Radboud Repository
sharing science

From Error to Terror. The Romantic Inheritance in W. H. Auden's "In Time of War

Van Dam, F.

2022, Article / Letter to editor (Partial Answers : Journal of literature and the history of ideas, 20, 1, (2022), pp. 151-174)

Doi link to publisher: https://doi.org/10.1353/pan.2022.0006

Version of the following full text: Publisher's version

Published under the terms of article 25fa of the Dutch copyright act. Please follow this link for the Terms of Use: https://repository.ubn.ru.nl/page/termsofuse

Downloaded from: https://repository.ubn.ru.nl/handle/2066/282246

Download date: 2024-09-02

Note:
To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

From Error to Terror: The Romantic Inheritance in W. H. Auden's "In Time of War"

Frederik Van Dam
Radboud University, Nijmegen

In 1937, Faber and Faber commissioned W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood to write a travel book about Asia as a sequel to *Letters from Iceland* (1937), which Auden had co-authored with Louis MacNeice. While the journey to the North had been driven by cultural and personal inclinations, the decision to visit the East was motivated by a public and political purpose. After his return from Iceland in late 1936, Auden had written to E. R. Dodds that he was "not one of those who believe that poetry need or even should be directly political." At the same time, he recognized that "the poet must have direct knowledge of the major political events" (Mendelson 2017: 183). In his quest for such direct knowledge, Auden took part in the Spanish Civil War but failed to translate his experience into poetry.[1] The second Sino-Japanese War offered a chance to atone for this failure: in China, he said, "we shall have a war of our own" (Isherwood 289).

At first, this conflict proved elusive. Auden was continually delayed in his attempts to visit the front. Eventually he did come close enough to witness the destruction and danger that people on the ground were facing. The germ of his sentiments can be glimpsed in a recently discovered newspaper article for the *Birmingham Gazette* (Mendelson 2019), in which he discusses the plight of missionaries, with particular atten-

[*] I am grateful to the anonymous reader for sagacious advice and for drawing my attention to the article from the *Birmingham Gazette,* to Ortwin de Graef and Brecht de Groote for their invitation to contribute to this issue and for their generous feedback, and to László Muntéan for his astute comments on a draft version of this essay.

[1] Auden witnessed the Spanish Civil War first-hand, as an ambulance driver and broadcaster, in 1937. The grim reality of the war — in which the Republican side, which Auden supported, was far from scrupulous in its use of violence — upset his assumptions and led to a failure to speak out. As Tim Kendall notes: "Only 'Spain 1937' and the unusually spiritless prose report, 'Impressions of Valencia' . . . offer explicit evidence of the 'direct knowledge' sought by Auden. Put crudely, this may seem like a meagre artistic return on so much experience, but the Spanish Civil War is important for Auden's art because it teaches him that there is a kind of poetry he should not write" (108).

 © 2022 Johns Hopkins University Press

tion to the importance of the missions for the victims of air-raids: "outside their hospitals there are few surgical instruments and hardly any of the portable X-ray sets so vitally necessary in searching for buried shell-splinters and bullets" (Auden 1938: 8). The hospitals themselves were not safe from air-raids, Auden writes, even though their roofs were marked in national colors. In response, missions of various kinds made common cause:

> In the past, no doubt, there have been sectarian bickerings, convert-snatchings, absurd parochial rivalries. But in the face of a common danger, Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists, Italian Catholics and Scotch Nonconformists have achieved a measure of cooperation and mutual tolerance which puts their co-religionists in Europe and America to shame. (Auden 1938: 8)

In spite of the catastrophe caused by aerial bombing, so Auden suggests, missionaries developed a capacity to reconcile their differences. This realization, I argue, became the crux of Auden's views on the second Sino-Japanese War as articulated in "In Time of War," a sonnet sequence which he wrote in 1938 and published in 1939.

According to Edward Mendelson, "In Time of War" is "Auden's most profound and audacious poem of the 1930s, perhaps the greatest English poem of the decade" (2017: 310). The challenge that the sonnets present was already apparent at the time of publication. The sonnets are difficult to read, Lincoln Kirstein warned, "since the thought they embody is hard for all of us to comprehend. Once they are understood, they make it even more difficult to proceed with that understanding in us" (Haffenden 299). Even so, the sequence itself has not received the same amount of critical scrutiny as contemporary war poems such as "Spain" (1937) or "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" (1939). Instead of confronting the thought that informs the sonnets, critics have tended to focus on the function of the sequence within *Journey to a War* (1939), the travel book in which they first appeared, and which Auden co-authored with Isherwood. This book consists of a number of introductory sonnets, a travel-diary, a series of sixty-five photographs, the sonnet sequence, and a verse commentary.[2] By thus layering different genres and media, *Journey to a War* creates

[2] In the 1965 revision for his collected works, Auden placed the prefatory sonnet to E. M. Forster at the end of the sequence (Auden 1976). For this revision, Auden also excised a number of poems, retitled the whole as "Sonnets from China," and made minor changes. These alterations make the revised version even more enigmatic than the original. For more details on the poem's publication history, see Mendelson 2017: 308–10.

multiple alternative pathways.[3] Like a montage, the book seems to ask the reader to assemble a collection of disparate moments in a meaningful relation, thus creating an elongated moment (as opposed to a narrative continuum). The expectation of coherence is ultimately thwarted, however, and replaced "with a paratactically dispersive strategy," characteristic of collage (Coats 177). Reading "In Time of War" as a constitutive part of *Journey to a War* thus yields a framework for the interpretative labor that the poem asks readers to perform and highlights the importance of parataxis that operates as a structural feature in the volume as a whole. The present article builds on these insights in order to probe more fully how this "paratactically dispersive strategy" creates meaning in the sonnet sequence itself and how it relates to the thought that runs through them.

