, another image?
   Do you know what you are talking about? Love, yes. Word known to all men. Amor vero aliquid alicui bonum vult unde et ea quae concupisimus…]
   — His own image to a man with that queer thing genius is the standard of all experience, material and moral. (187-8)\(^32\)

This question is asked by Stephen of his mother’s ghost in ‘Circe’ – ‘(Eagerly. ) Tell me the word, mother, if you know now. The word known to all men’ (540) – but remains unanswered in the first edition in both ‘Circe’ and ‘Scylla and Charybdis,’ consumed or overlooked somewhere on the way to the press. The first edition and the manuscript are in clear contradiction on this point. Its appearance in the manuscript legitimises its appearance in the corrected edition and Gabler accounts for its exclusion as an eyeskip, like that which passed over the headline ‘A DAYTFAHER’ in proofs.\(^33\) Richard Ellmann argues against the change, noting that he ‘felt grave doubts that Joyce would have welcomed the restoration of the passage,’ laying out the incongruity of the passage to the evolving scheme and style of the book.\(^34\) Following Ellmann, restoration reveals the manuscript but conceals the author’s intention. This kind of loss is a consequence of the composition of the text. Just as Mr Best’s murmurings are cut off and silenced by Stephen, the missing passage is excised by the ‘sllt sllt’ of the press. What authors mean to do, as

both ‘Aeolus’ and ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ show, is often distant from what is printed onto the page. The materialism which is the foundation of *Ulysses* allows no recourse to the ghost of the author. Settling the question with reference to Joyce and his intentions bows to an idealism – the presence of the author in the text – greater than that which is revealed to Stephen. Historical contingency – getting the book in print – imposes an arbitrary stop on the process of composition and makes the author, like Bloom in the newspaper office, a passive, albeit interested, spectator to the reproduction of the text. Publication is the *deus ex machina* which draws the drama of composition to a close. To edit *Ulysses* with reference to manuscripts and to the intentions of James Joyce is a manoeuvre which is not theoretically consistent with the account of composition developed in the text. *Ulysses* is Bloom’s book and it is Bloom’s resignation towards and indulgence of typographical errors that must be sustained rather than Stephen’s idealism.

The debate which followed the publication of this edition scrutinised Gabler’s fidelity to Joyce’s manifest intentions through minute identification of the errors of the 1984 edition. Gaskell and Hart review the 1922, 1961 and 1984 texts of *Ulysses* and provide a checklist of amendments to all three editions. This additional set of corrections aims to bring the text closer into line with Joyce’s idealised intentions, further fragmenting the image of the coherent text bound by first publication. John Kidd accused Gabler of introducing new errors in the corrected edition and lambasted him for relying on facsimiles of Joyce’s

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manuscripts rather than their originals: a higher standard of care and proximity is demanded of the editor than of the general reader. Gabler is held to account for not being close enough to the manuscripts and author rather than for watering down the book’s insistence that all texts are second-hand by the time they reach the printing press. Other readers have criticised Gabler for his lack of fidelity to Joyce’s intentions as expressed by the record and for misinterpretation of the evidence. What is not in question in this debate is the validity of such a turn to the manuscripts and its implications for correctly characterising the composition of *Ulysses*. It appears impossible to imagine a text without an author, even if the narrative proceeds oblivious to such a figure. I read in the Gabler edition and its reception a lack of fidelity to the capitulation of *Ulysses* to a material economy of textual production.

A ‘Reader’s Edition’ of *Ulysses*, edited by Danis Rose, was published in 1997 and has not provoked the same level of debate as the Gabler edition. I do not intend to treat this edition in any detail, save to remark that it follows a similar methodological path to the Gabler edition, but with far less annotation, and an apparatus which does not allow the reader to witness the changes wrought to the text. Rose constructs what he terms an ‘isotext’ from the manuscript using ‘all the extant manuscripts which are in the main line of transmission,’ departing from the Rosenbach manuscript for eight of the eighteen episodes. He advances a set of corrections more radical than Gabler’s, correcting not only typographical errors and mistranspositions but faults like spelling errors, a refashioning which goes even further in perfecting a text which presents itself as resistant to such standards. Rose declares his allegiance to the copy-text principles expounded by Greg and

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offers the reader’s edition as a reconciliation of these principles and Jerome McGann’s ‘social contract’ theory of editing.  

The more editors and publishers have tried to correct *Ulysses*, the more errors have been introduced into the text. Instead of settling the matter, the Gabler edition has served to promote *Ulysses* as an inherently corrupt text, open to apparently endless emendation. The bibliographical study of *Ulysses*, like the interpretation of its text, is a constantly evolving field. As new documents come to light, like the manuscripts recently acquired by the National Library of Ireland, a new set of references are generated. This material was not consulted in the construction of the Gabler or Rose editions. Whether further manuscript material is discovered or not, settling the text of *Ulysses* with reference to manuscripts is a conceptually flawed undertaking which relies always on the subjectivities of the author and editor, rather than the closed system of the printed text, an actual object disjunct from its theoretical author.

The Gabler edition drew much attention to the fraught publication of the first edition, which was re-released in facsimile form by World’s Classics in 1993, a stable response to the controversy, a balance against which to re-measure the edited text. It is in this facsimile form that the claims of the first edition of *Ulysses* to represent the first book of Modernism are most readily accessed. A mode of correction more consistent with the account of production advanced in the text would adopt the 1922 edition as a copy-text and emend that

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text with reference to the errata listings released with later editions. The absence of a
definitive or widely accepted standard text must destabilise even the most positive readings
of the narrative. Bibliographically speaking, *Ulysses* remains an open book, even if no
further printed editions are on the immediate horizon. This instability is constitutive, a vital
consequence of the modern and Modernist mode of textual production to which *Ulysses*
concedes.

A correct text is a fiction, just as *Ulysses* itself is a fiction, determined by and continuous to
the exceptional circumstances of publication and the exceptional details of Dublin on
Bloomsday in 1904. Fixed texts are mutable, they change when they are published and
they change when they are delivered to readers. *Ulysses* is only readable as an erroneous
and ambiguous text, as a reflection of the world it contains. Exceptional circumstances will
always render this an unstable text. A sanctified authorial text is an impossible goal. The
Gabler edition and the controversy it provoked are sufficient evidence that this ideal
standard is one which can only be provisionally attained. More importantly, the concept of
a correct authorial text is so convincingly displaced in the narrative of *Ulysses* that any
effort to construct a correct text entails a refusal of the conceptual basis of composition.
Corrections to the first edition of *Ulysses*, whether undertaken by Joyce himself or later
editors, violate the ‘ineluctable modality of the visible’ in transposing onto the text an
account of composition vested in authorial subjectivity and in denying the capacity for
material things to change independent of their authors.
(He taps his parchment roll energetically.) This book tells you how to act with all descriptive particulars. (483)

_Ulysses_ is indeed a book which tells its readers ‘how to act with all descriptive particulars.’ To really read _Ulysses_ is to accept its errors at face value. Pursuing the ethos of _Ulysses_ does not lead directly to James Joyce, but to the book, processed by the press. The typographical errors signaled by the colophon to the first edition of _Ulysses_ are as vitally part of the book as the exceptional circumstances of publication. The errors deprive the reader of the illusion that the book is a transparent and exact rendition of the author’s text, signifying the detachment of Joyce from the production of the text and the final reliance of the text on its flawed, printed form. The book is an irreducible quantity in and of _Ulysses_. Printed books are the foundation stones of literature, not the manuscripts which blow around ‘Aeolus.’ A postmodern book of fragments, following the logic of _Ulysses_ is impossible: the book binds all fragments it contains into a continuous and complete whole. The first edition of _Ulysses_ speaks for itself and not for its author.
Chapter Four: *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1930)

*A Draft of XXX Cantos*, published by the Hours Press in 1930, provides one canto for each of the thirty years of the twentieth century. The synchronicity of the book to the progress of the new century declares a continuous engagement with contemporary culture. The new form for Ezra Pound’s epic is the book. The foundation of the epic structure is neither the memorable lines of Homer passed from generation to generation, nor the song of the troubadour, nor yet the manuscript of the sedentary scribe, but the printed page. It is this reliance on the form of the book which makes of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* a distinctively modern epic. The composition of the book integrates its own bibliographical history and the myriad literary and historical forms it includes: the printed book is the point of return which unifies all historical digressions.

The publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* in 1930 marks the consolidation of a form which had been variously appearing in print in journals and books since 1917. Each element of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* had been published before its integration into the Hours Press edition. Publication works to ‘make it new,’ and make a whole of these discrete elements after they have accumulated meaning to themselves independently. The different bibliographical forms of the early volumes of cantos are a material index to the forms swept together in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, a book which absorbs its own literary and bibliographical genealogy as seamlessly as those of the books it references. Whereas *Ulysses* evolves most significantly as manuscripts, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* develops as typescripts, as a set of new books whose core forms are transmitted from volume to volume. Its publication
rejuvenates the first thirty cantos as part of a continuous ‘long poem’ and installs them as a coherent foundation to *The Cantos*.

*A Draft of XXX Cantos* conceives of itself as a compressed edition of literary history, a guide to the past redacted through the bibliographical and figurative present of the book. The formal impetus of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is towards objectivity: it is an irreducible, self-contained artefact which will continue to accumulate its own bibliographical and literary history. Changes in the bibliographical presentation and historical understandings of literary texts are a given in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. To intervene in the cycles of textual transmission by means of an editorial apparatus is to fundamentally alter the objective status of the text.

*A Draft of XXX Cantos* renews the core forms of the literary and historical monuments it seeks to emulate:

| Palace in smoky light,  
| Troy but a heap of smouldering boundary stones,  
| ANAXIFORMINGES! Aurunculeia!  
| (IV, 13) |

The ruins of Troy mark the ‘smouldering boundary stones’ of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The allusion to Homer’s *Odyssey* is followed swiftly by references to the archaic Greek lyric poet, Pindar and to his pre-Imperial Roman counterpart, Catullus – poets whose careers immediately precede the flourishing of Greek and Roman culture, the Golden Age and Imperial Rome. ‘Smouldering boundary stones’ describes the operation of the literary and historical allusions which follow, allusions whose core forms which are regenerated within the poem. The reader of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is a spectator to the enduring forms of literary history, edited and strategically arranged by the poet. Typographical and
bibliographical variations to the text do not significantly alter its core form, smouldering but still recognisable, and so a valid object for interpretation.

The display of bibliographical allegiances by *A Draft of XXX Cantos* to its predecessors declares its succession in the history of great books. Spoken, written and printed discourses collide in *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and are rendered equivalent forms on the page. All texts – those of the author, correct and incorrect quotations and translations, dialogue and every verse form – appear of equal status. Historical priority is granted to no text and it is finally the book, the figure which equalises its predecessors, which claims authority to order and control all the texts it contains. It is inconceivable that such a text could be edited solely with reference to the poet and his manuscripts. The compositional origins of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are dispersed beyond the limits of an individual writing subject.

Ezra Pound lived in Paris in 1922 and was a witness to the agonised delivery of *Ulysses*. When *Ulysses* was published, the individual cantos which compose *A Draft of XXX Cantos* were being written and published in serials. As distinct from *Ulysses*, which displays the contestation of the page between manuscripts and print, both in the archive and through the counter of Stephen and Bloom, the commitment of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* to rendering a set of equivalent forms in print is unequivocal. Whereas the publication of the first edition of *Ulysses* marks the separation of the author from the text and the final abandonment of the manuscript, this distance is already convincingly installed on the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. 
Authorship is redefined beyond the writing of manuscripts to encompass the manufacture of printed books through the close interest taken by Pound in every aspect of the production of his books. The steady composition and publication of the individual cantos prepares them for their place in the completed text. The result is not an ad-hoc collection but a structured and strategic edifice of letters. Unlike the composition of *Ulysses*, during which Joyce appears to unfetter composition from any imposition of temporal deadlines, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is composed as a series of printed books, which in turn take as their basis the history of literature in transmission. The poet maintains control over the form and content of the book and closely monitors its gradual, strategic release to the public.

Whereas *Ulysses* was not complete when Joyce signed a contract to publish with Sylvia Beach, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* was ready to print well in advance of the agreement between Pound and Nancy Cunard to publish the book. The first edition conclusively synthesises the composition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, the technology of the book and its metaphorical transformations in the poem.

As a result, the compositional material for *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is in a form far more legible to printers and editors, suggesting that Pound had digested the lessons from his involvement with the publication of *Ulysses*. The book is consequently a more bibliographically stable object. As witnessed in the composition of *Ulysses*, each stage of composition and publication consolidates the previous. Manuscripts are literally consumed by the book and the first edition is indisputably the most advanced and complete version of the text on publication. Unlike *Ulysses*, there remains no ambiguity as to the textual standing of this book, all ‘exceptional circumstances’ have been brought within the covers of the book.
I look first at the composition and publication of the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*,
reading the first edition as the perfected compression of its own bibliographical history.
Whereas my focus in reading the composition of *Ulysses* was drawn to the interaction
between manuscript and printed forms, the genesis of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* demands that
the printed texts be in the foreground of my analysis. Comparing *A Draft of XXX Cantos* to
its most direct literary precedents, the earlier appearances in print of the first thirty cantos, I
argue that the first edition builds on a foundation of printed books, such that every element
of the book is already historicised, its regulated form a participant in a strategic, regulated
sequence of publication. The bibliographical transformations of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*
repeat and signal the schemes of linguistic and figurative transformation within the thirty
cantos themselves. The poem incorporates its own idiosyncratic bibliographical apparatus
and so theoretically precludes further annotation.

I gather references to book-making in the text, examining how they serve to consolidate an
account of the literary text which is inseparable from the means and form of its production.
The printing press occupies an important position in realising the pan-historical vision of *A
Draft of XXX Cantos*; Pound’s affinity with contemporary printing produced texts ready for
the press. The Malatesta Cantos (VIII-XI) assert the role of history in guiding the
composition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, displaying the origins of the text in historical
documents. In these cantos, the imagination of the poet is explicitly displaced as he acts as
a draughtsman, adapting secondary texts to the primary form of the long poem. I consider
how the renewal of the historical figure of Sigismundo de Malatesta through a program of
transcription and quotation works to produce a text which is already edited, an irreducible
set of objective forms in service to the revisionist history of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. 
Finally, I investigate the possibilities for editing a text like *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Vitally interested in textual variation, repetition and fraught lines of literary and historical transmission, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* presents itself as a kind of textbook to literary history, figuratively covering the problems addressed by the New Bibliographers, the historical and material transmission of literary texts. The long life of Ezra Pound and the continuing accretion of *The Cantos* throughout the twentieth century have deferred calls for a critical edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. No critical or corrected editions of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* have appeared and to a large extent, the book precludes this kind of attention, presenting itself as a perfected and self-contained rendition of a series of pre-existing texts. To annotate *A Draft of XXX Cantos* runs counter to a poetics based in compressed, economical use of language, as well as to Pound’s declared hostility to annotative additions which diminish heuristic demands on the reader. The most-mooted option for the editorial future of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Cantos* is the variorum edition, an apparatus to represent the genesis of the text through its history in print. The expanded display of the bibliographical history in a variorum edition runs counter to the theoretical containment of history in the book, as the book.

My interest in this chapter is in the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Given that this text has not been reprinted in facsimile, I refer to the text of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* published by New Directions, whose pagination corresponds to the most recent editions of *The Cantos* published by New Directions and Faber and Faber. Following the first edition and the first commercial edition, that published by Farrar and Rinehart in 1933, I cite individual cantos by Roman numerals, followed by the page number within the book.

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a) The First Edition

Bound in coarse, undyed linen, the exterior of the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* conceals its bibliographical lineage from the untutored reader. The linen binding the book presents an unrefined surface to the reader, reminiscent of hessian or sackcloth, rather than the materials of fine book-making referenced throughout and the existence of two deluxe editions from materials then bound into this book. The fine production values and the exemplary literary credentials of publisher and press are recognisable only to the cognoscenti, those moving in the same circles as Pound and his publisher, Nancy Cunard. It is a deluxe hard-cover edition, printed on sturdier paper than *Ulysses* and constructed to withstand the interventions of readers and editors.²

Unlike *Ulysses*, there is no note appended to the first edition to alert the reader to the special standing of the text: ‘exceptional circumstances,’ the pre-history of the book, are compressed and bound into an unequivocal whole with no reference to the publication of the earlier cantos. Its compositional beginnings, or origin are not described in relation to specific points in space or time, there are no biographical notes, publisher’s comments, errata listings or lists of books by the same author: the first edition is a self explanatory structure. This anti-commercial aesthetic serves to dissociate the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* from the cheap, ephemeral commodities produced by contemporary publishers and lambasted in the poem. The text is unillustrated and printed only in black, each canto begins anew on a recto page. See Figure 7, overleaf. The illuminated initials introducing each canto were drawn by Pound’s wife, Dorothy Shakespeare. It is a minimal typographical apparatus, a sign that the poems need no further visual supplement than the

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² I have examined copy 189, held by the British Library, and copies 44 and 135, held by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.
Figure 7. Ezra Pound, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1930).

N' that man sweat blood
to put through that railway,
And what he ever got out of it?
And he said one thing: As it costs,
As in any Indian war it costs the government
20,000 dollars per head
To kill off the red warriors, it might be more humane
And even cheaper, to educate.
And there was the other type, Warenhauser,
That beat him, and broke up his business,

Tale of the American Curia that gave him,
Warenhauser permission to build the Northwestern railway
And to take the timber he cut in the process;
So he cut a road through the forest,
Two miles wide, an' perfectly legal.
Who wuz agoin' to stop him!

And he came in and said: 'Can't do it,
Not at that price, we can't do it.'
That was in the last war, here in England,
And he was making chunks for a turbine
In some sort of an army plane;
An' the inspector says: "How many rejects?"
"What you mean, rejects?"
And the inspector says: "How many do you get?"
And Joe said: "We don't get any rejects, our...
And the inspector says: "Well then of course
you can't do it."

Price of life in the accident.
And C. H. said to the renowned Mr. Bukos:
"What is the cause of the H. C. L.?" and Mr. Bukos,
The economist consulted of nations, said:
"Lack of labour."

And there were two millions of men out of work.
And C. H. shut up, he said
He would save his breath to cool his own porridge,
But I didn't, and I went on plaguing Mr. Bukos.
basic elements of letterforms, indeed, the poems appear to be laminated on top of the initials, insisting that they are the primary visual focus of the page.

An announcement of the publication by the Hours Press contains a little more indication as to the type of book to come: ‘A Draft of XXX Cantos: eliminating the idea that his knowledge of the past has invalidated his perception of the present.’ It is the knowledge of the past concentrated as the poem which validates its commentary on the present. This perception is transmitted as a visual, physical and bibliographical quantity: an objective view of the present, informed by the past and contained by the book. The demonstration of the past in the perception of the present provides both the structure and dominant theme of A Draft of XXX Cantos, summarised by Hugh Kenner as the ‘coming and going of vortices in time’s river.’ This is achieved through the interaction of historical and contemporary poetic forms and subject matter, and, on a more immediate level, through the proficient manipulation of verse forms and close attention to their visual disposition on the page. A Draft of XXX Cantos looks like it is composed of innumerable different types of poetic forms in dialogue with each other. Just as Jonson’s ‘Note to the Reader’ and the glosses which appear on the margins of the first edition of Sejanus His Fall defend the historical foundation of the play, the historical origins of A Draft of XXX Cantos are immediately perceptible in the first edition as the appearance of classical form interacts with the elements of modern verse. Whereas Ulysses demands the reader’s indulgence to the form of the text, what A Draft of XXX Cantos requires is a reader who will bring their own knowledge of the literary past – and the bibliographical history of A Draft of XXX Cantos – to a reading of the text.

The suggestion of provisionality held by the title – a draft, an indefinite article – is in conflict with the objective dimensions of the final form and its assertive rearrangement of literary history. It is the residue of this suggestion which accommodates for the slight textual shift between *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1930) and the commercial editions published by Farrar and Rinehart and Faber and Faber in 1933. The title creates a single grammatical entity of the first thirty cantos, just as publication creates an independent entity of previous discrete incarnations of the cantos. Before publication, the denomination ‘draft’ might conceivably denote ‘a work in progress,’ like the provisional title of *Finnegans Wake.*

Insofar as *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is interested in participating in the continuous tradition and transmission of literary history, it is a work in progress, but once published, it is a work in progress which will not be added to by the author. A ‘draft’ signifies a groove or guideline which directs the chisel of a mason. This poet resembles more a draughtsman, laying out the plan or prototype for the larger structure to follow, *The Cantos.* A draft can also refer to the conscription of troops. Conscription finds its etymological origin in the Latin *conscribere,* to write down or enlist. This draft enlists a platoon of thirty cantos in service to literary history, suggesting that the poems themselves form the basis of a regimented offensive on received values. The title, *A Draft of XXX Cantos,* is an anterior gesture to the future of the book, not an abstract form or ideality, but a structure. The objective of this draft is to provide a solid foundation to *The Cantos* and to recruit and prepare proper readers for *A Draft of XXX Cantos,* for *The Cantos,* and for the literature of the twentieth century.
b) The Composition and Publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*

i) Ezra Pound the Bookmaker

Ezra Pound’s first book, *Hilda’s Book*, is a collection of poems handwritten on vellum and handsewn by the poet into a book as a gift to Hilda Doolittle:

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I strove a little book to make for her,
Quaint bound, as ‘twere in parchment very old.
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The poems were written in 1905 to 1907 and appeared in an edition limited to one. The book is glossed by McGann as ‘an act of homage to Pre-Raphaelitism and the ideal of the troubadour poet it passed on to him.’ It is an exemplary beginning to the career of the poet-maker: his literary début fashioned by his own hands for a presumably receptive reader. The production of *Hilda’s Book* sets a precedent for the manual involvement of Ezra Pound in the production of his books and suggests in advance the significance of the physical and historical form of the book to the objective poetics of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Whilst not handmade by Pound, the composition and content of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are nostalgic for the intimate, immediate and controlled publication of *Hilda’s Book*, the first book from which the poet abstracts himself. Book-makers like William Blake, William Morris and Aldus Manutius are role models for the poet as manufacturer. *Hilda’s Book* resembles too the first version of *The Wind Among the Reeds* by Pound’s early mentor, W. B. Yeats. Written from 1893 to 1895 in a handmade notebook as a gesture to his muse, Maud Gonne, this notebook speaks of the early desire of Yeats to make literature, rather than to create texts. Built on such precedents, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* proposes a Romance rather than a Romantic account of the poet, the troubadour:


you have seen that maker
“ And finder of songs so far afield as this
“ That he may free her,
   who sheds such light in the air. ”
(VI, 22)

The object produced by the maker and finder of songs is the book. A Draft of XXX Cantos claims the book-making prerogative asserted by Blake over the pages of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell but denies the Romantic trope of transcendent creation. It is Pound’s original aspiration to be a book-maker that guides my understanding of the publication and form of A Draft of XXX Cantos. The voice and song of Homer and the troubadour are subordinate to the requirements of publication in the twentieth century: the first sign of this poet is a handmade book.

The first book written by Ezra Pound to be printed, A Lume Spento, was published at his own expense in Venice in 1908. Venice is nominated as ‘the City of Aldus,’ drawing the book into an equation with the cultural renaissance transmitted through the presses of printer Aldus Manutius and his colleagues. Pound was not quite able to relinquish A Lume Spento to the printers of early twentieth century Venice. Extant copies of the book are corrected in pencil by the poet, his hand the final guide to the correct text of the book.6 There are no such amendations to A Draft of XXX Cantos: the poet, poem and book are equivalent and all indices of the subjective evolution of the text are absorbed as its history.

Although Hilda’s Book is the only volume handmade by Pound, he maintained a higher degree of control over the publication of his books than James Joyce. If a bibliography is

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the *curriculum vitae* of the poet, Pound’s professional career was certainly more prolific and visibly successful than that of both Joyce and Gertrude Stein. Between 1908 and 1930, thirty volumes of Pound’s work were published. The number of copies of some of these early books – *Poems 1918-1921* (1921) and *The Natural Philosophy of Love* (1922) – is listed as unknown in Gallup’s bibliography and so the specificities of Pound’s early instigations cannot be exactly measured. Hundreds of poems, essays, reviews and other critical pieces appeared in journals and little magazines like *Poetry*, the *Egoist*, *BLAST*, *New Age*, the *Little Review*, the *Dial* and the *Transatlantic Review*, as well as in newspapers including the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Mercure de France*, the *Chicago Tribune* (Paris edition), the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *Observer*. He became the foreign editor of Harriet Monroe’s *Poetry* in 1912, poetry editor of the *Egoist* (formerly the *New Freewoman*) in 1913 and foreign correspondent for the *Dial* in 1920, as well as maintaining personal and professional connections with editors and publishers across the Modernist scene. Pound’s reviews were sometimes pseudonymous, his writing covers an enormous range of subjects and professes all manner of expertise: art, literature, music, economics, history, politics. There is no topic or format from which the poet is excluded. Pound’s career as a reviewer and critic is a public display of *sprezzatura*, a reminder of the apparently illimitable erudition animating the gradual appearance of the individual cantos.

Before 1930, Pound’s books had been published by Faber and Faber, Boni and Liveright, Elkin Mathews and the Bodley Head, as well as by many of the small presses thriving in Paris and London. The variety of publishers and editors to bring his work into print is an index of Pound’s panoramic view of contemporary print culture and a sign of his proficiency, greater, at least, than Joyce’s, in managing composition for the press. As a
rule, Pound’s early books were first published in small print-runs, of less than one hundred copies. Books were reprinted by commercial publishers, or poems extracted for inclusion in other books printed in larger numbers like *Personae* (1909), *Exultations* (1909), *Poems 1918-21* (1921) and *Personae* (1926), all of which draw most of their content from material already published in books and serials. *Lustra*, for example, materialised in two different forms in 1916. The first appeared in September in an edition of two hundred copies, marked ‘privately printed for the author’ and stamped with the insignia of Elkin Mathews’ firm. A month later, an abridged edition of the text was published by Mathews and some eight hundred copies were printed, implying the adaptation of the text for a wider audience. The capacity of Pound’s writing to appear simultaneously in different authorially ratified forms is an index of the malleability of the core forms of the poems, closely monitored as the poet manages their bibliographical transformations.