By identifying the aesthetic principles and analyzing the concepts that sustain Auden's thinking in his sonnet sequence about the war in China, I am taking my cue from Isobel Armstrong's suggestion that close reading should not aspire to control or master the text but should allow itself to get closer than close, to get "caught up with, imbricated in, the structure of the text's processes," which is "where thought begins" (94). In one of the sonnets, for instance, Auden prompts the reader to reflect on the

[3] John Fuller notes that the sonnet sequence and the (much-maligned) verse commentary are "calculated to counterbalance the self-deprecatory comedy of the central 'Travel-Diary,' where the authors' pretended ignorance of Chinese politics, awareness of war as a personal 'test,' friendly rivalry with professionals like Peter Fleming, obsession with clothes, food and illness, and so on, sometimes goes to an extreme of the journalistically ingenuous" (235). While Fuller is right to note the contrast between the humor of the diary and the gravity of the sonnet sequence, there are also important intersections. According to Jason M. Coats, certain characters from the diary and persons in the photographs (the unknown soldier, Chinese leaders, British expatriates) return in the sonnets. To see these connections, readers must read attentively and use their imagination, as the poems feature nameless subjects. By prompting the reader to scour the poem for such connections, so Coats argues, the book exemplifies what Brian McHale calls "weak narrativity," a narrativity that has been purposefully undermined (McHale). At first sight, this aesthetic is at odds with what contemporary readers would have expected to be Auden and Isherwood's aim, that is, to generate sympathy for the plight of the Chinese. Instead, the poem first creates and then stymies "the desire for a clearer political directive" (Coats 178). But perhaps this lack of an overt message is precisely what makes the book effective, as it prompts readers to cultivate their capacity for formulating a moral judgement: by assembling fragments whose charged difficulties have prevented them from participating in a more coherent marshalling of fact and affect, Auden and Isherwood aim not to deny their obligation to the Chinese and to each other, but rather to involve the reader at all steps of the process: in reading, interpreting, judging, and, potentially, acting (Coats 184).

relationship between acts of language and acts of violence by rhyming the diplomatic "verbal error" with the devastation of "towns in terror":

> Far off, no matter what good they intended,
> The armies waited for a verbal error
> With all the instruments for causing pain:
>
> And on the issue of their charm depended
> A land laid waste, with all its young men slain,
> Its women weeping, and its towns in terror. (1939: 277, ll. 9–14)

The idea that small changes in language may have major repercussions is performed in the line: it is a small step from "error" to "terror," both on the lexical level and in reality. To better appreciate such aspects, we should pay more attention to "the sound of thinking in poetry — not the sound of finished thought but the sound of a mind alive in the syntactical process of discovering what it might be thinking" (Longenbach 73–74). This approach may have an ethical purpose. "Sound and its excess are deeply erotic and irreducibly violent," Armstrong writes, "as the mismatch of sound and signified, aural sound and meaning, opens up need. That need, which is also a responsibility for the other, is paradoxically created by an assault, a breaking in upon the self" (94). Here I will look closely at the ways in which "In Time of War" creates such erasures and bifurcations. By tracing and describing the vagaries of meaning in Auden's sonnet sequence, I aim to show not only how Auden engages with literary innovations that came to the fore in poetic responses to aerial bombing but also how the paratactical prodigality of "In Time of War" can be understood as an engagement with Romantic aesthetics. Auden's rhyme of "error" with "terror," indeed, has a famous predecessor: in the poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley, the two occur almost always together (*The Mask of Anarchy* being the exception that proves the rule).[4]

The Aesthetic

Auden's engagement with the Romantic inheritance is not limited to British poets, but extends to the conceptualization of the aesthetic in German philosophy. According to Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790), the purpose of the aesthetic is to bridge the divide between appearance and cognition, thing and thinking, the beautiful and the good. Aesthetic judgements accomplish this

[4] I am indebted to Jan Mieszkowski for this intriguing observation.

bridging through an act of displacement in the movement from sensuous presentation to formal representation (Redfield 1996: 6). The judgement of beauty seems universal but is in fact conditioned by time and place: we can recognize an example of beauty by judging it, but the universality that sustains this judgement will always depend on particular examples. Even in judging something that transcends the powers of our imagination, such as the sublime, humans are prone to such displacements: "the feeling of the sublime in nature is respect for our own vocation, which we attribute to an object of nature by a certain subreption (substitution of a respect for the object in place of one for the idea of humanity in our own self — the subject)" (Kant 87–88). By thus establishing a resemblance between the particular and the universal, and substituting nature for humanity, aesthetic judgements rest on the figurative power of analogy; the unity that they create is metaphorical (de Man). Friedrich Schiller develops these ideas in *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry* (*Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, 1795). When we are immersed in nature, Schiller maintains, we experience an urge to shed the artifices of our daily lives. In Schiller's view, we have fallen from a natural state into a twisted, self-conscious way of being, as a result of which we are no longer looking at things as they really are. Even so, our ability to perform aesthetic judgements in the face of nature — an ability that sets us apart from other animals — shows that we can be redeemed. This form of redemption is not just an individual but also a collective matter, as Schiller argues in *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (*Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*, 1795), in which he endows the aesthetic with an ideological purpose. The aesthetic, in Schiller's view, is a determining factor in the public installation of images that give shape to political ideals, such as freedom. Although these ideals are actually beyond representation, they nevertheless solicit universal assent precisely because — like the aesthetic — they covertly grant particular interests the semblance of a universal realization. While the idea of a beautiful state within which men can experience their natural condition may seem innocent, it is important to note that this ideology was gradually twisted in such a way that "the representative subject of aesthetics" was transformed into the "exemplarity of a master race," and the "deferred promise of Schiller's Aesthetic State" became "the violent immediacy of a destiny" (Redfield 1996: ix). By the 1930s, humankind's "self-alienation," as Walter Benjamin famously puts it, "has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure. Such is the aestheticizing of politics, as practiced by fascism" (2006: 270).

Auden's analysis of the political situation in the 1930s and 1940s is not unlike Benjamin's: "Auden saw the English and European political arena of the thirties, together with its disastrous aftermath in the following decade, as the grim proving ground of romantic kerygma" (Boly 1982a: 150). One may be justified in situating Auden's work in the context of German Romanticism, in particular, as Auden was familiar with Schiller's *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, to which he alludes in, for instance, "The Creatures" (1936; see Mendelson 2017: 180).[5] "In Time of War" develops this interest and combines Auden's critique of global fascism with a critique of Romantic aesthetics.

This hypothesis may shed some light on the rather enigmatic structure of the sonnet sequence and in particular on the nebulous first half. In the first thirteen sonnets, Auden describes man's creation and fall, followed by various stages in "his" history (the subjects of the sequence are consistently male). For a lyric that announces itself as a war poem, this is a rather unconventional opening: "The first thirteen sonnets do not obviously belong to a sequence titled 'In Time of War,' except in the loose sense that several presage war by locating the seeds of conflict in the human psyche" (Kendall 115). Jason M. Coats suggests that the inclusion of the historical sonnets is a counterintuitive framework: "Instead of proceeding from particular to universal . . . the intervening poems muddy the interpretive waters by casting blame everywhere and nowhere" (178). Only with the second half, consisting of fourteen sonnets, do we move into the present and to the matter of war, with the emergence of a collective plural in sonnet 14: "Yes, we are going to suffer, now" (Auden 1939: 272). I do not fully agree, however, that the "sonnets are best understood as a chronological rather than a meaningful sequence" (Coats 180); nor do I think that the function of the first half is limited to giving man's bellicose disposition a psychological profile, as Kendall argues. By examining how the sonnet sequence as a whole is marked by an engagement with the Romantic inheritance, I argue, it becomes apparent how the "historical" sonnets in the first half offer a meaningful backdrop for the reflections on fascism and aerial warfare in the second half.

[5] Stuart Christie has argued that Auden's poem uses China as an empty screen which allows him to bid farewell to the concept of Englishness that had sustained his writing. Even if one accepts this hypothesis, it is important to recognize that we may be dealing with a retrospective imposition (Christie's interpretation relies on the revision that Auden made in the 1960s) and that Auden was engaging with European (and not just English) Romanticism.

One of the most important ways in which Auden criticizes the Romantic inheritance can be detected in his depiction of the human subject, insofar as the poem uses a method of characterization that refuses to be subsumed within the movement from sensuous presentation to formal representation. The sonnets do not provide effusions of a lyrical "I" but offer vignettes of different human types, types which remain nameless and which are referred to only by pronouns. One is tempted to think of them as symbols, but they function in a different way. Take sonnet 3, at the beginning of Auden's account of human history, in which the poet describes a hunter:

> Only a smell had feelings to make known.
> Only an eye could point in a direction;
> The fountain's utterance was itself alone;
> The bird meant nothing: that was his projection
>
> Who named it as he hunted it for food.
> He felt the interest in his throat, and found
> That he could send his servant to the wood,
> Or kiss his bride to rapture with a sound. (1939: 261, ll. 1–8)

According to Mendelson, figures such as the above "are not quite allegorical, since their relations with others are not allegorical relations, and not quite exemplary, since their experience is more extensive than any exemplar's could be" (2017: 311). The use of the definite article and possessive pronoun (*the* fountain, *the* bird, *his* servant, *his* bride) is instrumental in achieving this effect, as it suggests that there is a concrete referent for this otherwise abstract figure.[6] As a result, there is no clear move from sensuous particular to formal universal, nor is there an exemplification of an abstract idea in a concrete thing; rather, caught within a process of incorporation and condensation, the figure remains stuck in between the universal and the particular. By developing a form of exemplarity that refuses to be subsumed into a higher, ideal reality, Auden subverts the underlying schema of aesthetic ideology.