Given this interest in regulating the finitudes of the printed page, it is unsurprising that Pound investigated the purchase of printing press for his own use. Again, his interest in the printed and material forms of his poems follows that of Yeats, many of whose works were first printed by his sister, Elizabeth Yeats, at the Cuala Press. Pound’s 1929 correspondence with William Carlos Williams reveals the makings of a scheme to import a press to Rapallo:

> Old fashioned ‘and press for marrvelous fine printing is no use az far as I’m concerned. To much damn work, technical skill, etc. Damn it, I oughtn’t to have to bother with the thing at all; but the rest of the world is so lousy lazy that I may as well look into the matter, Self-inking, self-feeding, etc. Something that wd. give a decent imprint.  

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Pound asserts the desire to exercise complete control over the form of the book, regulating not only its distribution but its production. Ideally, books would be printed to a regimental schedule in an efficient interchange between the author and the printing press, unimpeded by the rest of the ‘lousy lazy’ world. The Romantic figure of Blake the printer, who wrote the pages of his books, is replaced by the faceless Modernist poet, the mechanic to a ‘self-inking, self-feeding’ automata. Unlike Leopold Bloom, Pound is reluctant to submit to the spectacle of the printing press, treating it instead the most authoritative means of realising complete control over his books: ‘a decent imprint.’

ii) Mechanical Composition

The proximity of Pound to the production of his books generates an affinity for the printing process but also an acute awareness of to the corruptions it can engender. Kenner comments of Pound:

He never enjoyed Joyce’s comfort with the idea that a writer’s job is encoding instructions for printers. Hence problems with his own texts, problems even he wasn’t able to solve.\(^8\)

Pound gave explicit directions to the printers and editors of his texts and kept carbon copies of his work and correspondence as if to retain all evidence of the provenance of his texts. This strategy has been successful: there are considerably fewer disputed bibliographical points in the uncorrected first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* than that of *Ulysses*. Whilst all problems may not have been ‘solved’ on the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, they become part of the book, absorbed into its bibliographical history.

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That the foundation of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is in printed texts is made clear on an examination of the composition and publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, a process guided by the poet but from which his ‘autograph notation’ is a distant fancy. The composition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is precisely described by its archival remains, a ledger of the poet’s activities as a reader, editor and translator of other texts. The archival material for *A Draft of XXX Cantos* – notes, manuscripts, typescripts, proof-pages – points to the signs of increasing coherence and order in the cantos. Inconsistencies in the manuscripts are largely resolved as they are transformed into the clean prototypes of the book.\(^9\) The contents of the archive declare clear and chronological relationships between compositional material and the finished work. Each poem is revised and copied many times: *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is demonstrably not the first draft of this material. There is nothing preliminary about the contents of the first edition. In contrast to the interchange between proof-pages and James Joyce right up to the first publication of *Ulysses*, manuscript composition and the subjective origins of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are distant from the event of publication. The suggestion that the poet *might* have added further to the text, vestigial in the composition material for *Ulysses*, is eliminated by the signs of an efficient process. Ronald Bush has traced the consolidation of the style of *The Cantos* as they were being written, with particular reference to the first sixteen cantos. His study treats the development of the ideas which hold the long poem together and draws attention to the increasing impersonalisation of its narrative technique and texture.\(^{10}\)

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\(^9\) The composition material for *A Draft of XXX Cantos* which I have examined is that held by the Beinecke Library at Yale University.

Pound undertook his own typing, corrected typescripts and retyped them himself. As a result, there is minimal interference between author and printer. The typescripts for *A Draft of XXX Cantos* adopt the formal conventions of printed texts, anticipating the reification of publication. The printed book is the *telos* of composition and the poet remains as close as possible to this moment of final transformation. Later typescripts are marked with arrows, circles and renumbering, a revision process which attends to the organisation and disposition of printed material on the page, rather than making substantive additions like those seen on the proof-pages and *placards* of *Ulysses*. The movement of composition on typescripts is towards the clarification of a pre-existing form, the ‘tale of the tribe,’ as the poet accumulates, orders and elucidates the text before him. *Le mot juste* is defined by its place within the text and on the page.

The archive declares the importance of visual, physical forms to the development of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*: *phanopeia* is the necessary supplement to *melopeia* and *logopeia*. In Canto VII, the figure of ‘poor old Homer blind’ (VII, 24) appears, his work glossed as ‘sightless narration’ (VII, 24). The vision of the page did not motivate the composition of the *Odyssey*, narration guided by the ear rather than the eyes, but it does guide *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The poet is impelled by perception, the vision of the text transmits its literary form as a gestalt. It is the image of the poem which unites its account of history, the vision contained and displayed within the book:

```plaintext
Topaz I manage, and three sorts of blue;
    but on the barb of time.
The fire? Always, and the vision always,
Ear dull, perhaps, with the vision, flitting
And fading at will.
(V, 17)
```
The vision of the page is a constant. A Draft of XXX Cantos does not allow the vision to flit and fade, or lose its vitality. It is a form designed to resist the ‘barb of time.’ As such, the verbal text is inseparable from the vision and form of the page. The notion of the author’s fair copy, as expressed by his autograph notation does not and cannot comprehend the significance of the spatial disposition of printed letters and their relationships to each other within the book. Typescripts can claim authority unavailable to manuscripts for the visual organisation of the page as an ensemble of printed, rather than handwritten characters. The assertive use of the space of the page on the manuscripts, typescripts and printed pages of A Draft of XXX Cantos installs the spatial field of the page as representative of the poet’s intentions, suggesting the need for a visual scansion of the page, a poetics founded on a literal materiality. These questions of format will be vital to any editorial consideration of the text; their significance within the archive challenges the manuscript based models of composition advanced by the New Bibliographers.

Scholars have noted with approval the efficiency with which Pound revised his manuscripts and typescripts, expressing confidence in his competence as an editor. Christine Froula remarks that he left ‘few good lines unpublishable.’¹¹ The visibility and efficiency of these revisions, undertaken before the poems were sent to publishers, reinforces the authority of the printed form, rather than its formless manuscript precedents. No stone is left unturned and there is no recognisable remnant of the subjective expression or experience of the poet. Lawrence Rainey counts ‘more than seven hundred pages of notes and over sixty-five drafts and draft fragments’ for the Malatesta Cantos, the fruits of the poet’s researches into

Sigismundo and the *Tempio Malatestiano* in 1922-3. The Malatesta Cantos present an edited history of this research, delivering to the reader all they need to know. The poet acts as an editor, arranging historical material for its renewal in a new form. As such, the text appears in its perfected form, strategically arranged to exclude the attentions of future editors.

The composition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* does not constellate around writing but around reading, translating, copying and editing, activities which are all refracted through the book. On the evidence contained in the archive, the composition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is firstly an act of reception. The archive files newspaper clippings, photographs, programs and articles, as if to clearly identify the textual origins of the poems and to signal the poet’s fidelity to and continuity with a pre-existing literary and cultural corpus. These clippings are a supplement to the direct references given to the reader of the book, like those in Canto X: ‘*Com. Pio II, Liv. VII, p 85./ Yriarte, p. 288*’ (X, 44). To deduce the origins or beginning of the poem demands an apparently endless programme of cross-referencing and annotation, a process that can be enacted on encounter with the first edition of the book. The ready supply of textual sources of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, within the book and the archive, works to displace the image of a poet from whom the text originates. None of the cantos are properly original to the book, all having been published elsewhere previously. The typescripts are carefully dated and signed in ink with the poet’s initials, suggesting that they represent a formal, legally binding account of his intentions. The monogram is the terse sign that the poet has no further inscriptions to add and assents to the text as consideration on his future contract with the reader.

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iii) A Book made of Books

Typescripts and manuscripts give an incomplete account of the evolution of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Pound commenced work on the nascent forms of *The Cantos* in 1904 but the evolution of the text occurs in print, in journals and serials, rather than on the private pages of the author. The most proximate precedents to the publication of the first edition are the appearances of individual cantos and groups of cantos in print in which the order and form of the book as a whole are rehearsed. Gallup’s comprehensive bibliography of Pound’s work provides a guide to this history, the earliest forms of the text are available in print. Although many of the journals to print the early cantos are not in wide or current circulation, their theoretical availability circumvents the need for a facsimile volume like the *James Joyce Archive* to reflect the development of the text.

Throughout the 1920s, individual cantos appeared in little magazines and journals, led by the publication of *Cantos I-III* in *Poetry* in 1917.\(^\text{13}\) These three cantos were reordered and substantially revised before their appearance in more permanent form between the covers of a book. The first published canto is that which appears as the third canto of *A Draft of XVI Cantos*, a structural change retained in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Similarly, the Malatesta Cantos were first printed as ‘Cantos IX-XII’ in the *Criterion* in 1923 but shift to Canto VII-XI in *A Draft of XVI Cantos*, where they have stayed.\(^\text{14}\) The variants between early editions of the first thirty cantos and *A Draft of XXX Cantos* have not been authoritatively collated, a process which the efficient program of revision suggests is redundant: all variations have been taken into account on the appearance of the book.

\(^{13}\) *Poetry* 10. 3 (June 1917): 113-21.
\(^{14}\) *The Criterion*, 1, no. 4 (July 1923): 363-84.
The appearance in pamphlet form later in 1919 of *The Fourth Canto* marks the first discrete publication of an individual canto.\(^{15}\) An unknown number of copies was printed; Gallup records a note from the author: ‘forty copies *privately* printed, for author’s convenience, NOT published!’\(^{16}\) Publication is not just a question of printed form, but its circulation to a public beyond the reach of the author, hence the emphasis throughout Pound’s career on testing formats in provisional appearances.

The first book of cantos to be published appeared six years later, *A Draft of XVI Cantos*, a large format luxury edition of which ninety copies were printed and published by William Bird’s Three Mountains Press in Paris in 1925. Pound wrote of this edition:

> It is to be one of the real bits of printing; modern book to be jacked up to somewhere near level of mediaeval mss. No Kelmscott mess of illegibility.\(^ {17}\)

The proximity of ‘mss’ and ‘mess’ in this letter is telling. The literary forms which will endure, the ‘real bits of printing,’ are cognate to the mediaeval mss without the mess. It is an improved and refined form of the text which is brought into print; the qualities of the medieval manuscript adapted to the modern book. Slatin argues that the publication of *A Draft of XVI Cantos* marks the consolidation of the ‘design’ of the poem: ‘what remained was the filling in of the details of a design or plan already implicit in the first sixteen cantos.’\(^ {18}\) Effectively, the first appearance of the cantos as a book is simultaneous to the realisation of a set of guidelines which direct the composition of the cantos which follow.

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\(^ {16}\) Gallup, *Ezra Pound: A Bibliography*, p. 27.
\(^ {17}\) Pound to Kate Buss, 12\(^{th}\) May, 1923, *The Selected Letters of Ezra Pound*, p. 187.
This book is of similar dimensions to *A Draft of the Cantos 17-27*, published by the Ovid Press in London in 1928. Both are folio editions, four times the size of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The smooth vellum covers of these books, tanned, dyed and stamped with the author’s monogram in gold, offer a quite different tactile sensation to linen bound first edition. They are printed in large Caslon type on paper whose chainlines and watermarks are immediately perceptible. Enormous decorated wood-cut initials designed by Henry Strater for *A Draft of XVI Cantos* and Gladys Hynes for *A Draft of the Cantos 17-27* introduce each canto and reinforce the visual and bibliographical continuity between the two books. See Figure 8, overleaf. The initials are printed in black and red and contain smaller illustrations which spill out beyond the limits of the letter onto the page. The initials break up the first lines of the individual cantos. The bibliographical ornamentation visibly interrupts and inflects the verbal text; its magnificent dimensions and illustrations appear to overwhelm the text which follows. As if to reinforce the connection of these books to the history of fine printing, the Aldine dolphin and anchor appears as an illustration on page 32 of *A Draft of the Cantos 17-27*, at the end of Canto XXI.

McGann reads the decorated books as an allusion to William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelite revival of Renaissance ideals of the book, drawing attention also to the counterpoint of the style of the illustrations, and to the modern typeface in which the texts are printed. As much as the initials echo the lavish productions of the Kelmscott Press, their allusion is of a stylised nature. The illustrations contained by the initials depict contemporary scenes as

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19 *A Draft of XVI Cantos* measures 392 x 262 mm; *A Draft of the Cantos 17-27* 391 x 259 mm.
Figure 8. Ezra Pound, *A Draft of the Cantos. 17-27* (1928).
well as historical and literary motifs. Like the allusions within the poems, a continuity between historical forms and their modern counterparts is maintained.

In 1930, these previous editions were conclusively bound together as *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The most significant reform made by *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is the adjustment of line breaks and lengths to the reduced dimensions of the initials beginning each poem. *Cantos XXVIII-XXX* had appeared in the *Hound and Horn* in April 1930 but had not been published in book form until the release of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. This is a much smaller book, measuring 211 by 148 millimetres, an edition for the peripatetic reader, like the small format texts printed in Venice by Aldus Manutius. The Hours Press edition comprised two hundred and twelve copies, of which two were printed on real vellum and were not for sale, ten printed on Texas Mountain paper were signed and numbered, and two hundred ordinary copies printed on Canson Montgolfier Soliel Vélin, a heavy rag paper.\(^{21}\) This edition acted as the copy-text for the commercial Farrar and Rinehart and Faber and Faber editions published in 1933.

The initials introducing each canto in this edition are of much more restrained dimensions than those which appear in the earlier books. Figure 9, overleaf, shows four different versions of the letter ‘a’ prepared by Dorothy Shakespeare; the letters appear adapted to the physical form of the poem, rather than vice versa. McGann observes that:

> The 1930 capitals possess a distinctive (clearly ‘vorticist’) style that mediates between the self-consciously antiqued physicalness of the 1925 and 1928 texts and capitals, and the more transparent trade-edition texts of 1933 and thereafter.\(^{22}\)

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\(^{21}\) Simultaneous to this edition, a further ten copies were printed from the same plates and bound in orange leather boards and signed by the author. This is classed as a sub-edition by Gallup, *Ezra Pound: A Bibliography*, p. 46.

\(^{22}\) McGann, ‘Pound’s *Cantos*: A Poem Including Bibliography,’ p. 34.
Figure 9. Four initials from *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1930).
Stark and precise, these spare initials evoke at once Celtic calligraphy, illuminated manuscripts, precisely cut printed letters and oriental alphabet systems. A series of basic forms, they are less elaborate, more abstract than the pre-Raphaelite extravanganzas which introduce the earlier versions of the poem. They do not dominate the page but serve to launch each poem, functioning as cantilevered structures from which the text is appended. In this edition, the long poem needs no visual supplement or pictorial narrative to elucidate its form.

The Hours Press, established by Nancy Cunard in 1928 at La Chapelle-Réanville, a village outside Paris, and later located in Paris itself, published a neat twenty four editions before its closure in 1931. The authors published by the Hours Press are an index of Cunard’s wide involvement with literary circles in London and Paris, spanning writers of the French and English fin de siècle, like Arthur Symons and George Moore, and those concentrated around Montparnasse and Bloomsbury, like Richard Aldington, Ezra Pound and Samuel Beckett. The grand-daughter of the shipping magnate, Sir Samuel Cunard, and the daughter of socialite and patron of the arts, Lady Emerald (Maud) Cunard, Nancy Cunard had access to sufficient financial resources to operate the press relatively free of commercial considerations. Rather than being guided by financial necessity, the publication list of the Hours Press according to the number of books Cunard and her assistants, who included Henry Crowder and Louis Aragorn, were physically able to publish.

Cunard undertook a rapid apprenticeship as a printer and printed all of the books published when the press was located at La Chapelle-Réanville. It was from William Bird of the
Three Mountains Press whom Cunard purchased her two hundred year old Belgian Mathieu press, probably the one used to print *A Draft of XVI Cantos* in 1925. It was not this press which was finally used to print *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, as symmetrical an equation as that would be. A poet and printer, Cunard is the kind of distinguished publisher to whom *A Draft of XXX Cantos* pays homage, in contrast to the travesties of modern printing vilified therein. Cunard’s memoir of the press, *These Were The Hours*, records her formation as a printer and closely observes the materials and processes of printing: ‘the smell of printers’ ink pleased me greatly, as did the beautiful freshness of the glistening pigment.’ When the press moved to Paris in late 1929, Cunard relinquished her role as printer and did not bring her affinity for ink and paper to the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*.

Pound maintained good relationships with a number of publishers and saw many more books and articles printed than most of his peers. It is safe to assume that he selected the Hours Press to publish *A Draft of XXX Cantos* from a number of options and planned to later republish the book for a larger audience. The Ovid Press, the Three Mountains Press, the Hours Press, the publishers of the first thirty cantos set an impressive figurative backdrop to *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Motifs which recur within the poems – metamorphoses, mountains, time – are repeated in the names of the publishers, enhancing the relationship between the verbal content of the work and its physical, bibliographical form.

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Unlike James Joyce and *Ulysses*, Pound and *A Draft of XXX Cantos* were prepared to meet the press. Cunard recalls:

> It was Pound himself who found Maître-Imprimeur Bernoaud, in Paris, and told him exactly how he wanted the volume to look.  

The specifications of the first edition are ‘exactly’ decreed by the poet, his role not limited to checking proofs but rather, expanded to orchestrate the physical form of the book. The publisher provides only the seal of the book, her colophon stamps the edition with exemplary literary, aristocratic and *avant-garde* credentials. This Modernist author has complete control over the visual field of the page, stewarding the text to the final stage of publication. The conflict between manuscript and printed forms played out in the composition of *Ulysses* is supplanted by a text which has already been primed for the press.

The Hours Press edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is superseded by the commercial editions published in the United States and the United Kingdom in 1933. The text of the first edition was reprinted in March, 1933 in an edition of one thousand in the United States by Farrar and Rinehart. Faber and Faber released a commercial edition of fifteen hundred copies in the United Kingdom in September, 1933 which advertised ‘Mr Pound’s latest corrections’ and it is this version which has been reprinted in subsequent collections of *The Cantos* by Faber and Faber and New Directions, both of which introduce new typesetting errors of their own. A change of format allows a little more text to fit each page. The convention of beginning each new canto on a recto is discarded, as are the ornamental initials. The limited edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is distinguished from the commercial editions by minor typographical errors. So, for example, in the commercial

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24 Cunard, *These Were the Hours*, p. 131.
edition, ‘shit’ and ‘shitting’ are toned down to ‘sh-t’ and ‘sh-tting’ (XV, 64), ‘Pesàro’ becomes ‘Pesaro’ (IX, 34-6), spaces before colons and semi-colons disappear and compositor’s errors are corrected, ‘ten beants’ is amended to ‘ten bezants’ (XVIII, 80) and an inverted ‘i’ is righted in ‘derricks’ (IX, 38).

The guidelines chiseled by the first publication of the book have remained authoritative and the text has not attracted the fervent editorial responses which characterised the reception of *Ulysses*. The authorial seal stamped on the texts has been received as a mark of textual stability. A polished form, this draft is not a spontaneous expression, but an ordered, self-sufficient figure, a deliberate and regulated release of the poet’s objectives. The original voice of the author is imperceptible, the book manufactured of the remnants and models of other books. The typographic development of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* through its bibliographical history describes a refinement of the printed form of the text; abstraction clarifies the motives of the book, compressing its bibliographical history into a single form. The first integral edition, unadorned and unillustrated, is the most minimal, irreducible form of the poems.
c) The Origins of Printed Texts

(i) Books and Bookmaking in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*

A book made of books, the surfaces onto which *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is printed are never blank but always historically determined. The page of the book is a surface already inscribed, its relativised form denies that the book is a neutral medium for the transmission of literary texts. Pound wrote of the paper for the proofs of *A Draft of XVI Cantos*:

> I see that the Whatman takes a better imprint than the Roma, *but* the stink!!!!!!!! *and* the transparency of the paper seem to me to make it most ondesirable sort of paper to print anything but obstetric woiks on.\(^{25}\)

The paper of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is heavy and opaque; the surface upon which the text is printed is anything but transparent. Pound’s work, it is implied, merits a finer backdrop than a work on human reproduction, something heavy enough to bear the weight of history and outlast the flimsy productions of the newspresses.

The pages of the book are historicised: Canto XVIII offers a lesson in paper-making delivered through the mouthpiece of Marco Polo, a witness to Kublai Khan’s introduction of paper currency:

> They take bast of the mulberry tree,  
> That is a skin between the wood and the bark,  
> And of this they make paper, and mark it  
> Half a tornesel, a tornesel, or a half-groat of silver.  
> (XVIII, 80)

The complicity of literature and mercantilism is emphasised so as to alert the reader to the components of the book at hand. Dard Hunter’s record of early European attitudes to paper supplements the observations of the poet:

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The early paper of Europe was regarded with disfavour, as not only was it higher in price and more fragile than parchment, which had been used for bookmaking, but it was distrusted on account of its introduction by Jews and Arabs.\textsuperscript{26}

The invocation of the history of papermaking draws attention to the always relative surfaces which compose the book, a supplement to the changing forms of the first thirty cantos as they approached the form of the first edition of \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos}, and adapt to later commercial editions.

\textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} denies the concept of the \textit{tabula rasa}. The page is a material and always changing surface: an original blank surface onto which the text is written is unimaginable. The blank sheet, figured as a ‘scrupulously clean table napkin’ (XIV, 61), is a benign image and the cleanliness of bourgeois linen is deceptive. It is impossible to imagine such a ‘scrupulously clean’ page within this book. Whereas the New Bibliographers and their heirs treat books as theoretically transparent, materially deficient vessels for transmitting the literary text, \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} insists on the historical specificity and significance of bibliographical form, in which every textual surface is pre-determined by history.

The first and thirtieth cantos draw the reader to the Renaissance book, an ideal frame for the modern book they are holding. At the end of Canto I, the poet cites an abridged Renaissance colophon: ‘In officina Wecheli, 1539, out of Homer’ (I, 5). The reference is to a parallel text edition of Homer printed in Paris, a simple and small format rendition of the \textit{Odyssey} in Latin and Greek prepared by Andreas Divus. As Kenner notes, the reference to Divus works to both identify a historical counterpart to the modern book and to elucidate

the refraction of the Anglo-Saxon rhythms of *The Seafarer* in the opening stanzas of the canto.\(^{27}\) Canto XXX returns to the Venice of Aldus Manutius and alerts the reader once more to the tradition of fine printing and durable cultural productions to which *A Draft of XXX Cantos* positions itself as a successor:

...and here have I brought cutters of letters and printers not vile and vulgar.  
(XXX, 149)

The fine printers of the Renaissance represented in *A Draft of XXX Cantos* stand in contrast to the debased profession of contemporary publishing. The first edition itself is a counterpoint to the productions of Baldy Bacon and his ilk, a rejuvenation of the book which aspires to provoke the kind of cultural renaissance transmitted by the books printed in the great Renaissance centres of learning. ‘A poem including history’ draws into focus the material history of literary production: the entire history of the printed book is designated as antecedent to the first publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. What produces the book is not solely a set of immediate circumstances but the history upon which it is built.

The entrepreneur Baldy Bacon, an acquaintance and correspondent of Pound’s, in Canto XII bases his business on printing, ‘distributing jobs to printers’ (XII, 53):

Baldy’s interest  
Was in money business.  
“ No interest in any other kind uv bisnis,”  
Said Baldy.  
(XII, 53)

The book is a commodity, divested of its aesthetic value to be shipped off indiscriminately to buyers by a publisher with no literary sensibility: ‘That, Fritz, is the era, to-day against

the past’ (VII, 25). *A Draft of XXX Cantos* dissociates itself from the business-like productions of Baldy, attempting to detach itself from the usurious relationship between commerce and literature. This suspicion of the book launched into the public sphere as a commodity is counterbalanced by the deliberate attentions granted *A Draft of XXX Cantos* before its release to a wider public. The bibliographical history of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is what distinguishes it from the ‘bisnis’ of commercial publishing.

Canto XXVI depicts another publisher, ‘that music publisher,’ trying to stay ahead of the game, a further declaration of the poet’s familiarity with books published by printers ‘vile and vulgar’:

> And there was that music publisher,  
> The fellow that brought back the shrunk Indian head  
> Boned, oiled, from Bolivia, said:  
> “Yes, I went out there, Couldn’t make out the trade,  
> Long after we’d melt up the plates,  
> Get an order, 200 copies, Peru,  
> Or some station in Chile.”  
> Took out Floradora in sheets,  
> And brought back a red-headed mummy.  
> (XXVII, 130)

The book is conceived of as its base elements: plates, copies and sheets. The publisher returns from his travels with a corpse wrapped in cloth, the remains, perhaps, of a hapless author. The invocation of Baldy Bacon and the music publisher hint at the future of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and the metamorphosis that it imagines it might undergo in the hands of such characters. The book is a package to be carted around to profit its publishers, an economy which *A Draft of XXX Cantos* undertakes to evade, both through the exposure of the conditions of contemporary printing and through the close attention paid to its published form by Pound. Under such conditions, the form of the text must be perfected before it reaches a commercial publisher, just as *A Draft of XXX Cantos* was by the time it
was printed by Farrar and Rinehart.