The sonnets further develop this critique in their portrayal of man's relationship with nature. Some features of Auden's vision of this relationship are undeniably Romantic. In sonnet 2, for instance, the subjects portrayed have been estranged from their true, natural selves: in their postlapsarian state, they "could not understand / The dogs now who, be-

[6] In his revision of the sequence, Auden reduced the occurrence of the definite article, "with largely disastrous effects" (Fuller 235).

fore, had always aided; / The stream was dumb with whom they'd always planned" (Auden 1939: 260). Echoing Wordsworth's vision of the "Child as Father of the Man" (Wordsworth 2014, I: 669), Auden writes how "maturity, as he ascended, / Retired like a horizon from the child" (1939: 260).[7] This Romantic picture of man in a state of disgrace extends through the sequence and is highlighted in the first lines of the final sonnet. "Wandering lost upon the mountains of our choice," Auden writes, "Again and again we sigh for an ancient South, / For the warm nude ages of instinctive poise, / For the taste of joy in the innocent mouth" (285). Keats was able to imagine such a state when hearing the song of a nightingale; so did Tennyson when he was upset by the proposals of the Great Reform Bill.[8] Auden, then, seems to buy into the Romantic analysis of the human condition — but not completely. While Auden's description of the human condition as a state of disgrace can be understood as Romantic, he does not buy into Schiller's belief that there is an earlier state to which man can aspire to return. Even before any kind of fall from nature into history, man "looked for truth and was continually mistaken" (259), as Auden puts it in the first sonnet. This theme returns in the final sonnet, the sestet of which demystifies the Keatsian yearning articulated in the quatrain:

> We envy streams and houses that are sure:
> But we are articled to error; we
> Were never nude and calm like a great door,
>
> And never will be perfect like the fountains;
> We live in freedom by necessity,
> A mountain people dwelling among mountains. (285, ll. 9–14)

While the poem concedes that we might appreciate beauty, the notion that such appreciation will bring us closer to a truthful understanding of ourselves is dismissed. In Auden's poem, then, the idea that there is a

[7] These lines may also be read as an answer to *The Prelude* (Book I, lines 322ff and 381ff), "where the hills follow the young Wordsworth with moral intent" (Fuller 236). Auden's (later) views on Romanticism are more directly expressed in the Page-Barbour lectures of March 1949, later published as *The Enchafed Flood* (1950), in which he chooses the dream allegory from *The Prelude* (Book V) as his metatext. Critics such as John Boly have argued that this work marks a shift in Auden's work, from the stance of a vatic prophet in the Romantic tradition to that of a deconstructive jester (Boly 1982a; 1982b). Other critics, such as Jo-Anna Cappeluti (2006; 2014), maintain that Auden remained invested in the Romantic tradition throughout his career.

[8] Auden's rhyme of "South" and "mouth" echoes Keats's 1819 "Ode to a Nightingale" (Keats 1991: 280, ll. 15–18) and Alfred Lord Tennyson's 1833 "You ask me, why, though ill at ease" (Tennyson 1969: 490, ll. 25–28).

more original state of being that we can return to is depicted only to be exposed as a fallacy. The poem does not move forward to a resolution: in its end is its beginning.

The fact that man remains caught in this quandary is associated with the corrupting powers of language, as sonnet 3, in particular, illustrates. Simultaneously creative and destructive, language is a constitutive factor in man's divorce from the natural world. Just as the act of naming originates in the act of killing a prey, so words "bred like locusts till they hid the green / And edges of the world: and he was abject, / And to his own creation became subject" (261). Whereas for Schiller there is a chance for redemption insofar as language makes it possible to think of ideas (such as freedom) without a corresponding reality, in Auden's poem this capacity creates discontent rather than solace: he "shook with hate for things he'd never seen, / And knew of love without love's proper object" (261). Shelley's ideas are summarily dismissed in similar vein. In sonnet 2, Auden takes issue with "A Defence of Poetry" (1821) when he writes how "the way back by angels was defended / Against the poet and the legislator" (260).[9] If one were to find the Romantic origins for these angels, one could turn to the work of William Blake, who likewise considers the state of nature to be one of impiety, and with whom Auden felt a kinship (Boly 1982a: 151).

Auden's reference to angels also intimates that his post-Romantic views on language are mediated by another important influence. As Lincoln Kirstein has noted, Auden's sonnets "are difficult as Rilke's are" (Haffenden 299). Rilke's poetry was very much on Auden's mind when he was working on this sequence: in August 1939, after the publication of *Journey to a War*, Auden wrote a review of a new translation of Rilke's *Duino Elegies* (*Duineser Elegien*, 1923). The form of Auden's poem is a tell-tale sign of this influence, modelled as it is on *Sonnets to Orpheus* (*Die Sonette an Orpheus*, 1923), with which Rilke had revitalized the genre of the sonnet sequence. In the individual poems, Auden makes a number of allusions to Rilke's work, such as the image of men as fountains in the sestet of the final sonnet (285).[10] Particularly telling is Auden's homage to Rilke in sonnet 23:

[9] "How glad I am," W. H. Auden wrote, "that the silliest remark ever made about poets, 'the unacknowledged legislators of the world,' was made by a poet whose work I detest" (1948: 177).

[10] The first quatrain of sonnet 7 (265), for instance, is a summary of the third sonnet in Rilke's sequence (Rilke 9). "Rühmen, das ists!" (Rilke 13) from sonnet I.7 is translated in "Certainly praise," the opening lines of sonnet 13 (271), the poem with which Auden closes the preamble.

> To-night in China let me think of one,
>
> Who through ten years of silence worked and waited,
> Until in Muzot all his powers spoke,
> And everything was given once for all:
>
> And with the gratitude of the Completed
> He went out in the winter night to stroke
> That little tower like a great animal. (281, ll. 8–14)

Not only does this homage suggest that Rilke's poems might figure as a cure or corrective for the pandemic of global violence, it also shows how Auden, like Rilke, tricks the reader with moments of carefully prepared uncertainty. The word "of" in the twelfth line creates an erasure: is "the Completed" a creature or thing that is grateful to Rilke, or has Rilke become "Completed" and is he grateful for having achieved that state? The latter interpretation is more likely, but the very fact that a reading according to which Rilke's existence is "Completed" coexists with a reading that separates his being and that of the "Completed" is a constitutive part of the poem's obfuscation of the distinction between self and other.[11] Even more importantly, in the simile in the final line it is not clear which is the vehicle and which the ground. Does "the great animal" refer to Rilke or to the "little tower"? The antithesis ("little tower" and "great animal") and the tendency to think of an animal as the object rather than the subject of stroking would seem to predispose the reader towards the latter interpretation yet grammatically both interpretations are valid. There are more than thirty similes in the sequence as a whole, with which Auden makes his readers lose their footing, apart from numerous metaphors. By suffusing these tropes with ambiguity and uncertainty, as in the sonnet above, Auden destabilizes the power of metaphor that is so crucial to Kant's thinking about the aesthetic.

[11] Auden's attitude to Rilke would change in the 1940s. For a succinct overview, see Leeder 191–93. Karen Leeder cites the homage to Rilke in sonnet 23 from the revision that Auden created in the 1960s (even though she dates the poem 1939). These revisions betray Auden's changed and dismissive attitude: Rilke is now remembered as one "Who for ten years of *drought and silence waited*, / Until in Muzot all his being spoke, / And everything was given once for all: / *Awed, grateful, tired, content to die, completed*, / He went out in the winter night to stroke / That tower *as one pets* an animal" (Auden 1973: 257; my italics). The change of the simile in the last line destroys the ambiguity that Auden fitted into the original version.

The Creature

Auden's simile in sonnet 23 also illustrates how, like Rilke, he uses metaphors to explore the relationship between the human and the non-human: just as Rilke thinks of the human "in terms of the non-human, of what he calls Things," as Auden put it in his review (2002: 25), so Auden's simile blurs the boundary between subject and object. In this particular comparison, the poet, the tower, and the animal are mapped on to one another. One reason to opt for the more difficult reading (in which it is not the tower but Rilke that the great animal resembles) lies in the fact that creatureliness, defined as a state of being in which the human and non-human merge, is a vital category in Rilke's thinking. In the *Sonette an Orpheus*, as in the *Duineser Elegien* (in the context of which Rilke's sonnet sequence took shape, as a sudden creative outburst), Rilke praises the capacity of creaturely life, which he finds in plants and animals, to inhabit a seemingly borderless world. Human life, in contrast, "is essentially reflective, mediated through consciousness and self-consciousness," as a result of which "man's relation to things is crossed with borders, articulated within a matrix of representations that position him, qua subject, over against the world, qua object of desire and mastery" (Santner 1–2).

That said, Auden's portrayal of creatureliness shows a significant difference from Rilke's. Whereas for Rilke creaturely life can be found in animals and plants, in Auden's poem the condition of creaturely life is embodied by man: the problem of the human condition is not so much a heightened self-consciousness but that man is caught in a double bind, belonging neither to the world of nature nor to the world of creation. Auden traces the cause of this predicament to the inherent indeterminacy of the human creature. From the moment that man makes his first appearance in Auden's sonnet sequence, he is described as "a childish creature / On whom the years could model any feature / And fake with ease a leopard or a dove" (1939: 159). By identifying the ability to fake as essential, Auden teases out the etymology of the word "creature": "Derived from the future-active participle of the Latin verb *creare* ('to create'), *creature* indicates a made or fashioned thing but with the sense of continued or potential process, action, or emergence built into the future thrust of its active verbal form," thus opening up "the possibility of further metamorphosis" (Lupton 1). This idea of the human condition as one of perpetual becoming is crucial for an understanding of the sonnet sequence. While Auden's poem is often read as a historical narrative that ends in the pres-

ent, the possibility that we are dealing with the protracted metamorphosis of one creature should be given due consideration.