Kenner terms the structure of the first thirty cantos ‘a closed loop within the Renaissance with modern extrapolations.’ Bibliographically speaking, these modern extrapolations imply both the printed form of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and the contemporary printers and publishers represented in the poem and as the book’s history. The history of printing is incorporated into the long poem, asserting that all texts are contingent on their means of production. Like the porkers of Portugal, the business of printing is ‘fattening with the fulness of time’ (XII, 55) and, following the logic of renewal and decay witnessed by the poem, its products will be marooned by the passage of history. The monumental books printed in the Renaissance stand in contrast to the ephemeral productions of the contemporary presses: the wind of ‘Aeolus’ is transfigured in *Canto XV* as ‘a continual bum-belch/ distributing its productions’ (XV, 65), this draught another play on the ‘draft’ of the title. These productions, the daily press, are the ephemera of contemporary life, to be discarded with the day:

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boredom born out of boredom,
british weeklies, copies of the . . . . . . . . . . c,
a multiple . . . . . . nn.
(XV, 65)
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Suspension marks stand in for the content of the ‘british weeklies,’ the specificities of their form irrelevant and disposable. The fleeting life-span of the daily press is reiterated in Canto XXVIII to further distinguish *A Draft of XXX Cantos* from such transient productions:

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And lest it pass with the day’s news
Thrown out with the daily paper.
(XXVIII, 139)
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This kind of text ‘breeds by scission’ (XV, 65); *A Draft of XXX Cantos* presents itself as a form which will not be split by such scission, or augmented by the attentions of editors. The text does not limit itself to the ‘day’s news’ but seeks to draw the resilient news and novelties of modernity into correspondence with their historical precedents. The first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* associates itself with the enduring ‘core forms’ of the Renaissance book, the ruins of Troy and the epics transmitted through literary history. It relies on both its historical credentials and its continuity of a tradition beyond the reach of commercial publishers for its future adaptation to a commercial edition. The appearances of Baldy Bacon and the music publisher are part of the lesson in bibliographical sensibility offered by *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, acting as a figurative injunction to readers to heed the form of the book they are holding.

**(ii) ‘Truth and Calliope’: History and Quotation**

The poetic and bibliographical form of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* mediates the demands of art and history, a conflict animated at the beginning of Canto VIII:

> These fragments you have shelved (shored).
> “Slut!” “Bitch!” Truth and Calliope
> Slanging each other sous les lauriers.
> (VIII, 28)

These lines draw Modernist poetry into a continuum with a Classical dispute beneath the laurels, the dispute between art and truth displayed in the first edition of *Sejanus His Fall*. The first line quotes T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, a sign that the modern epic must satisfy two muses: Truth and Calliope, the muse of epic poetry. The frame of literary history imposes a structure of objectivity on composition and demands the poet adapt to its requirements. In turn, the poet imposes a metrical structure on composition, editing literary history to its shape. The poet acts as a guide to the literary history he witnesses, asserting a
new order between the texts identified as its progenitors, and casting *A Draft of XXX Cantos* as the apex of and successor to this history.

The transformations of the poet and of the voice or persona adopted by the cantos establish a modern paradigm of authorship which can adapt endlessly to the changing material demands of textual production. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* renounces a unifying individual subjectivity or persona. Textual voices are interrupted, transformed and disappear into the poems. The continuity of a voice which is original to the poet, or unique to the book is disrupted by the perpetual intrusion of other texts and voices. The travestied impersonations and imitation of historical and literary voices by *A Draft of XXX Cantos* evoke historical subjects distant from the life of Ezra Pound. Voice – the transient emanation of an identifiable subjectivity – is objectified and turned into print. The Romantic voice, imagined as a manuscript, is gradually displaced by the orchestration of many abstracted voices by the mechanisms of print, like the interplay of *stretti* in a fugure. The effect of this distribution of voice is the projection of a polymorphous literary persona who is unconfined by the boundaries of social identity. Composition effaces the signs of the poet, completely absorbed is he by the task at hand: perception, intellection, organisation.

The stylistic homogeneity engendered by a single figure of composition is overwhelmed by the appearance of so many other texts within *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, to which the guiding poetic voice readily adapts. A great deal of the content of the poems have already been carved, etched, written and printed by other hands. Manifestly, they are not properly original to the book. *La Commedia Divina*, the *Odyssey*, *Sordello*, and the other epic forms
upon which *A Draft of XXX Cantos* depends, are absorbed into the texture of the book, their partition from each other unclear. When quotation marks are used to indicate quoted speech or a citation from another text, they serve to objectify those quotations and contain them within the larger form of the text. Quotation marks dislocate their contents from the sequence of the poem, directing the reader to yet another source of the book’s renewals. They are not, however, a sign of fidelity: the transcription of text contained within quotation marks its transformation. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* displays no qualms about rendering manuscript and inscriptions as printed forms. Quoted speech, quoted manuscripts, quoted books are all equally disposed on the page. The poet edits his selections from the history of literature and ratifies them with his seal, their place in the structure of the book:

“And here, Myo Cid, are the seals,  
The big seal and the writing.”  
(III, 11)

The seal of historical equivalence authorises the writing, disjunct from the personality of the poet. Indices of transcription and quotation appear throughout, ‘As Poggio has remarked’ (III, 11), ‘As Cavalcanti had seen her’ (IV, 16) and so forth. It is the effect of a literal transcription which is important, rather than the finitudes of correct quotation. The poet must reconstruct a narrative of the past from such fragments, extracting their meaning even when “Derivation uncertain” (XXIII, 107). The poet is bound by the historical record, summarising the history before him for the reader: ‘And all you can say is, anyway’ (IX, 35): there is nothing left to add.

It is in the Malatesta Cantos that the reliance of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* on the historical record and its concern with transmitting the effect of the encounter with historical
documents is most clearly witnessed. Truth and Calliope, the warring muses who open
Canto VIII, the first of the Malatesta Cantos, both inflect the content of the texts which
follow. The interest of the Malatesta Cantos is in the historical equivalence of forms,
flagged at the beginning of Canto VIII. The fragment —

...hanni de
..dicis
...entia

— is rendered in the following lines:

Equivalent to:

Giohanni of the Medici
Florence.

(VIII, 28)

Establishing these equivalencies through translation, literary history is constructed as an
edifice, the poet the editor of its content, the architect of its form. This is not a successive
history, but the succession of history wrought as a whole object, reinforcing the analogy
drawn by Donald Davie between the poetry of Ezra Pound and sculpture and the analogy
drawn by Pound, Kenner and many others between the Tempio Malatestiano and The
Cantos.

Sigismundo, the condottiere, leader, despot and patron takes his place as a representative of
his age through the architectural and literary remains bequeathed to future generations. The
myth of Sigismundo survives too as a series of documents, literary supplements to the
enigmatic Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini. The description of the Tempio Malatestiano
reads as a sardonic description of the book which contains it:

And in the style “Past ruin’d Latium”
The filagree hiding the gothic,
        With a touch of rhetoric in the whole
And the old sarcophagi
Such as lie, smothered in grass by San Vitale.
(IX, 41)

The temple endures, though ‘smothered in grass,’ just as *A Draft of XXX Cantos* seeks to last into posterity. Davie argues that it is the *virtù* of Sigismundo which earns his place in the poem, ‘the *virtù* not of doer of artificer, but of the patron who caused things to be done, caused artifacts to be made.’\textsuperscript{29} The thing made by Sigismundo is the *Tempio Malatestiano*; the thing made by the poet is *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The *Tempio* was not built from scratch but is the refurbishment of the thirteenth century church of San Francesco, just as the Malatesta Cantos are essentially a refurbishment of Pound’s historical researches. The arches and piers of the temple are evoked by the regular arches traced by the right margins of the Malatesta Cantos. The architecture of the poems is built of blocks of secondary texts, a tessellation of quotations cut and refashioned to fit the form of the text. The logic of these additions is contrapuntal. The poems accumulate the textual history of Sigismundo and so become another temple in his honour. These regular forms are disrupted by the quotation of the contents of the post-bag which appear as prose, the line breaks not directed by any apparent metrical scheme.

In a letter sent in Canto VIII, the signature of Sigismundo seals the authenticity of the correspondence recounted:

\begin{flushright}
SIGISMUNDO PANDOLPHUS DE MALATESTIS  
*In campo Illus Domini Venetorum die 7 Aprilis* 1449 contra Cremonam.  
(VIII, 54-6)
\end{flushright}

This signature attests to the historical equivalence of Canto VIII to the documents examined by the poet; the effect is of verisimilitude not to the subjective experience of

history, but to its documentary remains. The contents of historical documents are presented as if literal transcribed: ‘And this is what they found in the post-bag’ (IX, 37) opens a suite of letters addressed to Sigismundo. The post-bag is shut with the comment:

That’s what they found in the post-bag
And some more of it to the effect that
He “lived and ruled.”
(IX, 41)

The Malatesta Cantos are not, of course, literal transcription; it is the effect of what happened that *A Draft of XXX Cantos* aspires to catch, rather than an exact account: ‘‘gists’ in a radically compressed format.’ To establish the ‘gist’ of Sigismundo’s biography, the primary documents in the post-bag are rewritten in a vernacular idiom that is neither of the Renaissance or early twentieth century.

The poet acts as a kind of eclectic editor, applying both the science and art of textual scholarship to his researches to recuperate the sense of documents and the historical past. D’Epiro, in his examination of the composition of the Malatesta Cantos, records transcriptions, translations, and historical facts in Pound’s reading notes, revised and rewritten to bridge the gap between Pound’s readers and Renaissance texts. His research makes clear how much material was discarded by Pound as the Malatesta Cantos approached their first published form. The work of composition is to refine and clarify its subject through the gradual rejection of unnecessary content. Historical detail is sacrificed to poetic verisimilitude, the result the published poem. There is no discernable linear relation between the fragments, a set of communiqués which extract only the necessary

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details. As John Whittier-Ferguson notes of the redeployment of prose in *Eleven New Cantos* (1934), *The Fifth Decad of Cantos* (1937) and *Cantos LII-LXXI*, ‘he [the poet] must put a library onto notecards that others can comprehend.’\(^{32}\) Whether the reader – ‘the lay reader’ (XXII, 102), ‘the cake-eaters, the consumers of icing,’ (XXIV, 114) – will indeed comprehend the notecards is another matter: they are displayed as the content of the poem. The book is not premised upon the intersubjective exchange between poet and reader but upon the objective collation and demonstration of this library. The protocols of correct quotation are discarded; the interest of the poet is in the rendition of a series of equivalent, rather than exact forms.

The Malatesta Cantos conserve, as Kenner observes, the ‘vigor of actual documents.’\(^{33}\) The space-saving contractions of Renaissance secretary scripts are reflected in usage like ‘shud,’ ‘wd’ and ‘yr,’ abbreviations which also echo the idiosyncratic style of Pound’s personal correspondence. This equivalence between *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and historical documents is carried through to later cantos: ‘As you will find it in my big green account book’ (XXI, 96), ‘Thus the book of the mandates’ (XXIV, 110); ‘THE BOOK OF THE COUNCIL MAJOR/ 1255 be it enacted’ (XXV, 115). Marco Polo’s memoirs in Canto XVII, Thomas Jefferson’s correspondence and the account books of the Medici in Canto XXI also serve to bring *A Draft of XXX Cantos* into the realm of historiography, adapted to the demands of a long poem. It is fragments, rather than complete texts which are shelved in Canto IX, the relevant particulars distilled for the readers and stamped with their dates, a mark of historical authenticity. This is a text which has already been edited, which declares correction and annotation redundant: ‘All I want you to do is follow the orders’ (X, 47).

\(^{32}\) Whittier-Ferguson, *Framing Pieces*, p. 145.

Poetic form appears not as a *derèglement des senses* but as a regulated release of the sense, or core forms of these historical documents.

The structural breaks and groupings of the individual cantos and their regeneration on publication mirror the figurative schemes of fragmentation and unification in the long poem. The poet bears witness to cycles of historical change, the narrative of the poem accreting through time: ‘And where there was gunwale, there now was vine-trunk’ (II, 8). The beginning of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is impossible to stabilise: the first word of the poem is ‘And,’ signalling that all which follows is continuous to another set of narratives, written onto a surface which is itself already inscribed. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* begins in *media res*, a participant in a project already in progress. Canto I closes with the image of Aphrodite rising from the foam, its final line is gravid: ‘So that:’ (I, 5). Conjunction and endless supplementarity are the logical relations of the individual cantos to each other within the book. Seven cantos begin with the word ‘And’ (I, X, XII, XVI, XVIII, XXVI, XXVIII), Canto XXII begins with ‘An’ and the Latin ‘Et’ announces Canto XXIII. ‘And’ is the copula of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, its form a regeneration of its history. The paratactic relationships between cantos and within individual cantos are logically more difficult to follow than the hypotactic conjunctions which order the conventional epic. It is left for the reader to discern the relationships between clauses and cantos and so organise the connections contained within the book.

The ‘wilderness of renewals,’ like the regeneration of the Malatesta correspondence, eventually yields the order of the book, the formula repeated in Cantos XX XXI: ‘Basis of renewal, renewals’ (XX, 91); ‘Confusion, source of renewals’ (XXI, 100). This movement
from confusion to abstract order and regulated renewal is the compositional objective of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The literary past is reconstructed from its profuse origins and compressed into a continuous narrative of perception and intellection, ultimately yielding the redeeming order of the poem.

*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is renewed by allusion in Cantos XV and XVI: the historical figure of William Blake appears in a hell of his own making, the poetic and visual landscape of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*:

\[
\text{Ἡλιον τ' Ἡλιον} \\
\text{blind with the sunlight,} \\
\text{Swollen-eyed, rested,} \\
\text{lids sinking, darkness unconscious.} \\
(XV, 67)
\]

This bridge is situated right at the centre of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, at the end of Canto XV. It marks the passage from Blakean Romanticism to the Modernism of Paris in the nineteen twenties. Ἡλιον: the vision is of Blake's blinding epiphany. In four lines the canto moves from Ἡλιον to the distinctively modern diction of ‘unconscious,’ a word not in circulation till the eighteenth century and inextricably associated with Freud, Surrealism and the Modernist parsing of the Romantic trope of creative subjectivity. The renewal in the cantos which follow is foreshadowed by a ray of light in Hell: the formal light of objectivity which illuminates the composition of the Modernist book. To encompass the movement from Classical Greece to the age of the unconscious is the aspiration of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, crossing the formal partitions raised by the literary past. It is not ‘darkness unconscious’ — the blind voice of the soul or artistic imagination — which guides the poet but his vision of the present, informed by his knowledge of the past and his renewal of earlier texts like *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*:
And I bathed myself with the acid to free myself
of the hell ticks,
Scales, fallen louse eggs.
(XVI, 69)

The poet speaks as Blake, immersed like the plates of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* in a bath of acid to purge himself of the signs of the ‘lousy lazy’ world. Whereas the Romantic book is suspended in a state of bibliographical penance, aware of its corrupt material form, the hell ticks which fall on the pages of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are the signs of the material production of the text. It is amidst this ‘wilderness of confusions’ that the regeneration borne by the book, a compression of all the books which precede it, is achieved.

The history of the book, as figured in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, serves as a supplement to the contemporary investigations of bibliographers into the effects of material transmission. Whereas the New Bibliographers exert themselves to rationalise and eliminate the signs of transmission, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* integrates the process of transmission. Typographical error, or the appearance thereof, plays an important role in the bibliographical aesthetics of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Just as the style of *Ulysses* makes it difficult to determine whether a given example is a compositor’s slip or stylistic innovation, the boundaries between deliberate and inadvertent error in *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are unclear. The transcription of ‘Schoeney’ for ‘Schoenyes’ or ‘Ileuthyeria’ for ‘Eileithyia’, and the pun on *heleinaus* and *heleptolis* in Canto II establish these slippages as part of the texture of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. These are object lessons in linguistic flux and transliteration: Hell, Helen, Eleanor, Eleusis; the synonyms are contagious. Spelling variants like “‘Peace! Pieyce!!’” said Mr. Giddings’ (XVIII, 81), ‘Jeen-jah’ and ‘Ginger’ (XXII, 103), and vernacular nonce words reflect the language usage witnessed by the poet, in flux rather than confined to the
conventions of one milieu. Standards of correctness are in contestation throughout —
‘Those ain’t buttons, them’s bobbles’ (XXII, 106) — and it is to its textual subjects, rather
than a unifying subject or style that the poem remains faithful. The fallibility of the author
(critics love to pick apart Pound’s errors of scholarship) is continuous to the fallible and
dynamic transmission of literary texts through the ages. The linguistic slippages entailed in
the copying, translation, composition and compositing of texts are caught by the poem.
The static specimens of textual corruption are presented as object lessons to the reader in
linguistic variation. These are not the deficiences of transmission, but the signs of the
materiality of the book, never an ideal or absolute form.

Hugh Kenner writes that Pound composed ‘orally/aurally.’34 Be that as it may, Pound
composed *A Draft of XXX Cantos* for the printed page, transliterating this oral/aural
program of composition into print thus rendering intonation a visible as well as a sonic
quality of language, just as he translated foreign language texts for English readers. The
errors of reference which appear in the poem are the fault-lines of this transposition,
physical evidence of the transformation undergone by texts as they are read, annotated,
translated and published. All texts are imagined as subject to such slippage and *A Draft of
XXX Cantos* is hostile to the correction or amelioration of the form presented on first
publication. It is an anti-idealistic account of textual composition and transmission which
impels the poem, constructing an integral object for the reader, complete with ‘hell ticks.’

The beginnings of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are widely dispersed but its conclusion is clearly
marked:

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Explicit canto
XXX.
(XXX, 149)

The final lines of Canto XXX formally declare the boundaries of the draft in an authoritarian and anonymous manner. The integrity of this draft has not been disturbed by editors and the partition is retained in all subsequent editions. The comprehensive program of composition followed by Pound asserts the text as a stable bibliographical whole which defies annotation.
d) The Reception of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*

i) *A Draft of XXX Cantos, Readers and Editors*

*A Draft of XXX Cantos* has had a far less eventful and contentious textual history than *Ulysses*. Certainly, the conditions of composition and publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* present a very different set of questions to editors than both *Ulysses* and those envisaged by the New Bibliographers. The text is distanced from its manuscript origins, its production scrupulously supervised by the author. The book considerably revises the image of a single subjectivity as the origin of a literary text. The beginnings of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are distributed beyond the figurative reach of the author and the book itself is represented as a malleable form, one always subject to its own historical placement. This literary strategy, compounded by the certain and efficient process recorded in the archive, has been much more successful than that advanced by *Ulysses*.

The first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* was available only to a select number of readers. Prior to any publication, Pound circulated cantos in draft form amongst his friends and colleagues for comment and criticism. Pound’s publishers, editors, friends and the readers of the little magazines to which he contributed were his earliest audience and the first to read and see the nascent forms of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The strategic releases of poems to individuals allows the poet to closely monitor the responses of his readership and regulate the reception of his book. No individual audience member would finally be able to contain the full flourish of the printed forms of *The Cantos*:

No reader, in actual practice, ever belonged to all these audiences, and in fact no reader other than Pound could ever have traced all the parts of *The Cantos* as they were progressively published. This complexity finds its reflex in a stark but simple
fact: no library in the world, including the library that houses Pound’s own papers, holds all the journals and volumes in which The Cantos were gradually issued.\textsuperscript{35}

A unified reader is as difficult to project onto \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} as a single author. \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} can conceivably be read in one sitting but one venue cannot contain the full bibliographical flourish and variety of its history. It is the effect of this compression, the consolidation of a panoply of historical forms into one volume that \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} seeks to assert.

New Directions published \textit{Cantos 1-117} for the first time in 1970; the structural partitions raised by the table of contents retain the form and title of \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos}. Terrell typifies the critical preference for complete, integral texts:

No final literary criticism about The Cantos could begin until after 1970 when the complete text was published in one volume.\textsuperscript{36}

‘Final’ reading requires a stable bibliographical object. Not only does Terrell’s comment suggest that literary criticism which preceded the publication of The Cantos is in draft form, it suggests that the early cantos rely on the later ones for complete elucidation of their meanings. The integral text of \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} is that first published in 1930 and amended to the format of a commercial edition in 1933. Received as a discrete entity, an element in a continual sequence of publication, it is unaffected by the publication of the \textit{The Cantos}. As such, ‘final literary criticism’ on \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} could begin in 1930 when the first edition was published. The individual book accumulates its own history but is always relative to and a participant in a larger set of structural cycles: \textit{The Cantos}; the history of printed books.

\textsuperscript{35} Lawrence Rainey, ‘Introduction,’ in Rainey ed., \textit{A Poem including History}, p. 3.

The death of Ezra Pound in 1972 had far greater implications for reading *A Draft of XXX Cantos* than the publication of *The Cantos* in 1970. The death of the poet closes the possibility of further revision and renders the early book finally complete, rather than awaiting re-inscription by a still living author. ‘A poem of some length’ is an indeterminate quantity whilst the author is alive. The survival of the author renders ‘a draft’ a space of constant provisionality and forecloses the possibility of reading the book as a stable, closed object. It is the death of the author which marks the autonomy of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and an arbitrary close to its composition. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* finally achieves its enduring, monumental form on the death of the poet. The long life of Ezra Pound goes a long way towards accounting for the lack of a critical edition of the text: why speculate as to the author’s fair copy when he remains alive to answer for it?

The character Ezra Pound does not appear in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. His appearances later in *The Cantos* present a complication of the contract of authorship proposed by the earlier book in which the poet is a function of the literary text, a persona who adapts to the form of the texts at hand. The revision of authorship and intention in the *Pisan Cantos*, for example, is not consistent with the definition developed in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, a development beyond the purview of this study. Nonetheless, readers have evinced considerable interest in the manuscript of the book and the biography of the poet in relation to the first thirty cantos. Opening his authoritative discussion of *The Cantos* in *The Pound Era*, Kenner reproduces the first line of the autograph manuscript of the poem, suggesting a single scripitive origin to the book, reinforced by his assertion that:

A poem including history will contain not only elements and recurrences but a perceiving and uniting mind that can hope one day for a transfiguring vision of order
it only glimpses now, and that in carrying simple themes to a massive simultaneous orchestration will achieve the poem’s end in discovering its own richest powers.\footnote{Kenner, \textit{The Pound Era}, pp. 349, 376.} 

The facsimile image of the first line of Canto I is an index of Kenner’s intention to frame his analysis around the poet. It is the phenomenological order imposed by the mind of the poet and represented by his autograph which critics have exerted themselves to recuperate. The ‘transfiguring vision of order’ desired by \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} is provisionally, and eventually, completely achieved by the binding of the book, not by the projection of the poet onto the page. Kenner’s regression to the manuscript effectively reverses the movement of \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} towards its most ordered form, the printed book.

The aporias and absences of \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos}, emblematized by the white space of the pages, have tempted readers to complete them by positioning a unifying subjectivity who ‘knows’ about the poem: Ezra Pound. ‘In an important sense,’ writes Froula:

\begin{quote}
 to read \textit{The Cantos} is to ‘read’ the drama of Pound’s struggle to transform the terms of epic to accommodate the modern world.\footnote{Froula, \textit{To Write Paradise}, p. 2.}
\end{quote}

In other words, the epic drama motivating \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos} is the personal, subjective drama of composition. The aspiration of the book to contain literary history is circumscribed by the biography of the poet, textual objectives redefined as a personal struggle. The composition of the Modernist book – a rational and deliberate authorial objective – is transfigured as the history of authorial desire, animated by the subjectivity of the poet. In a similar vein, Flory laments that Pound:

\begin{quote}
 chooses to keep ‘Pound the man’ out of the reader’s eye as much as possible, yet this deprives his poem of the highly visible and absorbing hero who gives the traditional epic its unity.\footnote{Wendy Stallard Flory, \textit{Ezra Pound and The Cantos: A Record of Struggle} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 2.}
\end{quote}
It is a faceless imprimatur which seals *A Draft of XXX Cantos*: ‘Explicit Canto XXX.’ The invocation of ‘Pound the man’ installs a synthetic imagination which asserts a compositional unity to the book. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* does not participate in a traditional epic, it is a modern epic and there is no need for a bardic figure to write, memorise or sing the text. Publication prints, orders and finally coheres this epic. It is the book which is the structure through which it achieves unity. The hero writing, typing and proof-reading is absorbed into this greater structure as one of many secondary contexts.

Froula’s description of the composition of Canto IV romantically evokes the place and state of mind of composition:

> The manuscripts of Pound’s letters to his parents indicates that he composed it during the summer of 1919 while on his walking tour of Provence, after the poem had already evolved through MS D.40

Her evocation of the original site of inspiration recalls one of Wordsworth’s more famous titles – ‘Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye During a Tour, 13 July 1798’ – and reveals the vestigial Romanticism in critical efforts to reconstruct the scene of composition. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* can not be reduced to a single moment in time. It displays a multitude of beginnings and the guiding poet attempts to maintain a continuous relationship to all of them. The biographical circumstances of the composition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* are distanced from the poem by the many stages of revision, copying and publication recorded in the archive. There is no innocent or original text to this poem. On publication, the traces of creative subjectivity have already been eliminated from the surfaces of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Efforts to unite the poem through the reanimation of the poet are unnecessary. A different order of

40 Froula, *To Write Paradise*, p. 49. MS D is a stage of the composition process named and documented by Froula.
compositional unity is asserted by the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* as a single volume. The counterpoint of the historical and the contemporary which animates *A Draft of XXX Cantos* casts contemporary literature as a fallen ideal, an ideal revived and given new objective form in this book. This project of rejuvenation does not require the compositional or interpretative apparatus of authorial subjectivity. The argument and sustaining evidence of the poem are presented as a set of self-renewing objective forms, defined by their place in the book and their relationship to literary history.

*A Draft of XXX Cantos*, like *Ulysses*, functions as a ledger of its own composition, a record of its formative influences. In the most literal sense, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is a disingenuous book and its representation of artistic struggle can not be directly projected on to the experience or ‘struggle’ of Ezra Pound. Impersonality is strenuously imposed upon the poem, literary and historical characters and personalities are adapted and disfigured to sustain a larger objective structure. As a result, the book is crowded, polyphonic, plurivocal. Crucially the subjectivities fragmented and captured within its covers do not add up to a portrait of the poet, but to a portrait of poetry. *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is a monumental study of the continual inter-implications of art and history and clearly, individual subjectivity is too fragile a theoretical foundation for this epic.