The defining feature of this creature is a feeling of resentment. Auden's creature is "Imprisoned in possession"; he "hated life with all his soul," "fell in love with Truth before he knew her," and "hugged his sorrow like a plot of land" (1936: 262, 263, 264, 265). Hopelessly abandoned by the divine, his desires blocked, and bound by a language that is essentially alien to the world in which he lives, Auden's creature is adrift in the totality of the cosmos. This condition of creatureliness has political ramifications. In sonnet 4, the sovereign co-opts the creature in legitimizing his rule: the creature is metamorphozed into a biopolitical subject, who "grew in likeness to his sheep and cattle" and whom "the oppressor held . . . up as an example" (262). In the next sonnet, however, the tables are turned, and resentment is located in the figure of the political leader, whose promotion of ideals such as equality does not endure: "But suddenly the earth was full: he was not wanted. / And he became the shabby and demented, / And took to drink to screw his nerves to murder; / Or sat in offices and stole, / And spoke approvingly of Law and Order" (263). The oppressor, then, is revealed as partaking in the condition of creatureliness; one might even say that he is a creature himself.[12] The imbrication of creatureliness with sovereign power is unpacked in more detail in two other contrasting sonnets. In sonnet 10, men are portrayed as responsible for their own resentment: when faced with the incarnation of divine reason, whom "the wisest could adore," they sequester this figure in "beautiful stone courts" because "other needs were pressing, work, and bed," not foreseeing that the holy child would escape when "To fear and greed those courts became a centre" (268). The possibility of redemption is replaced with the exercise of sovereign power: "The poor saw there the tyrant's citadel, / And martyrs the lost face of the tormentor" (268). In sonnet 11, the perspective once again shifts. Looking down

[12] Auden's ideas on sovereignty are not that different from those of Walter Benjamin, who in his study of the German *Trauerspiel* argued that the modern sovereign is "confined to the world of creation; he is the lord of creatures, but he remains a creature" (1998: 85). As Lutz Koepnick explains, "In the face of their transcendental homelessness, of their melancholic despair, baroque sovereigns stumble over the secularized logic of power and, in turn, try to ground their faltering authority in renaturalized models of morality, in aesthetic and religious domains. In order to halt the decline of political authority, Benjamin's baroque inscribes law and order on the body and effaces moral autonomy and individual agency, while it exteriorizes all things political and dramatizes whatever matters for the sake of securing the foundation of absolute monarch" (280).

from his throne, the sovereign (here more definitely in his divine form, as the capitalization of "He" emphasizes) tries to impart the word of truth to a young boy, but the boy "yawned and whistled and made faces, / And wriggled free from fatherly embraces" (269). Instead of heeding this higher call, he is lured away by "the eagle," with whom "he was always willing / To go where it suggested, and adored / And learnt from it the many ways of killing" (269). These two sonnets present a chiastic view on adoration and abandonment: in the first, the divine is adored and then abandoned, whereas in the latter the divine is abandoned and violence is adored. Whichever way one looks at the human condition, the condition of creatureliness is bound to lead to conflict.

The juxtaposition of these two sonnets presents a good example of the effect that Auden is aiming for with the paratactic structure of the sequence. As various scholars have pointed out, Auden makes no effort to connect the sonnets or to mold them into a coherently structured narrative. Indeed, attempts to discern a chronological or historical narrative often have to rely on Auden's other writings to fill in the blanks. Within the poem, then, there is no legislating subject to impose unity. But this does not mean that there is no structure. Though the synthesis of the various constituent parts is precluded, there is an arrangement that creates a relational unity. In classical rhetoric, the model for the former is called hypotaxis (a structure in which clauses are organized into a tree-like structure through subordinating conjunctions), which contrasts with parataxis (a form in which clauses are juxtaposed on the same level through caesuras or coordinating conjunctions). A paratactical structure moves the burden of creating meaning from author to reader: "the lack of subordinating conjunctions and the presence of caesurae displace the moment of unity from that of an inscription — when the author is assumed to be sovereign — to a negotiation between the seemingly impenetrable or ambiguous text and a reader" (Wildanger 592). Auden creates this effect not just in the organization of the sequence, but also on the level of the line. The few subordinating conjunctions in this poem are outnumbered by their coordinating counterparts. The effects of this kind of syntax can be illustrated with the sestet of sonnet 16:

> But ideas can be true although men die,
> And we can watch a thousand faces
> Made active by one lie:
>
> And maps can really point to places
> Where life is evil now:
> Nanking; Dachau. (274, ll. 9–14)