**ii) The Future of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*: A Variorum Edition?**

Canto XIV sends a stern warning to potential editors, railing against ‘the betrays of language’ (XIV, 61), ‘the blowing of dry dust and stray paper’ (XIV, 62) and ‘obstructors of distribution’ (XIV, 63), who turn books into stone thereby ‘obscur[ing] the texts with philology’ (XIV, 63). Gallup notes that ‘Ezra Pound’s awareness of the importance of
bibliography to sound scholarship is apparent all through his work published.41 The poet
so aware of bibliography and textual editing has shielded the text from the necessity of
further editorial perfection. Whittier-Ferguson, in his examination of the prose ‘glosses’ to
Pound’s poetry, exegetical works like ‘How to Read’ (1929), ABC of Economics (1933),
ABC of Reading (1934) and Guide to Kulchur (1938), argues that these texts serve to fill in
the blanks around The Cantos, elaborating a rationale to the long poem and providing
annotations to its content. He reads the collation of texts, like those gathered in the
Malatesta Cantos, as a mode of disavowing agency, a logical consequence to Pound’s
‘objection to commentary in any of its guises.’42 His reading makes clear that Pound
delegates these issues of annotation to secondary or peripheral texts; the book stands alone
as a self-contained apparatus.

Many of Pound’s academic readers, however, profess a different type of scholarship to
Pound’s idiosyncratic philology, with its disdain for ‘bloomink feetnotes’43 and the
editorial future of the text remains a point of debate. As McGann observes, the prospect of
editing A Draft of XXX Cantos is challenging not just because of the injunctions of the
poem against editing, but because of the constant adaptation of the verbal style of the poem
which:

will not allow an editor to proceed on the assumption that final distinctions can be
drawn, for example, between the substantives and accidentals, between the ‘text’ and
its ornaments—between the work of the poet, on the one hand, and the work of the
compositor, the printer, even the bibliographer on the other.44

41 Donald Gallup, On Contemporary Bibliography with Particular Reference to Ezra Pound (Austin:
to Pound: ‘I always said now didn’t I there’s some subjects on which the Buck Rabbit [Pound] is touchingly
ignorant such as French literature, drama, philosophy and theology…’ Cited in Humphrey Carpenter, A
42 Whittier-Ferguson, Framing Pieces, p. 118.
44 McGann, ‘Pound’s Cantos: A Poem Including Bibliography,’ p. 56.
Not least, this is because the poet – and in this instance, I synthesise the personae of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and Ezra Pound, active behind the scenes – seeks to usurp and absorb the work of the compositor, the printer and the bibliographer. The problems attendant to the production and transmission of printed texts are addressed by the poem and integrated as part of its form.

There are myriad authorially ratified forms of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and the most important of these are in print. Manuscripts represent an immature version of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, superseded first by typescripts, then by appearances in print of individual poems, and finally, by the publication of the first edition. The postulation of a copy-text requires one version of the text be selected as the basis of a critical edition. I would propose the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* as the best copy-text because it marks the adoption of a form which retained its resilience through the lifetime of the poet and *The Cantos*. This stated, however, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is a text which shuns correction, representing itself as a perfected form in advance of publication. Given the assertive organisation of the Pound archive, and the extensive printed record of the evolution of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* it would seem unlikely that a regression to manuscripts will define the future of the text. The complete documentation of the textual genesis of *The Cantos* is a scholarly task of gigantic dimensions which dwarfs the labour exerted producing a synoptic edition of *Ulysses* as the research of Taylor, Froula and Bush into the genesis of *The Cantos* demonstrates. As yet, the variants between printed editions of the
poems which comprise *A Draft of XXX Cantos* have not been comprehensively collated and reprinted, unlike the many lists prepared for *Ulysses*.45

The longest point of verbal variation between the Hours Press edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and the 1933 editions falls in Canto XIII and illuminates what will be at stake for editors. The Hours Press edition reads:

> And even I can remember  
> A day when the historians left blanks in their writings,  
> I mean for things they didn’t know,  
> But that time seems to be passing.  
> I mean for things they didn’t know,  
> But that time seems to be passing.”  
> And Kung said, “Without character you will.

The repetition of the last two lines was overlooked by the printers of the 1933 edition, and presumably by Pound when proofreading, giving:

> And even I can remember  
> A day when the historians left blanks in their writings,  
> I mean for things they didn’t know,  
> But that time seems to be passing.  
> I mean for things they didn’t know,  
> But that time seems to be passing.”  
> And Kung said, “Without character you will.

(XIII, 60)

When Kenner wrote Pound querying this point with regards to the inclusion of Canto XIII in an anthology, he was instructed by the poet to keep the repeated reflection. 46 Like Joyce, Pound refused to submit entirely to the mechanical reproduction of the text. The version in the 1933 edition mutes the incantatory reverberation of the repetition and the emphasis it bears. The blank is filled in by Kenner, the textual historian. ‘That time’ clearly has passed for *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, the text is not Pound’s ‘writings,’ but an

45 The fact that these variants have not been collated is perhaps testimony to the faith that editors and scholars have placed in Pound’s processes of revision. D’Epiro collects ‘Major Textual Variants in the Published Versions of the Malatesta Cantos’ in Appendix A, pp. 115-117. This list compares only the New Directions version of the text to that which first appeared in the *Criterion* in 1923. Froula’s and Taylor’s genetic texts display the variants as part of their editorial apparatuses.

object transmitted to readers via the print-house. The text of the first edition is the
perfected version of the text, its variation a consequence of its transmission, exactly the
kind of change to which *A Draft of XXX Cantos* instructs its reader be attentive.

In light of the complex textual history of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, a variorum edition is
advocated as the best form of critical edition to represent the text and its history. In
advance of an as yet unrealised full length edition, Richard Taylor has prepared a variorum
edition of the first three cantos in which he collates all printed copies up to the date of
publication of *A Draft of XVI Cantos* (1925).\(^47\) This edition makes visible the
transformation of the so-called ‘Ur-cantos’ through the first stages of their publication
history, following typescripts and setting copies for the texts as well as the versions
published. Christine Froula has investigated Canto IV closely as exemplary of the general
conditions of publication governing *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Cantos* as a larger
work, counting eight published texts and many more manuscripts. She has prepared a
genetic edition of Canto IV which reaches back to the manuscript forms of the text,
expanding the scope of the genetic edition beyond Taylor’s, which represents only the
printed genesis of the texts. Froula argues that the concept of final authorial intention is
incompatible to *The Cantos*, proposing instead that the text be conceived of ‘as the trace of
a temporal process which … is neither contained and bounded by the author during his
lifetime not concluded and closed off by his death.’\(^48\) The apparatus that she proposes to
display this theoretical construct is a variorum edition. Ronald Bush adds his voice to the
call for a variorum edition, writing:

discusses the methodological basis of the variorum edition in ‘Reconstructing Ezra Pound’s *Cantos:*

\(^48\) Froula, *To Write Paradise*, p. 176.
Until we possess an edition of *The Cantos* that displays the evolution of the text amidst the shifting currents of history, we will continue to risk radically misconstruing Pound’s work.\textsuperscript{49}

A variorum – whether limited to the printed texts which precede the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* or, like the synoptic edition of *Ulysses*, a kind of compressed variorum which reflects the manuscript development of the text – itself risks misconstruing the history of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The form of the variorum makes a point which is already implicit in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*: that the text is produced by and of what Bush terms ‘the shifting currents of history.’

An editorial apparatus which relativises the printed form of the text draws attention away from the bibliographical lesson integrated by the poem: that every text carries with it the weight of its bibliographical history. A variorum necessarily limits the composition of the text to the manuscripts, typescripts and books of Ezra Pound, an origin beyond which *A Draft of XXX Cantos* consistently stretches. To represent exclusively the genesis of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* effectively withdraws the book from the intertextual ecology which produces it. Further, displaying the fragmented history of transmission shatters the illusion of the text as a *fait accompli*, an objective reconciliation of ‘Truth and Calliope.’

*A Draft of XXX Cantos* is constructed so as to be impervious to editorial treatment like that exercised by the New Bibliographers and also to the kind of reconstruction envisaged in a variorum edition. There are variations to be accounted for – changes in format and typographical errors – but to present these in an edition as visible and tangible supplements

to the text is to undermine the integrity of composition asserted by the text. The purpose of the variorum edition – representing the descent of a text through history – is a vital imperative of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The history of printed texts and their transmission is not concealed by the poem, but synthesised as part of its coherent form. The motive of composition, to compress history into a poetic form, is reversed by an editorial progress which seeks to expand the image of the text to state explicitly what is already implicit in the poem. Effectively, the postulated variorum edition would undo the work of composition.

Whilst archival work into the bibliographical history of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* as a path to a better understanding the evolution of the text is of obvious critical value, to graft the fruits of this research onto the text by means of an editorial apparatus discounts the significance accorded these questions in the composition of the text. The deficiencies and lacunae upon which a critical edition is predicated – absences in the record, variation, fraught transmission – are addressed and incorporated by *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. The text imagines its own change of format as it is reproduced, attentive always to the consequences of transmission. These transformations, like the bibliographical transformations undergone by the first thirty cantos before 1930, are accounted for by the text.

*A Draft of XXX Cantos* displaces the ontological primacy of authorial subjectivity by presenting itself as the container of innumerable beginnings. The book is the entelechy of composition. The profuse origins and sources of composition terminate on the publication of the book. The binding of the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is a clear bibliographical indication of its structural coherence and integrity. The book is an assemblage, an apparatus which contains the poem. The individual cantos are an instrument of the overall scheme but are not their exact microcosm. The extremities of the
book complete in 1930, *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, mark the sub-division in another larger work. As solid a frame as the book is, it must always become an object in another scheme, as the books it integrates have been absorbed into its own texture.

To take seriously the commitment to historical authority articulated in the poem means to take the text as is: the reader must weather the changes wrought unto this form by history. Authority is displaced from the poet to the poem, the printed record the product of composition. Whilst human subjects are not conceived of as monolithic, works of art are: the ruins of Troy and the *Tempio Malatestiano* are the models adopted by the poem. The exegesis on the transformation of ideas and images through history applies also to the form of the text: bibliographical caution is embedded in *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. 
Chapter Five: *The Making of Americans* (1925)

Gertude Stein declared herself entirely satisfied with *The Making of Americans*. It is the book she refers to most frequently in her exegeses on writing, composition and literature. Her longest book, *The Making of Americans* dominates Stein’s early writing career. The earliest notes for *The Making of Americans* precede the composition and publication of *Three Lives*, written in 1905-6 and published in 1909, and *Q. E. D.*, written in 1903 and first published as *Things as They Are* in 1950. The ‘long book,’ *The Making of Americans*, was published in Paris in its 925 page entirety in 1925 by Robert McAlmon’s Contact Edition. The text of the manuscript, commenced in a rudimentary form in 1903 and completed in 1911 remained, save for some excisions, almost entirely unchanged on publication. The authorship and origin of the text cannot be attributed. The external world unrecognisable, it is the book which represents itself as the origin of the history it makes.

*The Making of Americans* refines and intensifies the compositional parameters proposed by *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos*: the necessities of composition govern the form of the book. The regular, regulated form of the first edition embodies the objective, impersonal aesthetic which organises composition, a wholly detached process of objective apprehension which adapts to the demands of its object. It is in this economy of composition that the book achieves the authoritative form of the text. The book is the structural figure which organises and relativises the narrative; its machinery is a stand-in for the author.
*The Making of Americans* is the product of Gertrude Stein’s literary apprenticeship. It is her master-piece, in the original guild sense, the perfected culmination of the apprenticeship represented by the earliest compositional material for the book. Stein’s frequent claim that writing was her *métier* gives material dimensions to composition. The French term *métier* denotes both an intellectual profession or vocation, and a trade or craft. The maker of *The Making of Americans*, driven by a sense of intellectual and patriotic vocation – ‘a history of all of them’ – wanted to make books. The technology of the book institutes authorial distance and aesthetic autonomy, circulating freely, detached from the writer and the scene of composition. It is this literary objectivity which *The Making of Americans* seeks to manufacture. Composition, ‘the assembling of a thing,’ is an exact, precise and deliberate process. In the face of Stein’s declared interest in rational objective processes and the rhythms of machines and character, she has been mis-characterised as a writer following the rhythms of the body and the unconscious. As heavily as Stein has emphasised genius, a term self-applied throughout her work, her understanding of textual generation seeks to efface the traces of an original authorial subjectivity.

*The Making of Americans* transforms the Modernist dictum ‘Make it New’ into its own motto: ‘Make it *Now.*’ The version of Modernism represented by *The Making of Americans* can be understood through the etymology of the modern: from the Latin *modo*, or just now. The grammatical tension between beginning and ending legislates a constant temporal immediacy which reasserts itself on each new opening of the book. This conflict of beginning and ending engenders the continuity which eventually coheres the narrative. The perpetual temporal stasis of the continuous present is the product of the collision of these two opposing forces. Opening and closing the book are of vital necessity to *The
Making of Americans. The book cannot possibly be read in one sitting and does not imagine an insomniac reader, consuming the book as a whole. The reader must begin again and again with the narrative and submit to its spatial negotiation of time. An awareness of the capacity of the times to change motivates a program of composition designed to eliminate or suspend the corrosive effects of time on language and literature.

A compulsive effort to understand, contain, organise and objectify motivates the narration of The Making of Americans. In beginning this task again and again, The Making of Americans does become a history of all of them, a post-Linnaean catalogue of the amplitude of being, an epic of relational and classificatory analysis in which the flux of a relativistic world has been completely parsed. The comprehensive coverage of every aspect of its topic necessitates its most minute and exhaustive examinations. The hypostasised product of composition, the book – ‘it,’ the anonymous and endless topic turned, processed, analysed and finally reified as literary knowledge – embodies the dynamic stasis of the continuous present, and gives solid and enduring dimensions to the regulated understanding it releases. Time is suspended in the continuous present, the reader must not suspend their disbelief, but all belief. As such, this suspension of belief must also renounce the figure of the author as the subjective origin of the text. Disbelief and disillusionment are necessary to an apprehension of the objective frame of the book.

The final manuscript of The Making of Americans, preceded by one draft and three boxes full of notes, represents the composition of the text as an immediate and continuous rendition of a pre-existing text. Like Ulysses and A Draft of XXX Cantos, The Making of Americans assumes its final form only when it occupies the body of the book. Unlike these
two texts, whose forms develop through several discrete stages, the composition of The Making of Americans is immediately oriented towards and adapted into an anonymous, easily reproducible typescript in advance of its eventual appearance and circulation as a book. In my investigation of the composition of The Making of Americans, I emphasise the movement of composition towards a form which denies all precedents and discards the paraphernalia of influence. The apparently self-sufficient final manuscript produces a book which refuses to acknowledge any referential realm but that delineated by its covers. Stein’s interventions in the publication process treat the composition as an inviolate whole. Refusing to turn back and revise the text, Stein treats The Making of Americans as an entity, a master-piece which must ideally be delivered to as many readers, strangers, as possible.

I turn to the composition of the narrative to sustain my argument that The Making of Americans denies itself both an author, and a history. The narrative maps the ‘gradual release’ of knowledge, examining and sustaining moments of a ‘whole present’ in the laboratory conditions of the continuous present. The suspension of the narrative within a single moment of understanding is what unifies the text as an indivisible conceptual whole. This present is conducted through a narrator without identity, following the compositional guidelines articulated by Stein later in her career. ‘Always listening and always talking,’ the narrator is a function of the process of composition and never an embodied subject of the text. The rhythms and movements of Paris as it entered a new century are echoed as this narrative is manufactured:

She was much influenced by the sound of the streets and the movement of the automobiles.¹

The *Making of Americans* repeats the rhythms and continuous operation of the machine, the conveyor belt and the production line. The rationalised, efficiency driven modes of industrial production emerging at the beginning of the twentieth century parallel Stein’s own industrious efforts to disengage subjectivity when writing. *The Making of Americans* is an epic of continuation and of continuity which represents composition as a material process embodied by a complete text, contained in print in the book. As such, *The Making of Americans* is not looking for an editor, but for a reader.

Finally, I consider the reception of *The Making of Americans*, with a focus on how Stein’s readers have worked to construct a recognisable autobiographical context from the abstracted scheme presented as the narrative. Biographical readings have shaped the editorial and textual reception of *The Making of Americans*. Stein’s biography has been the point of reference to which scholars have returned not only in critical readings of the text, but in examinations of the textual record. The institution of an author writing *The Making of Americans* is a metonymy which undermines the theories of textual autonomy and objectivity explored by Stein throughout her career. The turn to the archive and biographical material to elucidate the content and authorship of *The Making of Americans* is a strategy which violates the book’s aesthetic and intellectual foundation in self-sufficiency, and, most significantly, reveals the incompatibility between Modernist composition and the New Bibliography.
a) The First Edition

In a 1946 interview Gertrude Stein commented of her composition:

I write with my eyes, not with my ears or mouth… As a matter of fact, as a writer I write entirely with my eyes. The words as seen by my eyes are the important words and the ears and mouth do not count.²

Of course, mouths and ears which have had to contend with reading Stein’s work aloud tell a different story. The reader must count to keep tempo with Stein’s syntactically driven rhythms, rhythms which mimic the repetitiousness of colloquial exchange rather than the cadences of conventional literary prose. To silently read *The Making of Americans* demands readers keep breathing as they follow Stein’s long, complicated sentences and paragraphs through this vast book. Like the patterns of the short prose of Samuel Beckett, the rhythms are familiar, but alienated from their context, they sound both new and unfamiliar. It is repetition and the continuity of the narrative which work to eventually familiarise these rhythms. Stein the playwright and librettist is surely teasing her interviewer when she says ‘the ears and mouth do not count.’ Nonetheless, *The Making of Americans* is a book to be read first with the eyes. The visual encounter with the first edition, a monolith of sorts, provides the first indication of the type of literary object it is. Enormous blocks of text completely occupy the book. The comprehensive coverage of the page by the texts suggests first of all that there is nothing to add to this text; there is simply no room for improvement.

The first page of the first edition of *The Making of Americans*, untitled, half-full, half-empty of text declares itself a beginning, suspended between the silence of white space and the impending rhythms of the text. The apparently undifferentiated text presents block-

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shaped and sized paragraphs, words, phonemes, unbroken by dialogue: this is concrete prose. The solid textual elements suggest a mass of raw data, a Jacquard punch card, the dimming lights of the metropolis, the massive architecture of the factory slums around Paris, a kind of complicated scientific diagram: their repetition institutes a regular visual pulse on the page which is absolutely modern. The density of paragraphs is such that there appears to be more text than page, an effect intensified on pages where the print on the verso has not been quite aligned and its image pushes through as an eerie backdrop. The paper upon which the first edition is printed is very thin, as if to economically fit as many pages as possible between the tan paper covers of the book.

It is a book which illustrates Eric Gill’s 1931 comment on commercial printing well:

We have elected to order manufacture upon inhuman lines; why should we ask for humanity in the product.  

This book does not display the fine press values so striking on first encounter with A Draft of XXX Cantos, it is manufactured rather than hand-crafted. The regular and mechanical appearance of the text is the first suggestion of the importance of a manufacturer in its production, rather than a human subject, possessed of an identity and memory. There are no running heads to identify the author: page numbers are the only apparatus to guide the reader through the narrative. See Figure 10, overleaf. The first editions of The Making of Americans are unnumbered and identical to each other, a further bibliographical refusal of identification.  

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4 All references to The Making of Americans in this chapter are to the facsimile reproduction of the first edition: The Making of Americans (1925; repr Normal: Dalkey Archive, 1995).

There may be family living and any one may be expecting something to be happening and something is happening. There may be happening what some one is expecting. There may not be happening what some one is expecting. There may be something happening and any one then knowing anything of any such thing will be expecting, will not be expecting something that is then going on happening. Any family living is existing and any one in any family living is one knowing something of family living being existing.

Any one doing anything is expecting to be one doing or not doing anything. Any one in any family living is one doing or not doing something and is one then expecting to be one then doing or not doing something.

Some one has been standing up and is then doing something. Some one is doing something standing. Any one will do something standing. Some one has been standing in doing something. Certainly any one is standing in doing something.

Some one was standing and doing something. He was doing that thing. He was standing and doing something. He was doing something and he was standing. He was one some one was seeing. Some were seeing him doing something and standing.

Some are doing something. Any one is doing something. Some one is doing something and standing. Some are doing something and standing. Any one is doing something and standing. Some one was doing something and standing.

Any one doing something and standing is one doing something and standing. Some one was doing something and was standing.

Any one doing something and standing is one doing something and standing. Any one doing something and standing is one who is standing and doing something. Some one was doing something and was standing. That one was doing something standing.

Any one doing something standing is doing something standing. Some one is doing something standing. Any one doing something standing is one doing something standing. Some one doing something and standing is one doing something and standing.

Some one was standing and doing something. That one was one standing and doing something. That one was doing something and was standing and doing that thing. That one was one doing something, that one was one doing something, standing. That one was one standing and doing something, that one was one doing something and standing.

 Every one doing something and standing is one doing something and standing. Any one doing that thing is one doing such a thing. Any one doing such a thing is one doing something and standing.

Every one doing something and standing are all of them doing that thing.
When Marianne Moore looked at this book she was ‘not able to refrain from saying, moreover, that its chiselled typography and an enticing simplicity of construction are not those of ordinary book-making.’\textsuperscript{5} The \textit{Making of Americans} is not the product of ordinary book-making and early readers regarded it with some trepidation. In the absence of other readings, many of them proffered the most elementary of bibliographical observations of the first edition: it is a big book. The material dimensions of \textit{The Making of Americans}, its weight and girth, length and size occupy an outsized position in correspondence on the book. One of the few reviews the book received on publication draws attention firstly to its size, announcing:

And now Gertrude Stein has published in Paris a book called \textit{The Making of Americans} — a book seven and one-half inches wide, nine and one-half inches long, and four and one-half inches thick. And the contents are as original as the format.\textsuperscript{6}

\textit{The Making of Americans} measures 235 by 190 millimetres, approximately the same size as \textit{Ulysses} and \textit{A Draft of XXX Cantos}, but is thicker than both of them: an edifice too big to be ignored. The physical form of the book does completely define its content, a referential realm limited only by the covers of the book. Its very length, some 925 pages, conveys the encyclopedic aspirations of the text: ‘a history of all of them.’ The physical appearance of the book serves to support Stein’s later remark, in \textit{Everybody’s Autobiography} (1937), that ‘The Making of Americans is a very important thing.’\textsuperscript{7} It is an indivisible object, a continuous whole from which nothing can be added or subtracted.


The date of composition – ‘1906-1908’ – is nominated on the title page of the first edition of the book. See Figure 11, overleaf. The date of publication, 1925, doesn’t appear until the closing colophon, 925 pages later, and then in discreet Roman numerals. It is the date on the title page which is most prominent and casts the composition of the book as a distant historical event, an achievement which cannot be further perfected. To readers in 1925, the early dates must also suggest that this thing, *The Making of Americans*, written almost two decades earlier, has already accumulated considerable historical value to itself.

The dates on the title page work to assert both the book’s singularity from its peers and its place in the times. In nominating ‘1906-1908’ as a beginning to the text, readers are reminded that *The Making of Americans* was written before any of the dates conventionally identified as the beginning of literary modernism: ‘on or about 1910;’ the beginning or end of the First World War; 1922, the year of publication both *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses*. It claims priority as an important thing and asserts its place as the beginning of the Modernist book, the beginning of the literature of the twentieth century.

The title – *The Making of Americans* – signals the interest of the text in making things and it is indeed as a process of manufacturing that the composition of the text must be viewed. In his introduction to the book, Stephen Meyer writes:

> The title of *The Making of Americans* may be … understood in two different but noncontradictory senses, depending on whether one reads it as containing an objective or subjective genitive: the process whereby Americans are made (*The making of what? The making of Americans*) or the process whereby Americans make anything (*The what of Americans? The making of Americans*).  

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Figure 11. Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans* (1925).
To scale. Reproduced from the first edition (Paris: Contact, 1925), title page.
The appearance of grammatical precision dissolves in the act of interpretation. *The Making of Americans* insists throughout that it is be a sustained and continuous meditation on the making of Americans and simultaneously asserts that through this process it will make Americans: the book objectivises the process and product. The objective genitive function – the capacity to generate grammatical and textual objects – is the dominant sense of the title of *The Making of Americans*.

This book is not interested in what Americans make so much as what it is that makes Americans, accounting for every possible reflex of the individuals who comprise this nation. It proposes self and national realisation through the achievement of an indiscriminately phyto- and onto-genetic narrative:

to every one then there will be a whole history of them, each one then sometime will have written a whole history of her, of him, and this will give to every one who ever was or is or will be living the last part of real being a history of them can give to any one. (182)

The narrative conceives of itself as a beginning to the literary history of the United States initiated by its writer in exile, Gertrude Stein. The promise of a comprehensive patrimonial text approaches fulfillment with each new beginning. The aspiration to ‘a history of every kind of men and women’ is a brief to write a foundational national work which will apply to individuals who are made as if along a production line, just as the first edition of *The Making of Americans* appears to be a manufactured object, produced automatically. The title casts the book as a self fulfilling prophecy: *The Making of Americans* will be the making of Americans and everyone who enters the book will be so processed.