Adumbrated by the half-rhyme of "murder" and "order" in sonnet 5 (263), the sinister implications of the last line are particularly haunting. The semi-colon, that most unstable of punctuation marks, here creates an asyndetic simile. Juxtaposing the rape of Nanking with the concentration camp at Dachau (the place-names here are metonyms for the atrocities), Auden creates an imaginative link between Japanese and German fascism. A semi-colon, Theodor Adorno suggests in a witty piece on punctuation, is "a dialectical image" insofar as it "accomplishes the lowering [of the voice] with its period" while it "keeps the voice suspended by incorporating the comma" (Adorno 1990: 301).[13] In Auden's poem, this pausing for breath and lowering of the voice is also performed in the absence of flow: the inversion of the rhythm (from iambs to trochees), the reduction of beats (in the last three lines, from four to two), and the assonance of short, low back vowels, make the final line mimic the sensation of gasping for air. As a result, the simile does not create the kind of blending that cognitive theories of metaphor see as essential; rather, the reader is prompted to think about the difference as well as the similarity between the two catastrophes.

Auden's penchant for parataxis on the level of the sequence as well as the level of the line is closely imbricated with his critique of the Romantic inheritance. In this regard, "In Time of War" is grafted on the work of Friedrich Hölderlin. In his lecture on Hölderlin's late style, Adorno argues that the paratactic form of Hölderlin's poems produces "reconciliation" (*Versöhnung*), a state or condition that does not denote the unification of different positions but refers to the co-existence of difference: "it allows two things to co-exist while compelling the reader to interpret their relation" (Wildanger 595). This literary form is not merely ornamental but also pertains to Hölderlin's views on man's relationship with nature. Hölderlin's poem "Friedensfeier," so Adorno writes, reconciles nature and man, not in the sense that they are unified but in that their interaction creates an open-ended encounter with alterity: "That which would be different [from myth] is called peace, reconciliation. It does not eradicate the era of violence in turn but rather rescues it as it perishes, in the anamnesis of echo" (Adorno 2019: 410). Auden could not have known Hölderlin's "Friedensfeier" at the time of writing, as it was discovered only in 1954, but the spirit of Hölderlin's hymns seems to move through "In Time of War." We can detect it, for instance, in sonnet 14, the lynchpin and heart of this sequence of 27 sonnets. The sestet includes the

[13] For a more recent and more scholarly study of the semi-colon, see Watson.

line "We dwell upon the earth," with which Auden rewrites a line from Hölderlin's "In lieblicher Bläue" (1808): "Voll Verdienst, doch dichterisch, / wohnet der Mensch auf dieser Erde" (Hölderlin 1992: 908; see Mendelson 2017: 315).[14] Again, however, the Romantic vision is qualified: whereas for Hölderlin life on earth might imitate the heavens, for Auden the earth is a place where "private massacres are taking place" (272) and the heavens are disfigured by the appearance of bomber planes:

> Yes, we are going to suffer, now; the sky
> Throbs like a feverish forehead; pain is real;
> The groping searchlights suddenly reveal
> The little natures that will make us cry,
>
> Who never quite believed they could exist,
> Not where we were. They take us by surprise
> Like ugly long-forgotten memories,
> And like a conscience all the guns resist. (272, ll. 1–8)

In these two quatrains, Auden's metaphors rework his earlier reflections on creatureliness in the context of modern technology. The reverberations of propellers in the air are compared to a delirium; searchlights are anthropomorphized as they "grope," a notion with sexual overtones, suggesting that the rape of the natural world is continued in the air. Of particular interest are the planes themselves, the "little natures that will make us cry." The most obvious entities that the "little natures" refer to are bacteria, making the phrase a medical metaphor that ties in with the image of the second line. But Auden's rather unwieldy phrase also reminds us that in the state of creatureliness man is tied to the natural world. By acquiring the ability to fly, men seem to have transcended their earth-bound nature. This transcendence does not imply an end to the state of creatureliness, however; rather, it only serves to reiterate and reactivate past violence, described in the first half of the sequence, here remembered as "ugly long-forgotten memories." Moving from the point of view of the victim to the point of the view of the soldier, the next sonnet extends this concern with nature and creatureliness in a second description of bomber pilots:

> Engines bear them through the sky: they're free
> And isolated like the very rich;
> Remote like savants, they can only see
> The breathing city as a target which

[14] "Full of merit, yet poetically, / Man dwells on this earth" (my translation).

> Requires their skill; will never see how flying
> Is the creation of ideas they hate,
> Nor how their own machines are always trying
> To push through into life. (273, ll. 1–8)

The pilots pay no attention to the superhuman feat they are performing, or to their sublime surroundings; their gaze is drawn back to earth, for a very practical purpose. As such, the poem depicts a failure of the imagination. The pilots watch the human without any kind of sympathy, but simply as a target waiting to be destroyed. Auden's use of the word "creation" reminds us of the primitive man to whom "The bird . . . was his projection / Who named it as he hunted it for food" (261). In this sonnet, too, the act of creation leaves the human with nothing but resentment. Auden further complicates his poem by highlighting the absence of self-reflection in line 5. The pilots are unknowingly caught in the predicament of the creature; detached though they may seem to be, they do not possess the gift of self-reflection that would alert them to their condition.[15]