On the other hand, the subtitle – ‘Being a History of a Family’s Progress’ – establishes a reading paradigm which is entirely frustrated by the progress of the book. The expectation
of a literary family history, built of events and conversation and plot, is thwarted by the movement of *The Making of Americans* towards abstraction and the interiorisation of the narrative consciousness. *The Making of Americans* begins as a genealogical novel which promises to relate the fortunes of two families, the Dehnings and the Herslands, and transforms itself into a prolonged meditation on the ‘being living’ of the individual, generalised, clarified, repeated and rearticulated. The use of the indefinite article does not mark the individuality of the narrative, but its generality: ‘a’ is cognate with ‘any.’ The *progress*, such a highly charged word within American letters, away from the individual to the general exposes the aspiration of *The Making of Americans* to be a book of national identity. This kind of literary reference text will guide the progress of the nation, the ‘Family’ of reading subjects contained and processed by the book.

In announcing itself as ‘history,’ *The Making of Americans* dissociates itself from fiction and creative subjectivity, in the same way that *A Draft of XXX Cantos* displays its historical credentials in service of both Truth and Calliope. The book appears not as fiction but as an already historicised *history* of a family’s progress, and of the United States. Grammatically suspended between the present tense of the narratorial consciousness and the past patterns and behaviours which have shaped that consciousness, *The Making of Americans* narrates history in the continuous present. As such, it is history in the making and denies all precedents.

The first edition of *The Making of Americans* was not revised or corrected by Stein after first publication. The monolithic appearance of the first edition is matched by the secure standing of the text it contains: all subsequent full length editions of *The Making of*
Americans are facsimile reproductions of the first edition, sustaining the impression that the text is a closed system, entirely contained by the book.
b) Composition and Publication

i) Manufacturing the Manuscript

It is the rigorous experiment of composition, rather than its author, which determines the form and structure of *The Making of Americans*. Gertrude Stein is an entity through which composition occurs, she is contained and controlled by the millennial dimensions of its product:

> I went on and on and then one day after I had written a thousand pages, this was in 1908 I just did not go on anymore.9

The logic of beginning and ending is forgotten in the sealed environment of composition, a still unending present. The writing of *The Making of Americans* is disembodied and purged of authorial desire and direction. Not ‘going on’ does not necessarily impose a stop:

> We may well say nothing, but and this is the thing that makes everything continue to be anything, that after all what does happen is that as relatively few people spend all their time describing anything and they stop and so in the meantime as everything goes on somebody else can always commence and go on. And so description is really unending.10

Composition stops when the author does not go on and the book is published: the binding of *The Making of Americans* imposes a spatial and temporal limit to composition. The space contained by the book is filled with the interior movement of composition, a deliberate and controlled activity. In this environment, the place of each textual element is determined by its objective necessity to the project underway. Every word of *The Making of Americans*, like those of *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, is positioned exactly in composition. Stein makes every effort to remove the subjective barriers and distractions to the placement of *le mot juste* in her history of ‘all kinds of being.’ This never-ending,

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precise textual generation is an industrialist’s dream of non-stop production, a perpetual motion machine unimpeded by human error.

The final continuous manuscript of *The Making of Americans* presents the text as an immediately realised and coherent form. Neat and economical, the manuscript is written into regular sized black notebooks, front to back on the recto; the notebooks are flipped over and the narrative continues back to front on the verso pages. The grammatical conflict of beginning and ending is repeated in this forwards and backwards movement. The page is the integral unit of composition, the draft never crosses the limit marked by the spine of the notebook. The visual effect of reading the final manuscript in the notebooks is not unlike that of looking at the pages of the first edition. Regular blocks of text divide and demarcate the space of the page, the text exactly fits to the page. There are between ten and twelve lines on each page and a regular six to eight words composes each line. Facing pages are an upside-down, back-to-front double of each other. The slant of the letters is the same on both pages, instituting a visual regularity and monotony and reinforcing the sense that the manuscript as conceived is coherent and integral. Once written, the text defies revision and requires neither the attentions of the author nor of a corrective editor, but of a captive reader.

The notebooks which contain the author’s fair copy of *The Making of Americans* contain no calligraphic indication of hesitation or turning back, creating the impression that once Stein started writing, she could not stop. There is no sign that the manuscripts have been worked over several times. They look like the transcribed copy of a work already realised, with no

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11 Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (henceforth to be referred to as YCAL MSS 76), Boxes 48-51.
blotches, erasures, additions or other corrections like those which cover the several stages of composition of *Ulysses*. The manual labour of writing seems to be an automatic, quotidian activity unrestrained by memory or distraction. This manuscript was finally completed in October, 1911, with the bulk of the writing undertaken in the period nominated on the title page of the book, 1906-1908.

Stein was spared the labour of typing her manuscript – ‘some then have a little shame in them when they are copying an old piece of writing’ (441) – by Alice Toklas who prepared typescripts as the final continuous manuscript was being written:

> Gertrude talked over her work of the day, which I typed the following morning. Frequently there were the characters or incidents of the previous day. It was like living history.12

Stein wrote and Toklas typed, the final manuscript immediately turned into a typescript and distanced from the author. The exchange transforms the manuscript and all residual signs of authorial subjectivity into a more appropriate format: the mechanically reproduced text:

> I got a Gertrude Stein technique, like playing Bach. My fingers were adapted only to Gertrude’s work.13

The typing of the manuscripts is represented as a mechanical, automatic process, ‘a Gertrude Stein technique’ developed especially to reproduce the masterpiece. Like the pages of *The Making of Americans*, the typescript consists of solid blocks of prose, more widely spaced than the printed book. Although the typescript has not survived in its entirety, the sparsity of corrections to the fifteen hundred typed pages which do exist suggest that the transformation from manuscript to typescript was immediate and efficient.

The manuscript and typescript are equivalent forms, continuous to each other. The

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majority of the infrequent corrections to the extant typescript, marked in Stein’s hand in black ink or red pencil, indicate a typographical error, a line break or a minor elision. The characters who appear as Fanny Heisman and Madeleine Weimar in the manuscript are emended to Fanny Hissen and Madeleine Wyman; the adjective ‘german’ is changed to ‘certain’ and ‘foreign,’ drawing the narrative away from associations with German Jewish families like Stein’s own. The final stages of composition complete the movement of the narrative towards generality, rather than specificity. Aside from these occasional emendations and corrections of typographical errors, once the manuscript was typed, there was no beginning again or revision. The typescript remained a heavy and complete whole, over two thousand pages long, as it was circulated amongst publishers and editors on both sides of the Atlantic until 1924, when Stein finally found a willing publisher for her ‘long book.’

By all appearances, the final continuous manuscript and the typescript represent mutually sustaining versions of the text. There is no reason to question the transmission of textual authority from the final continuous manuscript to the manuscript and finally, to the first edition which appeared in 1925, the culmination to this process of composition and the only theoretically authoritative version of the text. A survey of the pre-history of *The Making of Americans* covering the stages of composition which lead to the production of the manuscript reveals the tendency to discard specifying and identifying detail from the narrative. The comprehensive appearance of the manuscript, apparently automatically transcribed, is the culmination of Stein’s experiments in composition up to 1911.
Prior to the transcription of the final continuous manuscript lie two distinct stages of textual production and states of the text: the first holograph draft, dated by the curators of the Beinecke Library to 1906-1908; and a long preparatory stage, represented by an extensive collection of notes which date to the last years of the nineteenth century. Bridging the notes and the first draft is an unfinished 1903 draft of a work entitled *The Making of Americans*, barely forty pages of a conventionally written family narrative, the content of which is covered in the first chapter of *The Making of Americans*.14 This is followed by a first holograph draft in which the structure and stylistic concerns of the book begin to emerge in a form more proximate to that of the text published. This material should be regarded as preparation for the composition of the final continuous manuscript, rather than continuous to it. At each new stage, Stein begins again and theoretically discards all reference to the past versions of the text. Working back from the final continuous manuscript to the first draft and the notes, it becomes clear that the obscurity of the referential origins of the narrative are vital to the realisation of a narrative which is both general and impersonal. The composition of *The Making of Americans* is not a spontaneous process but the regulated movement away from all recognisable origins.

The first holograph draft bears more signs of revision than the final continuous manuscript. Written into notebooks and copybooks into which additional leaves are inserted, the steady pace indicated by the handwriting of the final draft has not yet been attained. Stein turns back occasionally to correct and emend the text as it takes shape. The first draft of *The Making of Americans* declares an initial desire to write a history of ‘all kinds of women’

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which later expands to the broader project of a history of ‘all kinds of women and men.’ The narratorial assertions of independence are detached from the feminist project suggested by this first draft as Stein’s writing approaches a ‘true empiricism,’ in Henri Bergson’s terms, that is, a composition which is unaware of the limits of the ego, gender and identity. The first draft is also far more interested in the specific kinds of being of German settler families than the published version. The Anglicisation of German names in the published text marks the final absorption of ethnic difference into the book’s program of American being. The following discarded material is typical of that which is not repeated in the final continuous draft:

“Yes” he would say of his son Herman who was the one who took most care and trouble for him. “Yes Herman he is a good man and he knows good how to make a living. Yes he is good boy always to me but he never does anything like I tell him. It ain’t wrong in him, never, I don't say so like that ever for him, only I don't need it any more just to go on like I was living.”

The idiom and manners of German settlers are exhausted in *Three Lives*, a book stylistically exceeded by *The Making of Americans*. Exhibits of such singular, readily identifiable behaviour are reined in. This first draft is a rehearsal for the production of the final continuous manuscript in which all external and immediate references are denied.

The vestiges of earlier books by Gertrude Stein are barely visible in *The Making of Americans*, so thoroughly has the author internalised the lessons of composition. Unlike *Ulysses*, which picks up the narration of the character of Stephen Daedalus where *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* left it, *The Making of Americans* effectively denies its predecessors. The signature style of *The Making of Americans* depends on a quasi-plagiarism of earlier books by Stein which renders their earlier forms almost

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15 YCAL MSS 76, Box 40: 835, Notebook, p. 22.
unrecognizable. Walker nominates the first section of the book a ‘palimpsestic recapitulation of Stein’s early narrative styles.’ Nowhere, however, does *The Making of Americans* recapitulate other texts, or capitulate to them. Earlier texts are transformed through their encounter with the composition of the narrative, absorbed into the style of the ‘long book.’ The movement of *The Making of Americans* is omnivorous, bibliophagic. The book is an engulfing history of everyone, and a history of literature which entirely contains its own earlier forms. Complete, *The Making of Americans* leaves both Gertrude Stein and her apprentice works behind.

The refinement of the textual concept of consciousness and its relation to composition is visible in the exchange between *Q. E. D.*, ‘Melanctha’ and *The Making of Americans*, and demonstrates the gradual movement away from specifying detail throughout Stein’s apprenticeship as a writer. In the earliest text, the *roman à clef*, *Q. E. D.* (1903), the concept of consciousness is elucidated with reference to characters and events which correspond with the author’s biography:

They drew closer together and in a little while Adele began to question. ‘You were very generous,’ she said ‘tell me how much do you care for me.’ ‘Care for you my dear’ Helen answered ‘more than you know and less than you think.’

This exchange is repeated and transfigured in ‘Melanctha,’ written in 1905-6 and published in *Three Lives* (1909), a text in which the characteristic rhythms of *The Making of Americans* and Stein’s later prose begin to emerge:

‘Tell me just straight out how much do you care about me, Miss Melanctha.’ ‘Care about you Jeff Campbell,’ said Melanctha slowly. ‘I certainly do care for you Jeff’

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17 Q.E.D, in Stein, *Fernhurst, Q.E.D., and Other Early Writings*, p. 65.
Campbell less than you are always thinking and much more than you are ever knowing.\textsuperscript{18}

The theoretical finitudes of thinking and knowing in narrative developed between \textit{Q. E. D.} and ‘Melanctha’ are refined in \textit{The Making of Americans}, as the understandings of the earlier books are entirely absorbed into the style of the larger book. Thinking and knowing have become equivalent quotidian functions of composition and it is the incremental accumulation and release of knowing which shapes the narrative of the master-piece:

Always then I am learning always then I am remembering, I am puzzling, I am in a confusion, always then I am coming back again and again and seeing, feeling, thinking all the ways any one can see that one, all the ways that one is resembling to any one, slowly then each one I am ever knowing is a whole one to me. (338)

The narrator of \textit{The Making of Americans} now knows her object so well that she is able to repeat its rhythms and forms in the narrative without recourse to identifiable characters. The topic is now a ‘whole one,’ slowly released as the text is composed.

The other writing undertaken by Stein in this period also functions as preparation for the composition of \textit{The Making of Americans}, and suggests that the style which is consolidated in the book is a product of these rehearsals rather than one which emerged spontaneously on the composition of \textit{The Making of Americans}. Stein bound her early typescripts into books, and these present a conspectus of her stylistic experiments, simultaneous to the completion of the master-piece. One of these volumes, dated 1908-1912 by Stein, provides some good examples of the style of \textit{The Making of Americans} under trial in shorter texts.\textsuperscript{19}


\textsuperscript{19} The contents of this volume are ‘Orta or One Dancing;’ ‘Matisse;’ ‘Picasso;’ ‘Four Proteges;’ ‘Men;’ ‘Lederman;’ ‘A Painter;’ ‘Elise Survile;’ ‘Four Dishonest Ones;’ ‘A Kind of Women;’ and ‘A Family.’
‘Orta,’ a portrait, explores the grammatical relationships of similitude and difference which preoccupy the narrator of *The Making of Americans*:

Even if one was one she might be like some other one. She was like one and then was like another one and then was like another one and then was like another one and then was one who was one having been one and being one who was one then, one being like some.  

The finitudes of abstract kinds of being are the focus of this portrait. Conditional structures which broach what ‘might’ be are excluded from *The Making of Americans*, in which the narrative voice has achieved a certainty of perception. Character is explored in portraits like ‘Orta’ as a function of an abstract relational scheme, contributing to the larger study of all kinds of being undertaken in the longer work. The composition, ‘A kind of women,’ which is bound into the same volume as ‘Orta,’ pursues a subset of the ‘kinds of women and men’ which are investigated in *The Making of Americans*. The limits of the syntactical structures which regulate the composition of *The Making of Americans* are examined in this text:

Each one of them certainly were ones whom many were admiring and certainly each one of them came to quite completely need that thing, to quite completely know that thing, to quite completely be that thing, one some who met them were admitting and one to whom some that met them and admired them mentioned that thing.  

The tempo of the encounters recorded in these briefer experiments rehearse the rhythms and grammatical structures which compose *The Making of Americans*. The skills to produce this master-piece are developed by the author in the shorter compositions bound in anticipation of their eventual publication. They demonstrate that *The Making of Americans* is not a one-off or first time experiment, but the application of a technique explored and internalised in the earlier shorter trials. To take Stein seriously as an experimental writer

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20 YCAL MSS 76, Box 88:1695.  
21 YCAL MSS 76, Box 88:1695.
requires acknowledgement of this long process of experimentation, of which *The Making of Americans* is a refined conclusion.

The earliest stage of the composition of *The Making of Americans* is a disparate and discontinuous set of notes, enough to fill three archival boxes. The notes, written into *carnets*, notebooks and copybooks of all dimensions, as well as onto loose leaves, cover Stein’s reading, registering quotations, observations, her grammatical experiments and traces of a family narrative. Their organisation yields little clue as to the form of the final text. The notes are so comprehensively processed as to be unrecognisable as the polished manuscript. No coherent or continuous narrative emerges from these early notes. The sheets are undated and their content fragmentary, provisionally integrated on the production of the continuous manuscript and finally consolidated on the publication of the book in 1925. The account of composition given by this early material is neither comprehensive nor frank. Some of the *carnets* and notebooks which compose the earliest record of the composition of *The Making of Americans* have had pages cut out with a knife, rendering the origins of the text even more elusive.

In 1902, as Katz observes, Stein was obliquely at work on *The Making of Americans*:

> Though not a word of the book was written then, she started keeping the notebooks which gradually accumulated the memories, observations, quotations, and story material which were to be the matter of the book.\(^{22}\)

The history of English prose ingested by Stein in her intense reading period at the British Museum and Mudie’s bookstore in 1902 is processed in the earliest stage of composition. This reading program covered books from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, and with

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only a few exceptions, it was composed ‘entirely of major, minor, and very minor English
novels and collections of tales; of diaries, letters, biographies, and autobiographies; and
compendious volumes of history like Clarendon’s and Gibbon’s.’ These texts are
seamlessly contained in the narrative, their influence on the narrative is indiscernible.
Whereas *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos* make their literary debts visible on the surface
of the page, the traces of any other text are eliminated from the pages of *The Making of
Americans*.

These notes contain fragments of narrative and long schematised observations of Stein’s
circle of family and friends. There is, for example, a notebook titled ‘Diagram book’ which
contains long lists of names – Alice Toklas; Leo, Sarah and Mike Stein; Pablo Picasso;
Henri Matisse – which are grouped into different ‘types’ with the leading features of their
personalities recorded, a prototype of the personality scheme evolved in the completed
text. A note which heads the list reads ‘In this book (the long book) describe all the kinds
of women and the way men are like them.’ It is the abstract scheme of personality which is
retained in the final continuous manuscript, the identifying details all discarded as
irrelevant. Leon Katz and George Moore have both discussed the influence of Otto
Weininger on this psychological scheme, drawing Stein’s reading of the Austrian
psychologist’s controversial text, *Sex and Character* (1906), into the foreground of
composition. The appearance of Weininger and Stein’s family in the notes are as lessons
worked through by the author, practical exercises to prepare for the later composition

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24 YCAL MSS 76, Box 37:761.
and George B. Moore, *Gertrude Stein’s The Making of Americans: Repetition and the Emergence of
process which is conducted without pause. The notes, notebooks and *carnets* which represent this first stage of composition rely on a referential scheme which is discarded as the author internalises the knowledge gained in composition, dissociating it from any received or recognisable context. ‘A history of all of them’ is not limited to the individual case studies recorded in the notes, indeed, it is the abstraction of both content and context which is the basis of the book’s claim to objectivity.

The fluent appearance of the final continuous manuscript, in which all reference to this earlier material is discarded, suggests that Stein got composition ‘right’ on this draft after carefully testing her methods in earlier works and the first draft. The archival record of the composition of *The Making of Americans* represents the genesis of the text as a controlled process which gradually denies any historical precedent. The continuous present which sustains the narrative finds its ideal form in print, with all signs of the author writing eliminated from its surface. The textual history of *The Making of Americans* is theoretically contained by the complete text, made of the consolidated experiment of composition.

**ii) Publication by a Stranger**

The final continuous manuscript of *The Making of Americans* was complete in 1911 but Stein was unable to find a publisher for her master-piece until 1924. Ernest Hemingway negotiated the partial serialisation of *The Making of Americans* in the *Transatlantic Review* and nine extended excerpts appeared in the final numbers of the magazine under the
editorship of Ford Madox Ford in 1924. Robert McAlmon agreed to publish the book through Contact Edition in the same year.

McAlmon is a particularly important figure in the history of the Modernist book. As the publisher of the Contact Edition, he was responsible for bringing twenty two books into print, authored by the community of Anglophone writers living in Paris and their correspondents. The first book published under the Contact Edition imprint was a book of McAlmon’s stories, *A Hasty Bunch*, in 1922. As well publishing several further volumes of McAlmon’s writing, Contact Edition was the first to publish Ernest Hemingway, printing *Three Stories and Ten Poems* in 1923 as well as William Carlos William’s *Spring and All* (1923), Mina Loy’s *Lunar Baedeker* (1923) and H.D’s *Palimpsest* (1926).

The Contact Edition first operated through the Shakespeare and Company bookshop and later shared premises with William Bird and the Three Mountains Press. It is the small publishing interest most representative of the broad range of literary activity of the expatriate community in Paris in the 1920s. Some of the volumes released between 1924 and 1926 were hand-printed in limited editions by William Bird at the Press, but McAlmon generally contracted printing to job printers like Darantiere, and issued quick, cheap editions of contemporary literature. The standard edition of *The Making of Americans* is a good example of the kind, although the enormous gold and vellum deluxe edition outshines other Contact Editions. The only copy of the deluxe edition of *The Making of Americans* which I have seen – in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library – is a model unread.

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26 Gallup records Stein’s thwarted efforts to find a publisher following the completion of the manuscript in ‘The Making of *The Making of Americans*’ in Stein, *Fernhurst, Q.E.D., and other Early Writings*, pp. 175-214.
book. An enormous volume bound in vellum, printed on heavy hand-made paper and stamped with gold, most of the pages are uncut. The reader can gently edge the pages apart and peer down the heavily indented pages to the abyss of the spine.

In 1920, before his arrival in Paris in 1921, McAlmon had edited a little magazine, Contact, with William Carlos Williams in New York in 1920. Contact sought to promote the relationship between literature and locality, encouraging new writing borne of experience rather than tradition. The editorial policy of Contact was sustained with the establishment of the Contact Edition, an effective relocation of the New York post-war avant-garde to Paris. An early announcement read:

We will bring out books by various writers who seem not likely to be published by other publishers, for commercial or legislative reasons;

and another:

Books listed herein are in editions limited to 300 copies unless noted otherwise and will not be reprinted, our aim being to help to create new literature, and not to supply public demand.27

The Contact Edition operated in the service of an elevated ideal of literature, treating the circulation of the book as more important than the achievement of a clean and perfectly proofed text or the production of a beautiful book.

The first contact between McAlmon and Stein was inauspicious. Then editor of Contact, McAlmon wrote to Stein of her writing in 1921:

It doesn’t mean much to me, but a whimsical emotion now and then at some neat phrase, or an irony upon an unfinished thought, and situation…I don’t get it, and believing that you have conviction to go on in your manner, simply have a waiting frame of mind.\textsuperscript{28}

A reader in such a ‘waiting frame of mind’ is exactly the willing and patient participant that \textit{The Making of Americans} envisages for itself. In 1924, the waiting proved fruitful and McAlmon wrote enthusiastically to Stein of her writing, complaining of her reviewers that ‘they don’t dwell enough on the zip of intelligence and whoop of personality power.’\textsuperscript{29}

Stein contributed to the \textit{Contact Collection of Contemporary Writers} (1925) on McAlmon’s invitation, and so appeared in a volume with, amongst others, Joyce and Pound. This volume stands as a definitive index of the variety of ex-patriate writing in Paris in this period. The commitment displayed by this collection to the proliferation of contemporary letters sustains the stylistic investment of \textit{The Making of Americans} in radically new forms of literary composition. There is agreement between the ethos of Contact Editions and \textit{The Making of Americans}, insofar as they are both concerned with the necessity of reproducing and promoting new literature, unbound by the demands of convention and popular acclaim and Stein was certainly keen to see the typescript of the ‘long book’ finally turned into print.

McAlmon and Stein signed a contract to publish \textit{The Making of Americans} in 1924. The prospectus announced:

\begin{quote}
The great work, whose publication has been impatiently awaited, will appear in the Autumn of 1925. Contrary to our original announcement, it will be printed in ONE quarto volume of about 1000 pages.\textsuperscript{30}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{29} McAlmon to Stein, August, 1924 in Gallup, ed., \textit{The Flowers of Friendship}, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{30} YCAL MSS 76 Box 52: 922.
The manuscript of *The Making of Americans* was complete well before any agreement was made to publish it. Toklas’s typescript had provided copy for the printers of *The Transatlantic Review* in 1924 and to Maurice Darantiere who printed the book for Contact Editions in 1925. Unlike the text of *Ulysses*, *The Making of Americans*, like *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, was ready for the printer. A clause added to the contract between McAlmon and Stein (which Stein significantly annotated and amended before signing) reads:

> Alterations in the text, after the manuscript has been put in type, shall be at the charge of the author, as shall also any expense due to delay in approving proofs on the part of the author.\(^{31}\)

This clause suggests that McAlmon had learnt a lesson from the publication of *Ulysses*. There were no alterations to the text and these would theoretically be excluded from the logic of the completed composition. In 1925, Stein recognised the composition of the book as ‘done,’ an objective experiment successfully completed.

Relegating the composition of *The Making of Americans* to the past, Stein wrote to Van Vechten of the proof-reading:

> You know it is rather funny and youthful there are moments when I think I should prune it but then after all it was done as much done as it could be and after all these years I guess it will do.\(^{32}\)

In a similar tone, she wrote to Sherwood Anderson:

> It is a bit monumental and sometimes seems foolishly youthful now after 20 years but I am leaving it as it is after all it was all done then.\(^{33}\)

‘Leaving it’ implies a disjunction between the author and her text, that composition is a self-contained process which, once complete, cannot begin again. The form of the text is

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31 YCAL MSS 76 Box 115: 2412.
absolute and defies any correction or alteration. *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* includes a tableau of the proofreading of *The Making of Americans* which suggests that Stein had the process more under control than Joyce when correcting *Ulysses*:

> We used to leave the hotel in the morning with camp chairs, lunch and proof, and all day we struggled with the errors of French compositors. Proof had to be corrected most of it four times and finally I broke my glasses, my eyes gave out, and Gertrude Stein finished alone.  

After four corrections of proof, it is the author alone who endures the composition of the book, stewarding the text into its most important form, the printed book. These proof-pages, unlike those for *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, have not survived beyond the publication of the book. Stein’s certainty about the proof-reading suggests that they are insignificant to a reading of the composition of the text.

French compositors and the ‘exceptional circumstances’ which plagued the production of *Ulysses* three years earlier, created fewer problems for *The Making of Americans* in 1925. Whilst the Contact edition is not free of typographical errors, in spite of these, Stein wrote to Sherwood Anderson that:

> lots of people will think many strange things in it as to tenses and persons and adjectives and adverbs and divisions are due to the french compositors’ errors but they are not it is quite as I worked at it an even when I tried to change it well I didn’t really try but I went over it to see if it could go different and I always found myself forced back into incorrextednesses so there they stand.  

The way this textual machine ‘goes’ cannot be changed. Composition is inviolate and the ‘incorrectiondnesses’ stand as part of the finished text. Once the experiment of composition has been deemed complete, not even the author correcting the text years later can shift the
specificities of this coherent and completely realised object. Complete, the text is as a
graven image, as solid as the inscription which marks the end of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*.

Whilst proof-reading and typographical error were not to prove an obstacle to the
publication of *The Making of Americans*, the co-operation between McAlmon and Stein
dissolved when Stein made independent arrangements with other publishers to distribute
the sheets printed for McAlmon. When the book was in proof, Stein wrote to inform
McAlmon of ‘a syndicate which very seriously want to put all my books on the market… It
is for me an important opportunity.’ McC Through Jane Heap, Stein commenced negotiations
with the Boni brothers in New York to distribute the book in the United States. Not
surprisingly, McAlmon baulked at the prospect of *The Making of Americans* being sold at a
loss to a commercial publisher. In the flurry of letters exchanged on the topic, he stated his
objections:

*I’m sorry Boni’s did not take the book in a way, as they could give it more general
publicity, but the cost of it is well over three thousand dollars and if we are to lose
most of that I prefer doing it with our imprint on the book, to losing it as a gift to a
commercial publisher whose interest in books is that of a grocers in a stock they
don’t themselves test.*

McAlmon presents himself as a highly interested publisher driven by art rather than
commerce, in conflict with Stein’s ambition to distribute the book, now conceived of as an
object, to as wide an audience as possible. As Stein usurped control of the production of
the book, her publisher wrote again to protest the transformation of the book into a
commodity:

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36 Stein to McAlmon. Yale Collection of American Literature; Robert McAlmon Papers (uncatalogued).
Donald Gallup tentatively dates the letter to 15th September, 1925.
37 McAlmon to Stein, 16th September, 1925, YCAL MSS 76 Box 115:2412.
Certainly too we won’t let it look as if we’d grabbed something we wanted to give away. We took on the book not as an investment but as literature, and whatever financial chances there were involved, we also took on, and those expenses considerably effect my mode of living.\textsuperscript{38}

McAlmon disavows a commercial interest in publishing but is outraged when the formal commercial relationship between author, publisher and book is disrupted. The deal with the Boni brothers fell through and five hundred sets of pages were printed by Darantiere for McAlmon. In spite of Stein’s great hopes to meet a vast audience of readers as a book, less than one hundred copies of the first edition were sold. One hundred sheets were rebound in cloth and issued by Albert and Charles Boni in New York in 1926. The first edition remains the standard version of the text.

There exists much more correspondence between Stein and McAlmon regarding contractual details and this quarrel over the sale of the sheets than any proof-reading details.\textsuperscript{39} In a letter written after the publication of \textit{The Making of Americans}, Stein charges her publisher with insufficient recognition of her desire for the book to ‘go big,’ asserting her authorial propriety over the whole book:

\begin{quote}
My dear McAlmon
You did print the book and there is no doubt that nobody appreciated that more than I do but I did write the book and it is mine and you have several times in these few months lost interest in it and so you may see why I have good reason to be troubled and would rather have more definite hope for the future.\textsuperscript{40}
\end{quote}

Although Stein does not alter the content of the book, regarding the composition of the text as ‘done,’ she assumes an instrumental role in its publication. The book is a thing for which this author seeks to ordain a future in the hands of as many readers as possible.

\textsuperscript{38} McAlmon to Stein, 17\textsuperscript{th} September, 1925, YCAL MSS 76 Box 115:2412.
\textsuperscript{40} Stein to McAlmon, 18\textsuperscript{th} September, 1925, YCAL; Robert McAlmon Papers.
When Stein writes ‘it is mine,’ there is no ambiguity about the absolute claim made to sovereignty over its contents. In attempting to find another publisher or distributor for the book, Stein speaks as owner rather than author, exceeding the parameters of authorship imposed by the narrative and by her later theoretical writings. The denial that there is any one subjectivity writing or producing the book is undermined by the assertive presence of its author as the book went into print. The nature of Stein’s involvement in the publication process is different to that of Joyce and Pound in the publication of *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos*. Rather than altering the text or its format, her concern is to meet as many strangers as possible as a book.

At ten years distance from the publication of *The Making of Americans*, ‘What Are Master-pieces and Why Are There So Few of Them’ investigates the ‘master-piece’ as distinct from the personality and identity of the author. The master-piece is held by a book and once printed, the author has no further claim to it:

> There is something about what has been written having been printed which makes it no longer the property of the one who wrote it.41

Publication makes the book someone else’s property, detached from the guiding figure of the author. The master-piece under discussion is *The Making of Americans* but the repudiation of authorship as ownership is contradicted by Stein’s dispute with McAlmon. ‘What Are Master-pieces’ argues that the self is suspended in composition:

> At any moment when you are you you are you without the memory of yourself because if you remember yourself while you are you are not for purposes of creating you.42

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42 Stein, ‘What are Master-pieces,’ p. 149
The refusal of the self advanced in this text is sustained by the lack of identifying features in the manuscripts and completed text of *The Making of Americans*, to which all prior knowledge and influence are extrinsic:

After all there are things you do know each one in his or her way knows all of them and it is not this knowledge that makes master-pieces.\(^{43}\)

Stein does not bring her personality to the composition of *The Making of Americans* but refuses to fully relinquish control over the text, undermining the claims made in ‘What Are Master-pieces’ to the theoretical insignificance of authorial desire and knowledge. That said, the contractual dispute over publication engages a different theoretical subject to the entity which composes the text. This subject, Gertrude Stein, is consciously distanced from the composition of the book, as instrumental as she is to its publication. The verbal text of the book and its appearance on the page are not at all affected by publication, remaining in the form approved by their author more than ten years earlier. What is at stake is control of the book, rather than its content.

Being turned into a book is the primary focus of Stein’s writing career. Unlike many other expatriate writers in Paris in the 1920s, particularly women writers like Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, and Janet Flanner, Stein did not depend financially on her writing to sustain her living. ‘I am writing for myself and strangers,’ declares the narrator of *The Making of Americans* (289). To attain the necessary distance from her readers, Gertrude Stein wanted to encounter them in print, as a book. The difficulty and desirability of getting her work into print occupies a prominent position in Stein’s correspondence throughout her career. She wrote to Carl Van Vechten in 1916:

\(^{43}\) Stein, ‘What are Master-pieces,’ p. 149.
Alas about every three months I get sad. I make so much absorbing literature with such attractive titles and even if I could be as popular as Jenny Lind where oh where is the man to publish me in series. Perhaps some day you will meet him. He can do me as cheaply and as simply as he likes but I would so like to be done. Alas.44

Being so ‘done’ signals the end of composition and turns the author into an anonymous grammatical entity rather than a recognisable or identifiable subject. Unable to find a publisher to turn her into a book, Stein funded the publication of her first book, Three Lives (1909), herself.45 The modest critical success of Three Lives did not convince publishers and Stein continued to encounter difficulties bringing her work into print. Three Lives and The Making of Americans bookend only two other published volumes of Stein’s work: Tender Buttons (1914) and Geography and Plays (1922).46 Two separately bound portraits also appeared in this period. Mabel Dodge sponsored the private printing of Portrait of Mabel Dodge at the Villa Curonia in 1912 and Have They Attacked Mary. He Giggled, a ‘political caricature’ was published in 1917.47

The sparsity of work published in no way reflects the amplitude of Stein’s literary output in this period and threatens to distract from the vital importance of being in print, being reproduced as a textual object, to her understanding of being literary. The Beinecke Library holds a collection of twenty volumes of bound typescripts dated between 1908 and

45 A thousand sets of pages of Three Lives were printed in 1909 by the Grafton Press in New York and the book was copyrighted on 12th, July, 1909. The book was not a great success, commercially speaking. Five hundred copies of the sheets were bound and by the 1st January, 1910, only seventy-three copies had been sold, and seventy-eight distributed free of charge. Some of the remaining sheets were sold to John Lane and rebound as a Bodley Head edition for release in 1915 and 1920. The plates of the first edition were used for the 1927 Boni edition, the 1933 Modern Library edition and the 1939 New Directions edition. See also Gallup, ‘A Book is a Book is a Book’ in New Colophon 1, pt. 1 (Jan 1948): pp. 67-80.  
46 Gertrude Stein, Tender Buttons (New York: Claire Marie, 1914) was printed in an edition of one thousand copies. Two thousand five hundred sheets of Geography and Plays (Boston: Four Seas, 1922) were printed in 1922 and released in four separate bindings over the next eighteen years. Robert Wilson includes illustrations of the four different states of the first edition: Gertrude Stein: A Bibliography (New York: Phoenix Bookshop, 1974), p. 10.  
47 Portrait of Mabel Dodge at the Villa Curonia was printed in Florence in an edition of three hundred. Have They Attacked Mary was published in an edition of two hundred copies.
1925 in which Stein’s writing is presented as work already in print.\textsuperscript{48} These are preliminary printed forms which make every effort to adhere to the bibliographical conventions of printed books. Ratified with the author’s final imprimatur, they are prototypes of the entity that will be reproduced and distributed, ready for the immediate attention of editors. The bound volumes ease the load for prospective editors, publishers and scholars, making any alteration unnecessary.\textsuperscript{49} They are a guide to Stein’s composition practices and represent the development of her writing as a sustained intellectual and aesthetic project, always oriented towards the form of the book: ‘Gertrude Stein was in those days a little bitter, all her unpublished manuscripts, and no hope of publication or serious recognition.’\textsuperscript{50} Like Pound, Stein was careful to trial the form of her writing in print before submitting it to publishers. Although most of the texts in these volumes remained unpublished until the appearance of \textit{The Yale Edition of the Unpublished Writings of Gertrude Stein}, the form in which they appear to readers is as a book; they are ready to print, waiting for a publisher. The \textit{Yale Edition} does not follow the order of the bound volumes. Its editor, Carl Van Vechten, chooses instead to group texts by genre, consigning shorter texts to a single volume.

Stein became her own publisher in 1930, establishing the Plain Edition with Alice Toklas. She wrote to Sherwood Anderson, ‘I just got tired of shoving others so we decided to shove

\textsuperscript{48} YCAL MSS 76, Boxes 88-91. These volumes are numbered 6-25. Volumes 1-5 do not form part of the Beinecke collection.

\textsuperscript{49} A \textit{carnet} from this period entitled ‘Literature’ is a ledger of publication which also reflects Stein’s desire to see her work in print. Titles of compositions are listed and records are maintained of their submission to editors and the responses of these editors. Details of publication, of which there are few to record, are also marked. YCAL MSS 76, Box 92:1707.

\textsuperscript{50} Stein, \textit{The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas}, p. 213.
ourselves for a change. 51 A Picasso canvas – ‘Woman with Fan’ (1905) – was sold to fund the publication of five volumes of Stein’s writing. In establishing her own publishing house, Stein achieved what both Joyce and Pound did not, and what she had been unable to achieve on the publication of The Making of Americans: control over every aspect of the production of her writings. Stein’s will nominated a literary executor, Carl Van Vechten, to supervise the publication of her still unpublished works and provided a bequest for this project. The ongoing transformation of manuscripts into books, of compositions into things, is the central and unifying pre-occupation of Stein’s literary career.

Publication is no mere appurtenance to the literary; the book objectifies the author’s desire to be a literary entity, rather than a recognisable identity. Stein’s desire to be a book is a desire to detach herself from the scene of composition so that her writing may be read as the function of an entity, rather than of a writing identity. Composition and publication are two distinct phases in the history of the text, a distinction reinforced by Stein’s disinclination to interfere with her ‘complete’ early work, the text an indivisible whole. Unlike both A Draft of XXX Cantos and Ulysses, the bibliographical record of The Making of Americans is reasonably straightforward. The author’s final manuscript provided copy for the typescript, which was then checked by the author. The typescript then provided copy to the printer of the book, which was then proof-read several times by the author. There can be no doubts as to the authority of the text contained in the first edition or that its form, in print, represents the final intentions of its author.

c) Making the Narrative

i) Beginning and Ending

*The Making of Americans* begins again and again; it has many beginnings but no ancestors. As such, *The Making of Americans* does not desire the authority of the last word but that of the first word: to begin again. Of the ‘Family,’ *The Making of Americans* is both Law and Lore, denying all precedent history or identity. The family histories of the Dehnings and the Herslands, their servants and extended families, are related in *The Making of Americans*. This plot is absorbed into the continuous narrative, as the narrator’s efforts to represent and schematise the relations in these families, and then to write ‘a history of all of them’ overwhelm the family and all identifiable characters. The familial scene is one in which the patriarchs – David Hersland and Alfred Dehning – are already dying. King David and King Alfred the Great transmit Jewish and Anglo-Saxon authority; *The Making of Americans* is their heir and the progenitor of a new dynasty of American literature. As the family narrative is sublimated into the broader texture of *The Making of Americans*, the narrative exploits patriarchal laws of textual production and filiation and assumes their authority to speak.

The unhesitant final manuscript of *The Making of Americans* is matched by the certain structure of the narrative, and it is the continuity of composition and narration which disorders the logic of genealogical and literary beginning and ending. This narrative engine does not appear to ever completely start or stop. It is the collision of beginning and ending and the necessary maintenance of continuity which engender the grammatical poise of the book, the continuous present. Narration and composition equivalent, *The Making of Americans* represents the controlled, attenuated release of a single moment of cumulative
cognition, a sustained point of objective realisation given solid dimensions as the
completed text. Just as a point in space can have no beginning or end, a master-piece like
*The Making of Americans* displays neither a chronological moment of beginning nor a
conventionally cadenced climax:

> It is one of the curious difficulties a master-piece has that is to begin and end, because
> actually a master-piece does not do that it does not begin and end if it did it would be
> of necessity and in relation and that is just what a master-piece is not.\(^52\)

Continuity and the ‘necessity’ of composition, rather than relation or the figure of the
author, begin, end and unify *The Making of Americans*. Beginning and ending are the
repeated processes of a single and sustained composition rather than discrete points in time.
There is no grammatical subordination in the sentences which compose *The Making of
Americans* and it is only the very necessary spatial progress of the narrative through the
book which institutes a temporal subordination of beginning to end. The formal device of
repetition ensures that the beginnings of the narrative find no punctiform end.

The structure of the book asserts its own temporal logic and is not bound by any received
narrative strictures. *The Making of Americans* is broken into seven sections of uneven
length, from twenty to two hundred and forty four pages long. The niceties of chapter
divisions and guidelines as to the organisation of the narrative are abandoned. Formally,
the book is paratactic. There is no apex of linear narrative culmination and the relationships
between the broad sections are juxtapositive or paratactic rather than chronological or
hierarchical. The sustained rendition of composition maintains the continuous present,
broken by analepses on the lives of the characters which transport readers to a present
which is temporally disjunct, but which nonetheless remains continuous to the objective of

\(^{52}\) Stein, ‘What are Master-pieces,’ pp. 151-2.
the narrative, the release of what is known by the narrator. Not all of the seven sections of
the book are named and it is difficult to relate excerpts to ‘events’ in the narrative. Page
numbers, spatial markers, are the only way to isolate and locate fragments or discrete
quotations of the narrative.

In a typical projection of the narrative to come, the narrator promises her reader that:

Soon then there will be a history of every kind of men and women and of all the
mixtures in them, sometime there will be a history of every man and every woman
who ever were or are or will be living and of the kind of nature in them and the way it
comes out from them from their beginning to their ending, sometime then there will
be a history of each one of them and of the many millions always being made just like
them, there will be sometime a history of all of them, there will be a history of them
and now there is here a beginning. (176)

This beginning occurs almost a quarter of the way into the book and is reiterated until its
conclusion. ‘Soon then’ within the narrative must be at its endlessly deferred conclusion:
the close of the book. The reader must defer to the narrator’s knowledge of what is to come
and remain a captivated subject until its close. Making a prolonged narrative of the
sustained intuition of a continuous present is the compositional koan of The Making of
Americans:

to make a whole present of something that it had taken a great deal of time to find out,
but it was a whole there then within me and as such it had to be said.53

The narrator has patiently attended to the ‘making of every kind of men and women.’ The
reader must remain suspended with the narrative until the history is completely made, the
‘whole there then within me’ turned into the book.

The first pages of The Making of Americans establish the book’s refusal to situate itself as a
successor in any scheme of literary generation other than that which it mandates. The

opening paragraphs of the book announce generational change, the beginnings and endings of families, as the beginning of the narrative:

Once an angry man dragged his father along the ground through his own orchard. ‘Stop!’ cried the groaning old man at last, ‘Stop! I did not drag my father beyond this tree.’

It is hard living down the tempers we are born with. We all begin well, for in our youth there is nothing we are more intolerant of than our own sins writ large in others and we fight them fiercely in ourselves; but we grow old and we see that these sins are of all sins the really harmless ones to own, nay that they give a charm to any character, and so our struggle with them dies away. (3)

‘Once’ the book begins, in a field unbound by space and time, it is the temporal logical of composition which determines the generation of the text. The temper the author was born with is suspended. The anecdote condenses generational change and the transmission of personality, the tropes which generate the endless complexity of the book’s topic and make the history to come. The son and heir, The Making of Americans treats its inheritance like the angry man treats his father: literary history and ‘the tempers we are born with’ are dragged away and discarded. Watten reads this opening as a re-writing of the Oedipal mother ‘in terms of a social matrix [that] allows her successfully to develop a non-Oedipal mother in terms of social subjectivity.’54 It establishes the scheme of generational difference and repetition which produce the kinds of men and women which the narrator parses as she narrates, unbound by an identifiable social matrix.

This anecdote serves as an epigram which is recapitulated in the final pages of the book. It is the only literary allusion in The Making of Americans which is comparable to the more visible program of intertextuality which supports Ulysses and A Draft of XXX Cantos. The allusion is to Aristotle, establishing a connection to literary tradition which is severed by

the development of an increasingly autonomous narrative voice which leaves the standards of all fathers behind. It is drawn from the *Nichomachean Ethics*, VII. 6 (2), from a chapter which divides human character into six types according to their capacity to experience contentment. The objective analysis undertaken by Aristotle sets a model for the broader schematisation of personality envisaged by *The Making of Americans*. The parable of the angry man is not the beginning to this work, it takes its place in an analysis of the pursuit of virtue and happiness. The *Nichomachean Ethics* treat human life as the pursuit of these interconnected ends, establishing the foundation for a program of practical wisdom. The chapter which immediately precedes Aristotle’s meditation on pleasure covers the topic of intellectual virtue, and elucidates the compositional precepts of *The Making of Americans*. Aristotle reasons that ‘making and acting being different, art must be a matter of making, not of acting.’\(^{55}\) The rationale for practical wisdom provides an enlarged basis for the composition of *The Making of Americans*: ‘For while making has an end other than itself, action cannot, for good action itself is its end.’\(^{56}\) The book is the ‘end’ of the making, or composition of the text, the process and product cognate, an equivalence reinforced by the continuity of the final manuscript of *The Making of Americans*. To deliberate well is what produces practical wisdom; the process of deliberation inaugurated by the *Nichomachean Ethics* is obliquely nominated by *The Making of Americans* as a beginning to its rationalisation of human experience:

> Practical wisdom, then, must be a reasoned and true state of capacity to act with regards to human goods… Plainly, then, practical wisdom is a virtue and not an art.\(^{57}\)

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A reasoned and true process, the composition of *The Making of Americans* models its beginning on this program of useful knowledge mapped out in the *Nichomachean Ethics*, positioning itself as a successor to the practical wisdom of Aristotle and all of the fathers.

The introduction to Julia Dehning in the book’s first and apparently most conventional section, the bourgeois family narrative which builds on the 1903 draft, also hints at the developments to come:

> And so those who read much in story books surely now can tell what to expect of her, and yet, please reader, remember that this is perhaps not the whole of our story either, neither her father for her, nor the living down her mother who is in her, for I am not ready yet to take away the character from our Julia, for truly she may work out as the story books would have her or we may find all different kinds of things for her, and so reader, please remember, the future is not yet certain for her, and be you well warned reader, from the vain-glory of being sudden in your judgment of her. (15)

This injunction to the apostrophised reader requires all expectations of ‘story book’ endings be suspended until the whole of the narrator’s story is released. The archaism of the appeal to the reader, compounded by syntactical structures like ‘be you well warned,’ stands in dramatic contrast to the ‘different kinds of things’ which do follow in the narrative. The reassuring and familiar tone of this narrator is modulated as the composition finds and analyses ‘all different kinds of things.’ Julia Dehning, the wayward bourgeois daughter does not follow the path of Maggie Tulliver, Emma Bovary or Clarissa Harlowe, three story book models with whom Stein was familiar. *The Making of Americans* finds ‘different kinds of things’ for Julia Dehning and the narrator, avoiding the story book model which results in the death of the female protagonist. Julia Dehning becomes an anonymous element in the book’s catalogue of being. *The Making of Americans* does not exactly rescue its female characters. Rather, all specific signs of difference between women and men are reduced to their ‘bottom natures’ and character individuated as an increasingly
abstract set of differences and repetitions. Story book conventions, like the sins of the fathers, are left behind in a narrative whose future will only be certain when the family is entirely contained by the composition.

_The Making of Americans_, subtitled ‘A History of a Family’s Progress,’ closes with a twenty page section titled ‘History of a Family’s Progress’ (905-925); it is both an epilogue and an epitome of the larger work. The disappearance of the indefinite article marks the movement of the narrative from the specific to a reified generality. At the book’s closing sentences, the referential field of the book has narrowed to that defined by the book. The generational change represented in the opening anecdote absorbed into the grammatical scheme of family living:

Any family living can be existing when not every one has come to be a dead one. Every one in a family living having come to be dead ones some are remembering something of some such thing. Some being living not having come to be dead ones can be ones being in a family living. Some being living and being in a family living and coming then to be old ones can come then to be dead ones. Any one can be certain that some can remember such a thing. Any family living can be one existing and some can remember something of some such thing. (925)

The proper noun, possessive pronoun and personal pronoun have been withdrawn from this epilogue which contains the persistent flux of ‘any family living.’ Family living is an abstract field of relation which produces textual objects rather than embodied subjects like those the reader encounters in the first sections of the book, and in the earliest compositional material. The logic of textual production is genitive, in the sense that it is concerned with the designation of absolute relations between objects. It is comprehension of this family as a container of all kinds of being that closes the narrative.
Those nouns which do appear in this final section of the book—‘family,’ ‘men and women,’ ‘kinds’—work to structure this container and are contained by it. The appositive accumulation of gerunds—‘being,’ ‘living,’—creates the perpetual ‘just now’ of composition. In the absence of concrete referents, verbal motifs accumulate, rhyming visually and aurally: living, existing, having, something, being; any, can, thing, not, one. The effect is incantatory, of a rite being sung or a new grammatical paradigm being recited. The narrative voice attains a sustained and comprehensive equivocality: ‘some’ can be dead ones; ‘some’ can remember: the narrative can comprehend ‘every one.’ It is on remembering that the book ends, on an act of collective identity contained by genius. *The Making of Americans* thus achieves a hypostasised anti-epiphany: disillusionment. The book is apophatic, its grammatical and formal structures work to deny time and memory: when memory and identity intervene, the narrative stops. It is only in this state of disillusion that knowing can be objectified, possessed, and contained within composition.

Participles and gerunds function as both nouns and predicates constructing movement within the theoretical space of the narrative, a laboratory simulation of ‘a space filled with moving.’ This figure is repeated later in Stein’s career in *The Geographical History of America* (1936) and ‘The Gradual Making of The Making of Americans’ (1934). This movement is perceptible at the level of the sentence:

Certainly each one is beginning being living when they are beginning being ones being living. (799)

‘Certainly’ announces a deliberate statement. At the heart of this sentence is the clause ‘each one is beginning being living’. The copula ‘is’ is followed by the predicate composite of nominalisations, ‘beginning being living.’ Alternatively, ‘is beginning being living’ can function as an active, finite clause. Mis-reading the sentence and projecting
commas between ‘beginning,’ ‘being’ and ‘living’ will begin another process of association. Combining ‘beginning being’ and ‘being living’ yields ‘beginning being living’: a continuously regenerating object, a moment of flux in suspension. The grammatical operation of the book is entirely logical, tenses and grammatical auxiliaries are compounded like the characteristics which define the kinds of living contained within the family: the past + the future = the continuous present. The movement of the narrative towards generalisation and away from nominalisation is achieved through substitution (particularly of pronouns), deictic shift (‘this one,’ ‘that one’), negation, and the accumulation of many equally weighted clauses in the one sentence. Nomination is a dynamic process and this behaviour sets a mercurial itinerary for the grammatical subjects of *The Making of Americans*. Composition transforms the dynamic poetry of living, of all kinds of being into a hypostasised still life: prose, framed by the book.

The most common metaphor for the continuous present sustaining the suspension of beginning and endings in *The Making of Americans* is the endlessly flowing stream, a figure which also works to establish a genealogical connection between Gertrude Stein, Henri Bergson and Heraclitus. The movement of the continuous present in *The Making of Americans* is fluvial, but it is not organic, the metaphor of the stream is disengaged from bucolic, Romantic associations. The continuous present is a gradual and regulated release of accumulated knowledge, its composition determined within the hermetic conditions set up for the experiment by its author. The movement of the stream of narratorial consciousness is as through industrial pipes and hoses, the interconnecting locks and dykes of the Parisian canals, a scientific apparatus. It is the continuous consciousness of
composition which is emulated by the continuous present in *The Making of Americans*, a monumental supplement to Bergson’s observation that every feeling:

contains virtually within it the whole past and present of the being experiencing it, and, consequently, can only be separated and constituted into a ‘state’ by an effort of abstraction or of analysis.  

The fundamental objective of *The Making of Americans* is to represent the ‘gradual release’ of a ‘whole present’ through a process of abstraction like that proposed by Bergson.

A line is drawn to connect Henri Bergson and Gertrude Stein by Wyndham Lewis who diagnoses their shared ‘time-obsession’ in his critique of Stein’s writing:

Bergson was supposed by all of us to be dead, but Relativity, oddly enough at first sight, has recently resuscitated him; for the *time-spacer* has turned out to be the old-timer, or timist, after all.

*The Making of Americans* is a time-spacer too, proposing the objective median zone of composition as a theoretical site in which time is suspended for the purposes of objective analysis. Like the narrator of *The Making of Americans*, Bergson examines the observable phenomena of consciousness and its subjective effects. Of his book *Matter and Memory* (1896), Bergson wrote to Stein’s early mentor William James that he sought to show ‘how the relationship of consciousness to cerebral activity is something else entirely than what is supposed by physiologists and philosophers,’ an imperative which rhymes with the interest of *The Making of Americans* in the performance of kinds of being. In *The Making of Americans*, the psychological models of consciousness Stein had studied at Radcliffe and Johns Hopkins University are discarded in the narrator’s pursuit of ‘something else,’ a

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mode of analysis which retains the immediacy of thinking and knowing in a single, prolonged textual moment.

As the paradigm – ‘kinds of being’ – is gradually contained by composition, the penultimate section of the book, ‘David Hersland,’ investigates the propinquities of nominalisation, as if to consider itself in advance as such a named object:

> I do ask some, I would ask every one, I do not ask some because I am quite certain that they would not like me to ask it, I do ask some if they would mind it if they found out that they did have the name they had then and had been having been born not in the family living they are then living in, if they had been born illegitimate.

(723)

Finding the right name for things is a literary project and a question of propriety. *The Making of Americans* functions as a comprehensive guide to social etiquette through the proper parsing of all possible kinds of being. The composition of *The Making of Americans* asserts its own illegitimacy, the book is dislocated from the name and identity of its author. *Ulysses* thematises its author’s anxiety that his gestating child-book will be illegitimate, agonising over the laws of paternity: ‘— A father, Stephen said, battling against his hopelessness, is a necessary evil.’61 *The Making of Americans* defies this necessary evil in its declaration of its illegitimacy. Both the narrator and David Hersland disappear lexically in ‘David Hersland.’ The embarrassment and social disorder engendered by the patriarchal logic of naming is overcome by a totalising discourse of difference, achieved through an objective, hermetic process of composition.

The loss of David Hersland’s name is emblematic of the collapse of conventional social boundaries and categories realised by the certainty of composition. The textual death of

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David Hersland signals the success of composition and the succession of the book. The ‘bounty of increase’ is contained by the composition of *The Making of Americans*, a perpetual beginning to a new textual dynasty of kinds of being which adopts the certainty of difference as its foundation:

He could be certain that some one was one different from any other one. He could be certain that any one was different from any other one. He could be certain that some one was different from any other one. (877)

This realisation of difference recapitulates the opening anecdote in its most composed and final form. The certainty of this generational change overcomes the difficult negotiation of difference at the beginning of the book. The ending of *The Making of Americans* is continuous to its beginning, but differently disposed in the book. The logic of the narrative is not circular, it is the same point, sustained throughout and carefully regulated in composition. It is with this certainty that *The Making of Americans* demarcates the furthest boundaries of its comprehension of the continuous present. The death and realisation of David Hersland rhyme with the final assent of Molly Bloom and James Joyce to *Ulysses* – ‘Yes I said Yes’ – and the explicit textual partition which closes *A Draft of XXX Cantos*.

*The Making of Americans* presents itself as an unprecedented new beginning to literary Modernism. As such, it is less concerned with aftermath of its supersession of literary history than the beginning it announces. Rendering the conventional narrative of the nineteenth century a ruin is the goal of *The Making of Americans*, whose closure signals a destruction and a reconstruction which are both suspended in progress. Publication signals the achievement of composition, the reification of this static progress. The ‘beginning again and again’ which impels the narrative of *The Making of Americans* is in this way distinct from the many ‘endings’ (and by this I mean the foreclosure of different narrative
modes) in *Ulysses* and the ‘never-ending again and again’ suggested by the pun (*fin*-again) in the title of *Finnegans Wake*. Ironically, the end cannot be recognised as such until after it has been reached. Once composition is complete and the end has been reached, any revision is redundant.

This is a highly arranged narrative; the movement of abstraction is to gradually reveal that arrangement. The enormous dimensions of the book cohere because they are suspended in time, held together as the sustained grammatical description of an expansive point of knowing. The physical structure of the book conforms to the unified whole proposed by Aristotle in the *Poetics*:

> A *whole* is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A *beginning* is that which does not follow necessarily from anything else, but some second thing naturally occurs after it. Conversely, an *end*, is that which does itself naturally follow from something else, either necessarily or in general, but there is nothing else after it. A *middle* is that which itself comes after something else, and some other thing comes after it. Well-constructed plots should therefore not begin or end at any arbitrary point but should employ the stated forms.\(^{62}\)

Unlike the perfected text expounded by Aristotle, *The Making of Americans* does not rely on plot to achieve the unity or resolution of its theme: the physiognomy of the book imposes an arbitrary beginning, middle and end to the composition. Balance, proportion and purified scientific quantities measure the intellectual virtue of *The Making of Americans*, a master-piece of efficiency and necessity, of making, rather than action or performance. Progress through the book is measured in spatial terms, the movement filling this space is the narrative. Logical syntax and the spatial form of the book act as the limits which contain the potentially limitless movement of composition.

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ii) Composition and Manufacturing

The threat to the continuous present is the movement of time. Composition entails forgetting and constructs a narrative mode of conscious immortality through the suspension of identity. Subjective intention – writing as ‘you’ – is excluded from this mode of composition. Intention, within the parameters of *The Making of Americans* is formal, objective and intellectual. ‘Not you’ is a self-sufficient function of composition which accumulates and consolidates a sustained moment of cognition, rather than a successive suite of recollections. The narrative moves forward in the book by logical and repetitive apprehension of a dynamic ‘thing,’ a process explicated in ‘Portraits and Repetition:’

> I say I never repeat while I am writing because while I am writing I am most completely, and that is if you like being a genius, I am most entirely and completely listening and talking, the two in one and the one in two and that is having completely its own time and it has in it no element of remembering.  

The personality of such a narrator is entirely absorbed by the task at hand, a conduit for the two mutually defining process of listening and talking. Apprehensiveness describes the behaviour of this narrative, rather than its subjective synonym, anxiety. This apprehension engenders the comprehension, the knowing, which is released as narrative.

In this state of conscious forgetting, the narrator of *The Making of Americans* conducts a euphonious grammar lesson through repetition, an exposition of the extremities of English usage and American being. It is a pedagogical strategy of reinforcement which dissociates words from their received meanings and institutes a closed system of familiarity and recognition within the narrative:

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63 Stein, ‘Portraits and Repetition,’ in *Look At Me Now and Here I Am*, p. 108.
In some as I was saying repeating comes almost without any changing any differing from the other repeating in them, in some repeating always has some changing, in some repeating has each time real feeling, in some it has so little real feeling it is only copying their own repeating. There can be then every kind of repeating with every degree of changing to some which takes strong looking to be sure it is repeating. (198)

Essentially, the composition of *The Making of Americans* is repetition because the living of its objects is also repetition, ‘every kind of repeating’. The repeated prefatory clause ‘as I was saying’ foregrounds these continually repeated elements in the text, signaling that the digressions take their place within the closed conceptual space of the narrative. ‘I’ is a function of narrative, the sovereign subject whose identity is effaced as she listens to the repeating which surrounds her, and repeats it as narrative. The authorial self does not play a part in this interchange between text and context.

Considering *The Making of Americans* in print, the repetitions in the text find an analogue in the printed book, each one a repetition of the original. Just as the repetition of *The Making of Americans* by means of the printing press repeats an already secondary document – the typescript – the repetitions in the narrative have their origin in the book. Repetition is a vital function of the compositional strategy set by Stein, beginning again and again continuous to the production line, the printing press, the cinema, the regular black notebooks containing the continuous draft of *The Making of Americans*. The repetitions which characterise a work like *The Making of Americans*, Wendy Steiner observes, do not implicate the reader in any temporal contradiction, sustaining the effect of the continuous present and denying the narrator both a past and an identity:
Their now is the reader’s now. In reading repetitions we do not project ourselves into the future or contaminate the present with memories but live in the very nowness of each moment.\textsuperscript{64}

It is one moment sustained which impels the continuous narration of \textit{The Making of Americans}, the ‘nowness’ of the moment caught by the interchange between difference and repetition. Repetitions maintain the narrative as an immediate function of composition and work further to construct the phonic and visual \textit{sostenuto} which synthesises the book as a whole closed system.

The exchange between a sentient being, without personality, and its environment is figured through the gradual animation of a statue in Etienne Bonnot de Condillac’s \textit{Treatise on the Sensations}. The statue is a theoretical being, like the narrator of \textit{The Making of Americans}, through which the experience of the sensations is conducted, without the impediment of habit or subjectivity. The enlightenment of the statue is carefully controlled by the philosopher, in much the same way as the final revelations of the abstraction of the narrative of \textit{The Making of Americans} are regulated by its narrator. Condillac postulates the gradual exposure of the statue to sensations, a process equivalent to the accretive and expansive composition of \textit{The Making of Americans} as the narrator absorbs the kinds of beings which surround her. Once the basic desires – thirst and hunger – of the newly animated statue are satisfied, Condillac reasons that ‘Curiosity will soon lead it to observe itself’ and the objects which surround it, predicting that:

\begin{quote}
It will classify them according to the differences it observes; and the number of its abstract ideas will increase proportionately with the excitement of its curiosity in seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, touching.\textsuperscript{65}
\end{quote}


This is the behaviour exhibited by the narrator of *The Making of Americans*, immersed in a rhapsody of perception, ‘always listening’ and always classifying. Thus exposed, the statue reflects on the transformative experience of the sensations. The ‘self’ of the statue maintains a symbiotic relationship to the sensations which surround it. The statue so regulated can exist continuous to the continuous world unfolding around it:

There is no single action, considered in itself which it cannot think of as if it had not taken place, and in regard to which it cannot think that is has been itself the sole cause of its taking place. It is organized in exactly the same way when it is at rest and when it is moving. It does not remain still because it lacks the power to move, and it does not move because it lacks the power to remain still. This is what its power means. It involves two ideas; one, that it does not do something; the other, that nothing prevents it doing it.66

Like the statue, the narrator is a fixed point, a subject with no agency through whom the text is generated. Its apperception of the world will, Condillac reasons, remain in a state of elevated equilibrium with its environment, a state replicated by the steady rhythms of the continuous present in *The Making of Americans*.

The exposure of the statue to the world of sensations is similar to the ‘true empiricism’ defined by Bergson. This analytic process also demands the sublimation of personality within a regulated environment to gain an unimpeded understanding of what Bergson terms its original. The composition of *The Making of Americans* is such an empirical process, following a program of close observation like that advanced by Bergson as:

that which proposes to get as near to the original itself as possible, to search deeply into its life, and so, by a kind of intellectual auscultation, to feel the throbings of its soul; and this true empiricism is the true metaphysics.67

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As Stein would have listened with a stethoscope as a medical student, so the conditions that are constructed for the composition of *The Making of Americans* are those of a sterile and organised laboratory in which the thinker is theoretically separated from the confines of the ego.

To understand the world which surrounds it, Condillac’s statue and the narrator of *The Making of Americans* must undertake an apparently infinite process of analysis, as described by Bergson:

> In its eternally unsatisfied desire to embrace the object around which it is compelled to turn, analysis multiplies without end the number of its points of view in order to complete its always incomplete representation, and ceaselessly varies its symbols that it may perfect the always imperfect translation. It goes on, therefore, to infinity.\(^{68}\)

The narrator is faced with a constant turning object: the enormous family of being contained by *The Making of Americans*. It is the finitudes of categorical definitions and difference within the family which are multiplied in composition and consolidated as the text. Bergson’s critique of the emerging science of psychology identifies the problems facing the narrator of *The Making of Americans*:

> They look for the ego, and they claim to find it in psychical states, though this diversity of states has itself only been obtained, and could only be obtained, by transporting oneself outside the ego altogether, so as to make a series of sketches, notes, and more or less symbolic and schematic diagrams. Thus, however much they place the states side by side, multiplying points of contact and exploring the intervals, the ego always escapes them, so that they might finish by seeing in it nothing but a vain phantom.\(^{69}\)

To analyse psychical states, the kinds of being which *The Making of Americans* promises will be contained by the completed narrative, the thinker must depart the distractions and disorganised flux of subjectivity and the ego. The controlled accumulation of psychical

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\(^{69}\) Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 34.
states by the narrator of *The Making of Americans* is jeopardised only when the phantom subject of the author is remembered.

This theoretical statue, the entity generating the narrative, runs like a machine and it is to mechanical metaphors of composition that Stein’s exegeses on composition most frequently return. This literary manufacture embraces industrial process as detached from any social or intersubjective reality. In this way, the manufacture of *The Making of Americans* is distinct from the idea of *faktur* developed by the Russian Formalists in the same period. Georges Hugnet comments in the preface to his 1929 translation of *The Making of Americans* into French:

> Gertrude Stein fabrique des Américains comme chez Ford. Elle met un cheveu sur le tapis roulant de son usine et il en sort un Américain.

> *Gertrude Stein makes Americans like Ford does. She puts a hair on the conveyor belt in her factory and turns out an American.*

Treating words as industrial components describes the mode of composition engaged by the narrator of *The Making of Americans*. The apparently mechanical consistency of the narrative is secured by repetitions and the steady metronomic pace of the continuous present. The industrial motif is taken up by Stein in ‘Portraits and Repetition’:

> As I say a motor goes inside and the car goes on, but my business my ultimate business as an artist was not with where the car goes as it goes but with the movement inside that is of the essence of its going.

The mechanical internal movement of narrative is a function of the ‘movement inside’ that Stein identifies as her business. It is the essences of the text’s chosen objects which drive the textual machine of *The Making of Americans*, rather than its author.

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71 Stein, ‘Portraits and Repetition,’ p. 17.
*The Making of Americans* advances a double denial of identity and influence. The narrative rejects both the identifiability of individual subjectivity and the concept of identity as self-equivalence. It is the intrusion of identity – celebrity– into the anonymity necessary for composition which the narrator of *The Making of Americans* evades, an ironic foreshadowing of the incursion of the life of Gertrude Stein into the critical reception of her writing. When the audience ‘creates’ the writer of *The Making of Americans*, they project an understanding of composition and the literary object onto the book which relies on their knowledge of the author. The anonymity of the narrative voice, its difference from the author writing is the foundational premise of *The Making of Americans*. This distance is later signaled in the duplicitous title, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, which repeats the dislocation of the author and the narratorial ‘I.’ The narrator of *The Making of Americans* is not synonymous with its author, identity, like history, is suspended within the form of the book.

The account of composition advanced as the narrative of *The Making of Americans* is the emanation of an author without identity, of an analytical process without history. The interest of the New Bibliographers in measuring composition according to the standard set by an author is thwarted by this denial of authorship. The subjectivity of the author is consciously absented from the composition of the book, she is the statue through which the experiment is conducted. Manufactured of repetitions – the empirical matter of formal difference and identity – *The Making of Americans* is a literary text which eschews subjectivity for an economical and objective narrative voice and a disembodied textual present.
d) The Reception of *The Making of Americans*

i) Familiarising the Family

Carl Van Vechten expressed high hopes for the future readership of *The Making of Americans* in 1923:

> What has become of ‘*The Family*’? I want to show the mss to my publisher. It has occurred to me that the time is getting ripe for its publication now that you are a classic & have Imitators & DISCIPLES! please do something about this!

In the mid-twenties, Stein did have both imitators and disciples. The imitators included Ernest Hemingway, Thornton Wilder and Sherwood Anderson and the admirers Van Vechten, Virgil Thompson, Georges Hugnet, Bernard Faï and her publisher Robert McAlmon. Stein approved of obedient readers and it is to those readers who are most attentive to the lessons of her writing that *The Making of Americans* is most receptive.

Thornton Wilder’s play, *Our Town* (1938) echoes *The Making of Americans* in its incremental representation of life in Grover’s Corner. Wilder was enthusiastically reading the unabridged *Making of Americans* as he was writing *Our Town*. He wrote approvingly to Stein and Toklas:

> Now I have finished the book. It is a very great book. Everybody should read it and go to school to it and learn to see and hear by it and go to sleep in it and wake up in it. And some day everybody will. What a wonderful thing it would be to live to be a hundred and so watch that book slowly and certainly entering into everybody’s mind.

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The Stage Manager's reflection on Main Street repeats the grammatical structure of living in *The Making of Americans*:

> So—people a thousand years from now—this is the way we were in the provinces of New York at the beginning of the twentieth century.— This is the way we were: in our growing up and in our marrying and in our living and in our dying.\(^75\)

*Our Town* and its author are contained by the vast dimensions of the book, objects accommodated by the narrative and attentive to its rhythms. Wilder’s ideal performance of readership demonstrates the capacity of *The Making of Americans* to autonomously produce obedient readers and new books like *Our Town*. *Our Town* has internalised the lessons of *The Making of Americans* and so repeats them itself. All readers must ideally be as objects like *Our Town*, processed and regenerated by their encounter with the masterpiece.

Not many readers have been as diligent pupils to the compositional lessons of *The Making of Americans* as Wilder. As resistant as the composition of *The Making of Americans* is to any gestures of identification in time, readers have been nonetheless keen to identify the author with and in the narrative. Against the archival and narrative claims of a sustained intellectual program of composition which dispenses with a recognisable field of reference, the narratorial ‘I’ of *The Making of Americans* has been received as an encrypted reproduction of Stein’s self. Such gestures have significant implications for the editorial future of the text. The recuperation of autobiographical detail installs a compositional context, a finite set of lived beginnings which the narrative explicitly denies.

The narrator of *The Making of Americans* is, according to Lisa Ruddick, ‘so close to the author that it seems sensible to refer to her as Stein.’ Jayne Walker agrees:

This ‘I…writing’ is clearly not a fictional persona. It is the author, stripped of particularising autobiographical details, seeking knowledge in this process of writing.

Terry Castle asserts of Stein’s writing generally:

Stein’s writing is something more than just an experiment in description. It is also inevitably a self-transcription. The autobiographical impulse is strong in Stein’s writing—may in fact be its quintessential feature.

The autobiographical subject identified is endowed with the kind of distracting characteristics explicitly discarded in the composition of the text, suggesting that it is not objectively determined, but the product of memory, time and desire. These readings bear directly on the composition of *The Making of Americans*, – both the writing process and the narrative which it produces – advancing an account of composition which seeks to reconcile the theoretical account of authorship contained by the book with the embodied, neo-Romantic definition of authorship upon which the New Bibliographers rely.

The metaphors of production through which readers have approached the composition of *The Making of Americans* are gendered. The author is identified as a woman, and the creative process is redefined in terms of human reproduction. Mabel Dodge was enthusiastic about *The Making of Americans*, writing to Stein in 1911:

> I am longing for your book to get born! It will probably be a moral earthquake to me, as the other was quite a shock.

Miriam DeKoven’s survey of Stein criticism characterises Stein as a ‘foremother’ and her 1981 book casts Stein’s oeuvre as a Cixous inspired ‘body-text.’ In a not dissimilar fashion, Richard Bridgman names The Making of Americans Stein’s ‘huge child,’ a characterisation inimical to the book’s mode of production. In her analysis of the ways in which The Making of Americans works to deconstruct patriarchal models of the family, Franziska Gygax also takes recourse in the metaphors of maternity, arguing that the narrator seeks to ‘give birth to whole people.’ Whilst Gygax concludes that ‘the end of the book can hardly be called matriarchal because the female narrator has retreated and her characters are gender-less,’ the invocation of a pre-Oedipal textual mother again places the production and reproduction of the text in a gendered economy denied by the narrative, interested in the genealogical transmission of types of being, rather than such literal and embodied relations. To read Stein as a textual mother ignores both her definition of composition as objective, and her aspirations for her textual progeny: an obedient nation of readers and a generation of new books, which, like Our Town, will repeat the lessons of The Making of Americans.

Edmund Wilson disapprovingly links the length of The Making of Americans to unreadability and bodily excess:

already some ruminative self-hypnosis, some progressive slowing-up of the mind, has begun to show itself in Miss Stein’s work as a sort of fatty degeneration of her imagination and style.

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Richard Bridgman nominates *The Making of Americans* ‘a great sow of a work’ drawing attention to its lack of ‘formal resting places’ like chapter endings, or divisions between episodes. A friendly reader like Marianne DeKoven dwells on the expansive size of the literary Stein: ‘she has become a figure of limitless capaciousness and magnitude, a site of potentiality.’ The linkages between ‘female copia, of body and of word, and the copiousness of texts’ as considered by Patricia Parker, are clearly marked in these discourses in which critics concatenate the topos of excess physical proportion with the misogynist topos of garrulity. From being simply too big, *The Making of Americans* is transformed into an excess of meaningless verbiage: ‘needlessly prolix.’

These readings of *The Making of Americans* as a work of undifferentiated, gendered bulk connect with Catherine Stimpson’s discussion of the metaphoric transformations of the body of Gertrude Stein in her own writing and that of her readers. Stein’s robust form, her lesbianism, and her transgression of the boundaries of conventional writing are linked by Stimpson, whose argument turns on the supposition that Stein’s ‘sense of her own monstrosity in this world’ shaped her writing. A metaphoric of deviant dimension – shape, size and capaciousness – support a reading strategy which unveils the biographical content of the Steinian sentence, paragraph, and book.

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84 Bridgman, *Gertrude Stein in Pieces*, pp. 91, 60.
87 Wilson, *Axel’s Castle*, p. 192.
89 Stimpson, ‘The Somagrams of Gertrude Stein,’ p. 78.
‘Stein’s most successful creation was her extraordinary image,’\textsuperscript{90} writes Wendy Steiner. The reputation earned on the publication of \textit{The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas} has meant that Stein is no longer a stranger to her readers and in retrospect, Stein herself has become the most important point of reference in critical work on \textit{The Making of Americans}. Biographies and volumes of letters have been published in disproportion to book-length critical works or reprints of her longer works themselves. It is a central irony of Stein’s reception in the second half of the twentieth century that as fervently as she is championed as muse of \textit{avant-garde} poets, dramatists and painters, as privileged subject for theorists, as the standard bearer for experimental writing in the twentieth century, so fervently her biography and psyche are mined for clues. The conflation of books and autography by Stein’s readers lends support to Paul de Man’s proposition that:

\begin{quote}
the autobiographical project may itself produce and determine the life and that whatever the writer \textit{does} is in fact governed by the technical demands of self-portraiture and thus determined, in all its aspects, by the resources of his medium.\textsuperscript{91}
\end{quote}

\textit{The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas} and \textit{Everybody's Autobiography} thematise the conditions of autobiography and self-portraiture, attempting to control and so evade their technical demands. The most basic proposition made by these two books is that their author, Gertrude Stein, is capable of completely occupying another voice, of projecting another self. \textit{The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas} and \textit{Everybody's Autobiography} rely on autobiographical detail and the tropes of autobiography but their titles insist that they are \textit{not} the autobiography of Gertrude Stein. The narrative voice asserts itself as the sovereign subjectivity of the text, a characteristic shared with the autobiographical ‘I,’ but the

constantly modulated narrative voice of *The Making of Americans* denies a pre-existing ontological self or any easy reference to biographical experience. It is an entity which records the experience of composition rather than expressing itself. Reading *The Making of Americans* as work of autobiography denies the suspension of identity which is fundamental to the composition and progress of the narrative.

Understanding *The Making of Americans* through the apparatus of Gertrude Stein is to ignore the claims made in the book to compositional autonomy and narrative objectivity. Given the commitment of *The Making of Americans* to an objective and disembodied mode of composition, autobiographical readings recast the book in terms wholly incompatible to the narrative. *The Making of Americans* legislates an objective theory of language which precludes autobiography. Writing is not an aid to memory, it is an annihilation of all memory and identity.

**ii) The Content of Composition: Returning to the Manuscript**

The re-establishment of a productive connection between the author and the text has immediate implications for the editorial reception of the archive. As critics turn to the archive to recuperate discarded autobiographical content, the textual standing of the first edition is brought into question. Whilst *The Making of Americans* has not attracted the editorial scrutiny which characterised the reception of *Ulysses*, the composition of the text occupies an important place in critical readings which identify the development of the narrative with the development of its author. Autobiographical readings have been used to secure the interpretation of *The Making of Americans* as a book which records the personality and struggle of its author as she was writing:
by preserving intact each of its many new beginning, projected aims, and stylistic experiments, this mammoth book is finally the record of Stein’s first sustained struggle and self-conscious confrontation with the act of composition itself, of what it means to be an ‘author.’

Ruddick too reads the composition of *The Making of Americans* as mode of self-expression, the author and the narrator indistinguishable figures who find a voice through writing:

This was the novel in which she found her voice—not in the sense of perfecting a style (‘Melanctha’ is a more polished piece of work) but in the sense of identifying a shaping urge within her writing and claiming it as distinctively hers.

These readings suggest that composition, like the completed narrative, is a function of the author, rather than the disembodied and impersonal process advanced by the narrator.

The material which represents the first stage of composition of *The Making of Americans* is that to which scholars like Leon Katz, Ulla Dydo and Richard Bridgman have returned in order to elaborate a referential field for the book. This is, as Dydo acknowledges, hostile to Stein’s own ideas about her writing:

what Stein intended to leave to Yale, was her writing, self-contained and disembodied movement, lifted from the context between the covers of the *carnets*. It is inconceivable that Stein should have considered giving the *carnets* to an archive. They speak of the process of composition and of living that was the source of her words but not literature.

Dydo is right, it is inconceivable that the manuscripts and *carnets* form a basis for consideration of a work which so stridently declares itself finished, which denies history and memory. The division she draws between ‘words’ and ‘literature’ recall Stein’s injunction against anecdote to Ernest Hemingway, recorded in *The Autobiography of*

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93 Ruddick, *Reading Gertrude Stein*, p. 56.
Alice B. Toklas: ‘Remarks are not literature.’

Nevertheless, Dydo regards the manuscripts and carnets as the key to reading Gertrude Stein:

Her printed books preserve what she wrote but are stripped of the process that gave them being. In the autograph manuscripts, however, that process is often preserved.

In spite of the incompatibility of the figure of an identified author to the composition of The Making of Americans, investigation of the Stein archive has served to theoretically reconstruct the composition of the text in terms of its author, adding content to autobiographical origins projected by Stein’s readers.

Leon Katz, the scholar who has investigated the archival remains and composition of The Making of Americans most closely, divides the author of The Making of Americans into creature and creator, treating the narrator and the author as equivalent identities:

To avoid the stiffness of referring everywhere to Gertrude Stein as either Miss Stein or by her full name, I have adopted the following rule of thumb: in personal or fairly intimate biographical contexts, she becomes ‘Gertrude’; in more formal and in purely critical contexts she is transformed into ‘Stein.’

In his study of the composition of The Making of Americans, Katz recuperates an autobiographical narrative from the notes and carnets with particular emphasis on Stein’s life in Paris between 1906 and 1908. He positions her 1901 affair with May Bookstaver as the origin of the scheme of personality which eventually forms the basis of The Making of Americans. This event is taken as the starting point for a reading of composition as an agonistic, subjective process, as self-transcription. The following phrasing of Stein’s

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composition practices reinforces the equation between the personal history of the author and the emergence of the text:

In so far as it was humanly possible to do so, the surface of the composition was absolutely denuded of all local, personal, identifiable reference. It is striking that this mode of concealment was later to become theoretically justified in Stein’s writing. Yet it was done originally for psychological rather than aesthetic reasons.98

Mesmerised by Stein’s personality, Katz limits the intellectual program of the composition of *The Making of Americans* to the life of its author, a radical diminution of the book’s declared objectives, obscuring the aesthetic in favour of the psychological. The correlation of the book’s evolving schema of kinds of being to Stein’s family and circle of friends destroys the anonymous, objective environment of composition.

Alice Toklas confirms that:

The characters in *The Making of Americans* were originally the Steins, at their Stratton home in East Oakland, and the servants and people who worked for them.99

It is, however, the fundamental process of composition which witnesses the transformation of this type of material into narrative. What are repressed, resisted and discarded in the composition of *The Making of Americans* are the identifying traces of the author and her world. The progress of the narrative is a conscious and deliberate movement away from the specificity of individual subjectivity and lived experience, reflected by the inequivalence of the content of the notes and *carnets* and the completely realised form of the first edition. The evolution of the book away from autobiography and recognisable reference is described unambiguously in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*:

It had changed from being a history of a family to being the history of everybody the family knew and then it became the history of every kind and every individual human being.100

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The scope of the narrative exceeds the boundaries of individual identity and the limitations of a specific moment in time. Clearly, the prolongation of the continuous present in *The Making of Americans* aspires to contain ‘a history of the world,’ rather than the history of one individual. The theorisation of composition in *The Making of Americans* and other writing by Gertrude Stein is utterly defied by critical behaviour which relies on the tropes of autobiography to elucidate the text. *The Making of Americans* manifestly surpasses every limit which could bind it as autobiographical. In print is the only conceivable form of *The Making of Americans*. Imagined as a manuscript, or as the product of a manuscript, the objectivity upon which the narrator stakes her progress is lost.

To date, the turn to the archive has produced supplements to *The Making of Americans* rather than new editions. The first edition has remained intact and all subsequent reproductions of the text have been facsimile editions, uncorrected. A selection of excerpts from *The Making of Americans* appeared in French in 1929 as *Morceaux Choisis de la Fabrication des Américains*. Bernard Faÿ translated another abridged edition, *Américains d’Amérique*, into French in 1933. This edition was published in English by Harcourt Brace in 1934, following the publication of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. The 1936 announcement of the publication of the abridged edition by Harcourt Brace proclaims:

> ‘The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas,’ wittiest and gayest gossip book of many publishing seasons, has created a certain wide market for the first popular American edition of a novel that is already an indestructible part of American literature: Gertrude Stein’s THE MAKING OF AMERICANS.\(^{101}\)

The image of *The Making of Americans* might be indestructible but this is an abridged edition, the reduced form of a book which at full length asserts its integrity and


\(^{101}\) YCAL MSS 77, Box 28:497.
indivisibility. This abridged edition was the only edition of *The Making of Americans* in print until 1966 when the first edition was reproduced in a photo-offset edition in the United States by Something Else Press, and in United Kingdom two years later by Peter Owen. The complete volume has not been translated into French, nor into any other language. Unlike the first editions of *Ulysses* and *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, the first edition of *The Making of Americans* is the sole repository of the text.

The only significant editorial treatment of *The Making of Americans* is contained in *A Stein Reader* edited by Ulla Dydo in 1993. This *Reader* is not and does not aim to be a scholarly edition and holds eighty pages of excerpts from the book. The edition seeks to reflect the chronological development of Stein’s writing throughout her career, concentrating on experimental writing rather than the ‘late public works written ‘from outside’ in conventional English.’ Dydo’s examination and comparison of manuscript and book reveals excisions, rather than the expansive additions which transformed *Ulysses* before its publication. In the simultaneous turn to the archive and the author, Dydo takes the manuscript as the handwritten metonym for Gertrude Stein, treating it as the embodied origin of the text. The printed book disappears from the scene of analysis as the texts are revised and annotated with reference to the history of composition.

The edited text of *The Making of Americans* is the result of an editorial process which takes the manuscript as a copy-text and reads it against the printed text and typescript. Dydo recognises the authority of the printed text – ‘we considered it to have authority as a result of being proofread by Stein and Toklas in contact with the printer’¹⁰² – but adds new

material from manuscripts. Unfortunately the reader cannot easily track the changes which Dydo has made, except for ‘substantive restorations,’ which are bracketed but not annotated. Although it is comforting to read a text which has been scrutinised by editorial eyes, it is frustrating to follow a text so exactly reconstructed that the traces of that reconstruction are all but invisible. It is a text with no patina, its amendments invisible.

The edited excerpts from The Making of Americans in A Stein Reader are supplemented by introductions which draw the text into an explicitly autobiographical scene. The excerpts are reordered to reflect the chronology of composition, rather than their place in the first edition, violating the integrity of the whole composition. Whilst the fragmentation of such a long text into excerpts is a necessary consequence of anthologisation, drawing the narrative ‘into relation’ by linking it to the life of its author is precisely the kind of identification that the text seeks to repel, presenting its form as a continuous and indivisible whole.

The texts printed in Fernhurst, Q. E. D., and Other Early Writings, including the 1903 draft of The Making of Americans, are also invisibly emended by their editor, Donald Gallup, who acknowledges the protocols observed in his prefatory note:

In the transcription of all three texts, spelling errors (‘akward,’ ‘dissaproved,’ ‘fullfill,’ etc.) and obvious slips of the pen have been silently corrected except that the characteristic Stein spelling ‘alright’ for ‘all right’ has been retained.103

Gallup’s ambivalence to bibliographical pedantry is on the record, yet in contrast to the minute attentions and loud responses associated with emending Joyce and Pound, his attitude seems cavalier. Like the Gabler edition of Ulysses, these edited appearances of

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The Making of Americans privilege the subjectivity of the author as the origin of composition. The invisible corrections are unnecessary; the logic of the completed composition precludes such recourse to an author and her characteristics.

These editorial interventions are limited, in comparison to those undertaken on the first edition of Ulysses and the supplements envisaged for A Draft of XXX Cantos. That said, the critical animation of Gertrude Stein in discussions of the composition of The Making of Americans suggests that the book will eventually also be subject to an editorial process which privileges authorial subjectivity over the completely realised form of the first edition. The real antipathy between the New Bibliography and Modernist authorship is revealed by The Making of Americans. The efforts of literary critics to stabilise the narrative voice of The Making of Americans by fixing it in autobiographical matter are analogous to the textual scholar’s pursuit of an idealised best text, emanating from the pen of the author. The radical textual autonomy proposed by The Making of Americans does not correspond to the subjective understanding of either composition or intention in bibliographical discourses. A book which denies itself both a history and an author will not submit easily to editorial practices which seek to recuperate a best text with historical reference to the author.

The return to the manuscripts attempts to recuperate a biographical subject by finding the experiential or biographical ‘beginnings’ of composition. The book denies this recourse to a pre-ontological field of reference. The being of the book is the book, and its ontogeny relies upon the invisibility of all anterior processes: there is nothing before the book. Composition is not the product of experience, it is the controlled result of an experiment.
Reading *The Making of Americans* as the making of Gertrude Stein disarms the struggle of the narrator against the distractions of subjectivity and temporality. To impose any subjective frame on the book, including that of the unconscious, is to disobey the formal injunctions made by the book. The unity and identity of all textual subjects are sublimated by the objective and qualitative process of description. When such a subjective frame is imposed on the book, the literary effects of *The Making of Americans* are read as functions of authorial inexperience, the accumulation of certainty and disillusionment as marks of both the narrator’s and the author’s coming of age. The composition of the archive for *The Making of Americans* declares that there is nothing anxious or hesitant about the writing of the book. It is a structured and deliberate intellectual project: to sustain and repeat a prolonged point of understanding. What has been diagnosed as chronic authorial anxiety is the conscious and gradual apprehension of the objective of composition. Always talking and always listening, *The Making of Americans* rejects an account of composition as embodied process. Rather, it is a process of controlled intellectual rigour whose target is a lucid objectivity. To read this book in relation to a world of lived experience is to exceed the hermetic, independent ethos of the book, a closed system to which any alteration is unnecessary.
Chapter Six: Conclusion

The history of Modernist literature is the history of the Modernist book, the object which launches the text into the public sphere of readers, critics and editors. The Modernist book is *ipso facto* an original object, displaying the literary text to its readers without the apparatus of authorship. The proximity of James Joyce, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein to the first publications of *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* works to consolidate the form of their books as indivisible, autonomous wholes. Once published, the book usurps the privilege of the author to amend or refashion the text. First publication marks the final dislocation of the Modernist author from the literary text. Bound as a book, the text appears as an object, rather than as the representation of the process of composition. Unlike Homer’s epic, the linguistic contortions of Modernist narrative cannot be held by memory: the book is the only possible container for this type of text, not a memorable fancy, but a thing.

The New Bibliography establishes a fixed paradigm of textual production which understands the composition of a literary text through the figure of an author writing. Deviations from this model, like those represented by *Sejanus His Fall*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Vanity Fair*, are transformed when they are reproduced as critical editions. Those elements which do not fall within the definition of properly literary production – illustrations, notes, the disposition of the text on the page – are normalised in pursuit of a best-text, conceived of as an emanation from the pen of an author. Claiming blindness to the physical form of the book, and attending to the history of composition only insofar as it bears upon the correct text of a work, the principles of the New Bibliography
generate an account of composition and protocols of correction which, ideally, produce a
text which facilitates the most immediate interface between an author and reader. This
model of composition requires the editor and textual scholar turn to the archive and
manuscripts to remove all impediments to the close encounter between author and reader.

The consequences of this model of composition for reading Modernist texts are numerous.
In the first, the concept of the authorial fair-copy requires the figure of the author be
installed as the origin of a text. The regress to authorial subjectivity denies any agency held
by book. Secondly, in imagining the literary text as a manuscript, the importance of the
mechanical reproduction of texts is obscured. Thirdly, the construction of a stemma
through which to analyse the history of a literary text invokes a set of precedents which are
theoretically contained on first publication. Finally, the concept of an idealised correct text,
authorial or otherwise, is defeated by the self-representation of the Modernist book as a
complete and inviolate entity. The models of literary production advanced by *Ulysses, A
Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* repudiate the concept of the authorial
fair-copy, proposing the printed book as the only, and best representative of literary form.

In this thesis, I have argued that the application of the principles of the New Bibliography
to the composition of Modernist texts has served, and will serve to redefine the production
of the literary text as precedent to, and detached from its ideal form: the first edition. My
readings of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* have focussed
on the propositions made about composition within these texts, guided by their first
editions. What has emerged is a reliance on objective and material modes of textual
production and reproduction. The authority of the Modernist text is located within the covers of the printed book, and not in the mind of its author.

The composition and publication of *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* are wholly oriented towards the production of books, the finished and polished products of composition. The significance of being in print is witnessed at an archival level in the conflict between the manuscript and printed text of *Ulysses* on its print page, in the consolidation of the prior printed forms of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and the immediate conversion of the apparently automatically written manuscript of *The Making of Americans* into a typescript, and eventually into a book. These books are shielded from the attention of editors. The energy invested in first publication seeks to protect the book against any further intervention and to off-set the possibility of future correction, division or emendation.

Read in this light, the spiraling accretions to the text of *Ulysses* before it was published are efforts to secure the form of the text in its most final form. No subsequent edition of *Ulysses* can claim to have been so proofed by the author and the turn back to the manuscripts effectively denies the significance of first publication. The rehearsal in print of the components of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* extends the objective trial of printed form beyond the proof-pages. So diligently has each element of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* been tested that any revision is redundant. Further, the appearance of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* supersedes its bibliographical precedents. The history of the text is absorbed in the new book. It is a text already scrupulously edited by its author which appears as an objective, corrected form in print. To annotate or otherwise augment this text is to refuse the
publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* as a gesture of completion and textual integrity. Its consolidation of its own textual history and of all those texts which precede and influence it is vital to the completion of the text. The claim for the first edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* as a deliberate form is strengthened by Ezra Pound’s familiarity and affinity with contemporary publishing and his interest in determining the physical form of his books.

The final continuous manuscript of *The Making of Americans*, the culmination of its author’s long apprenticeship as a writer, is presented as a text immediately prepared for the press. Its transformation into a typescript eliminates all sign of the writing body. The only real and figurative frame for this kind of text is the book. *The Making of Americans* is a text which denies all history but that which it contains. The first edition is an independent referential enclosure which presents the text as an immediate and continuous whole: a space filled with moving.

Proofed in advance by its author, the Modernist book ideally stands firm in time. It is an irreducible form which withholds the possibility of its future decomposition. Neither the author, nor an editor can theoretically augment this text. Joyce’s efforts to correct the text of the first edition of *Ulysses* once it was published are inconsistent with the assertions of the narrative that it is produced not by an author, but by the conditions of composition and publication. The rehearsals of the elements of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* in provisional publications convey the Pound’s commitment to the production of a text which, once complete, will not require any further editorial attention. The disinclination of Gertrude Stein to alter the manuscript text of *The Making of Americans* as it finally approached first publication bespeaks of a commitment to recognise composition as, in Stein’s terms, ‘done,’ and so impervious to any emendation.
The desire of Joyce, Pound and Stein to be in print is matched by the insistence of their texts that they be read through the apparatus of the book, rather than the author and the manuscript. The suppression of an identifiable speaking subject who can be readily correlated to the world of the author and reader draws *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* together. The printed book is the only appropriate vessel for these texts, which rely on the anonymity and reproducibility of the printed letter to support narratives which are referential, objective and descriptive rather than expressive.

Each of these books glosses the composition and production of literary texts so as to draw the reader’s attention to how they are made. The spectacle of the printing press in *Ulysses*, the edited collation of quotations in *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and the narrator’s ruminations on her methods in *The Making of Americans* all serve to emphasise the objective basis of Modernist composition. The unidentified voices which narrate these three texts are detached from the personality of their authors. The passage from *Ulysses* to *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* describes the gradual dislocation of a known origin from the composition of the text. The conflict between objective and subjective modes of textual reproduction played out in *Ulysses* is resolved in advance of the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos*, and in advance of the composition of *The Making of Americans*. That *The Making of Americans* has been least affected by the exertions of editors is testimony not only to the relatively small readership of the book, but to the absolute consolidation of the form of the text through its composition.

In so defining their composition, Modernist books declare their distinction from their contemporaries and from the scholarly models advanced by the New Bibliographers.
Flaunting their incompatibility to received modes of textual production, *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* resist not only the applications of editorial and textual scholarship which seek to recuperate an authorial origin, they also demand to be read as whole entities and so resist the fragmentation and historicisation implicit in any editorial approach.

The book imposes a logical and linear structure on the text it contains, its form a spatial guide to the beginning, middle and end of the text. This elementary structure measures the progress of the text towards its complete form within the book. The nominated end of the Modernist book is like a point on the circumference of a circle, a logical beginning and end which is continuous to all other points in the figure. The book is the point of return to all digressive cycles initiated and identified by composition. It holds a sequence of surfaces which will maintain their integral form and order no matter what the reader does. Literary closure is marked by the closing of the book by the reader, a physical action. Publication consolidates the form of a whole text, a whole which reveals its final form only at the end of the book.

The closing pages of *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* are as envois to the reader, final directions as to how to read the texts whose parameters they demarcate. Molly’s monologue closes *Ulysses* on a note of affirmation: ‘yes.’ The structural position of the episode – at the end of the book and in the last hour of Bloomsday – is what determines its status as an ending. The last word repeats Molly’s assent to Bloom and signifies the final capitulation of *Ulysses* to the material processes which generate the text. This ‘yes’ secures *Ulysses* as a text produced by the body of the book,
asserting the final accord of the text to its material form. In a similar fashion, the explicit last words of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* construct a verbal barrier at the end of the poem, to which the covers of the book are a logical supplement. This visible display of ending, as if to rein in any possible transgression of the boundary of the thirtieth canto, declares an order to the apparently endless cycles of renewal and regeneration contained by the book. The text functions autonomously within the structure of the book, a hermetic hermeneutic object which must be read without recourse to its author. The final section of *The Making of Americans*, the epilogue ‘History of a Family’s Progress,’ marks the transition of the narrative to its most abstract form as the individual is subsumed by the generalised flux of the ‘family.’ The narrative presents itself as objective history, revealed to the reader as the progress towards certainty, the referentiality of the narrative unfettered by the restrictions of individual identity. The close of the narrative recognises that the promised history of all of them has been made, and wholly contained by the progress and process of composition. To disturb the faceless certainty of this narrative through reference to specific precedents is to demolish the objectivity which it adopts as both its foundation and *telos*.

Their endings thus delineated, *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* appear to their readers as monumental objects whose form is only intelligible within the structural confines of the book. The closure reached at the end of the book unequivocally declares the completion of the narratives they contain. In its insistence upon the relationship between bibliographical state and literary form, the Modernist book discards the typically Romantic desire for authorial presence and presents itself as an object to the reader. First publication makes explicit both the completion of the narrative and precludes the author from any further intervention. The container of all textual beginnings
and endings, it is the book which mediates the relationship between the work and the world, repudiating any prior model of subjective intention.

In print is the ideal form of the Modernist text. The archives and correspondence of Joyce, Pound and Stein reveal the personal significance of being in print to these three writers. They demonstrably assented to the publication of their books, signing contracts with their publishers and maintained an extraordinary degree of control over the publication process. The first editions of *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* are those to which their authors maintained the closest proximity; no subsequent editions of these texts received the attentions directed towards the first editions. If a correct text is to be measured according to the criteria of authorial proximity, the first edition is surely that which must be recognised as the best text and is the only conceivable candidate for a copy-text for critical editing. That said, the hostility of Modernist books to the concept of correction and annotation suggests that any editorial amelioration undermines the integrated objective form attained on first publication. The errors, lacunae and other impediments to the clear reading of Modernist books are constitutive elements of their form, demanding the reader interrogate not only the verbal text but its appearance in print. The controversy attendant to the appearance of the Gabler edition of *Ulysses* suggests that even the most scrupulous efforts to purge Modernist texts of the visible signs of production do not serve to resolve either textual error or the greater interpretive questions it raises. The prospect of a variorum edition of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* or an edited, annotated text of *The Making of Americans* will expose the origins of composition but effectively will also undo the appearance of a text which is immediately realised. The genesis of the Modernist text is contained by its composition. Critical editions which graft an elephantine apparatus onto
Modernist texts so as to display their provenance serve to obscure the formal integrity marked by the appearance of the first edition.

The binding of the book is a kind of *deus ex machina*, that external device which intervenes to bring the narrative of composition to an unambiguous close. In print, the Modernist book appears as an already perfected form. In this form, it cannot surpass itself nor can it revert to an earlier preliminary form, in which the productive relationship between the author and text is revealed. To so project a subjective, manuscript-based model of provenance onto the composition of the *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* undoes the impetus of composition towards a finished form, breaking the contract of publication, and disarming the symbolic integrity of the book upon which these narratives rely for their coherence.

The errors contained in first editions are reflections of the production of the book, reflexes of the machine-like entity which generates it. As such, Modernist first editions, flawed or not, require the reader to engage not only with the interpretive challenges of the text, but with the form which contains it. The bibliographical state which produces the literary text is continuous to the grammatical, figurative and rhetorical state of the text. First publication declares composition finished, in the same way that a painting or sculpture may be designated as finished by its creator. Realistically, books need to be reproduced to reach their readers. The protocols governing the reproduction of Modernist texts might be more usefully conceived in terms of replication, a mode of reproduction which takes the object to be replicated as its original, rather than turning to the process of creation and the creator. *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* rely absolutely on the
apparatus which displays them: the book. The Modernist book is no palimpsest; just as ink is apparently absorbed by the paper upon which it is printed, Modernist books insist that the text cannot be separated from its bibliographical state. The print can be neither scratched from the page, nor overwritten. The text is inextricably embedded in the medium which transmits it: bibliographical form and literary content are indivisible.

My analyses of the Modernist book have constellated around three books published in Paris in the nineteen twenties. The incompatibility of *Ulysses*, *A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* to editorial principles predicated upon the author as the subjective origin of the text has ramifications for other texts which also rely on their bibliographical state to project a narrative or poetic voice which is detached from the figure of an author writing.

Most directly, my critique of the recuperation of an autobiographical subject by editors must inflect textual consideration of other books by James Joyce, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein. Like *Ulysses*, *Finnegans Wake* is a book which relies on a multiplicity of origins; the dream narrative is circumscribed by the book, rather than by the mind of its author. The investment of *Ulysses* in other texts is redoubled in *Finnegans Wake*, which demands recognition firstly of the linguistic and literary contexts which produce the narrative. Redefining the composition of this text around the figure of the author shatters the illusion that the text is produced of itself, and of language. The control exerted by Pound over the publication of *A Draft of XXX Cantos* is matched by his attention to the publication of his writings throughout his career. The archive sustains my argument that Pound’s composition practices were oriented towards the production of texts which, once published, would
require no further attention either from the author or the editor. Likewise, Gertrude Stein’s carefully organised and bound typescripts announce a set of texts which are ready for publication, strongly suggesting that the impropriety of editing *The Making of Americans* applies generally to Stein’s work. Reading back through the archive to recapture the original texts of work by Pound and Stein disarms the rejection of a lyrical, subjective voice by both these writers.

The editorial imagination of the text as a manuscript has further implications for books published in Paris in the nineteen-twenties, a milieu which privileged books in print and allowed authors to retain a high degree of control over the production of their text. Whereas the production of printed books is understood by the New Bibliographers as an impediment to the clear transmission of meanings from author to reader, the authors and publishers active in Paris when *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans* were being published explore the semantic possibilities of being in print, treating the medium as independently productive and significant. Books like *Ladies Almanack* by Djuna Barnes, published in 1928 by Robert McAlmon present the text as an already historicised object, its carefully disposed and illustrated physical form a *gestalt* which realises the text as a whole. Bob Brown’s *The Readies* (1930), a polemic on the spectacular nature of Modernist writing presents an ‘eyeful’ of text, demanding the reader engage immediately with the words on the page in front of them, proposing reading as the passage through and around printed letters.

At the level of production, the proximity of writers like Barnes, Brown, H. D., Mina Loy, Ernest Hemingway and Ford Madox Ford, as well as Joyce, Stein and Pound to the
production of their texts challenges the assumption of the New Bibliographers that publication interferes with authorial intentions. The importance of small presses and publishers in Paris and in other Modernist centres like London and New York in bringing literary works into print in collaboration with authors requires that the antagonistic relationship between printed and ideal form be revised. In a similar vein, the use of the typewriter by e. e. cummings, William Carlos Williams, and later, by Charles Olson to exactly distribute printed letters on the page suggests the priority of printed, rather than manuscript forms to the vision of the Modernist book.

The influence of Joyce, Pound and Stein on a subsequent generation of writers who use the book as a structural device which distances the text from a known subjective origin also draws into question the validity of an editorial approach grounded in authors, rather than in textual objects. The novels of William Faulkner, and here I am thinking of *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) and *As I Lay Dying* (1930), reveal the influence of *Ulysses* not only in terms of style, but in the use of the book to organise the relationships between a number of different narrators and to interleave a plot with a symbolic narrative. Texts like this, which so explicitly renounce the device of a single narrative voice, warrant consideration as textual objects whose interpretive origin is marked by publication, rather than authorial inscriptions. The ontological limits of voice and persona explored in the prose of Samuel Beckett similarly brings into question the suitability of editorial protocols invested in the figure of an omniscient author. The conscious suspension of subjectivity in the composition of *The Making of Americans* is echoed by the interest of Language poets in writing, conceived of as an objective process to be measured not by the life of the writer, but by the entity that is the text. The suppression of the self-presentational aspects of
literary language must inflect not only critical readings of such texts, but the treatment of the textual archive.

The conundrum presented to readers of Modernist books and their heirs is that just as these books renounce the vision of a single subject writing the text, the archives which house their textual histories have grown to enormous proportions. The signs of a subjective process which are to varying degrees suspended in the composition of Modernist books are readily accessible in archives. This material remains a temptation for the textual scholar and critic alike, but following the precepts of composition articulated in *Ulysses, A Draft of XXX Cantos* and *The Making of Americans*, the archive should remain the stuff of literary biography and history, rather than acting as the basis of idealised corrected texts.
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