The Sublime

By thus extending the critique of Romantic aesthetics that was developed in the first half of the sequence and elaborating it in the technoscape of the present, these two sonnets about aerial bombing form a not insignificant moment in the history of war poetry — which makes it all the more peculiar that they were dropped from the revised edition of *Journey to a War* (1973) and *Sonnets from China* (1976). These two sonnets are early instances of a genre that would emerge in the course of World War II and that Roy Scranton has identified as the bomber lyric:

> Activating at once the glamour of the fighter pilot and the proletarian dehumanization of the replaceable machine part, recalling sublime skies full of killing angels, juxtaposing terrifying vulnerability against godlike

[15] Here, Auden is again alluding to Rilke. In sonnet I.23 of the *Sonette an Orpheus*, Rilke looks forward to a moment when flying will no longer be a purpose in itself, "wenn der Flug / nicht mehr um seinetwillen / wird in die Himmelstillen / steigen, sich selber genug, / um in lichten Profilen, / als das Gerät, das gelang, / Liebling der Winde zu spielen" (when flight shall soar / not for its own sake only / up into heaven's lonely / silence, and be no more / merely the lightly profiling, / proudly successful tool, / playmate of winds; Rilke 29). Instead, a flying towards "ein reines Wohin" (some pure Whither) will be able to prevail on "Knabenstolz" (boyish insistence) and ensure that one may "*sein*, was er einsam erfliegt" (*be* all that his [lonely] flight has been). In Auden's poems, however, flying, couched in the register of sexual assault, has no such pure purpose; it seeks the opposite, a mastery over the earth.

> power, the bomber lyric is a distant genre of poetry focusing on aerial bombers. The bomber lyric is identifiable by its subject matter (bombers), its evocation of the trench lyric, and its thematic concern with the tension between power and vulnerability, a tension embodied in the relationship between the bomber-as-war-machine and the bomber-as-human-operator. (27)

The Romantic inheritance is a constitutive factor in this genre, as poets drew "on the trench lyric's reiteration of the Romantic tradition, its depiction of war as an apocalyptic sublime, and its focus on human fragility" (Scranton 29). Since the French Revolution, indeed, war poetry had been dominated by the trope of the sublime. In contrast to beauty, the sublime is so large, so overwhelming, that it cannot be consciously experienced. In the *Critique of Judgement*, Kant argues that scenes of war may induce such an effect: "War itself . . . has something sublime about it, and gives nations that carry it on in such a manner a stamp of mind only the more sublime the more numerous the dangers to which they are exposed, and which they are able to meet with fortitude" (93). Kant here hints at the fact that such a view of war is not without an ideological purpose. Seeing war as something sublime may help the nation in finding a purpose and sense of unity. In Wordsworth's sonnets on the Battle of Waterloo, for instance, "such is the magnitude of modern warfare, in the sense of its ideological promptings, human effects and political consequences, that the creative mind is unable to activate a power of understanding sufficient to overcome its subjection to the overburdened imagination" (Shaw 15).

In his first bomber poem, Auden's description of the advancing planes takes shape in the register of the sublime. The planes themselves are represented not directly but through tropes. As "the sky / Throbs" and "searchlights" are "groping," the onlookers cannot see the threat in its totality. Importantly, however, this depiction of machines of war is focalized not through the soldier but through civilians. In highlighting the speaking subject of the poem in the first-person plural, the first line stresses that this method of warfare involves not only armed combatants but also the population at large. Auden's depiction of aerial warfare thus alerts the reader to an important subclause in Kant's analysis: war is sublime "provided it is conducted with order and a sacred respect for the rights of civilians" (Kant 93). In the age of world wars, with the arrival of strategic bombing, this Kantian perspective is void. Highlighting a collective and civilian point of view, then, sonnet 14 differs from both the trench lyric and the bomber lyric, which focus on the suffering of

the individual soldier. In sonnet 15, we do get an insight into the bomber pilots' state of mind, which differs markedly from later bomber lyrics such as Randall Jarrell's "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner" (1945) and "The Eighth Air Force" (1945). These later poems ritualize "a political theology in which the soldier is the scapegoat of liberal capitalist democracy, our 'just' murderer" (Scranton 43). In contrast, Auden is less willing to absolve the pilots of their individual responsibility. Since the pilots "chose a fate / The islands where they live did not compel" (273), they are presented as having had an alternative. The rub of the matter, it appears, is that the exercise of agency is subject to man's creaturely inclinations. The default choice seems to be war rather than peace: in a foetal image that adumbrates "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner," Auden writes how "At any time it will be possible / To turn away from freedom and become / Bound like the heiress in her mother's womb" (273). Auden's sonnets, then, refer to Romantic theories about the sublime nature of war only to expose them as a smokescreen; one might even posit that the poems are a parody of the bomber lyric *avant la lettre*.

Auden's unwillingness to absolve soldiers of their responsibility ties in with a resistance to glorify their suffering. In the bomber lyric, like the trench lyric, the soldier is often cast as a "trauma hero," who "must suffer for the killing he undertook on society's behalf" (Scranton 38). In sonnets 17 and 18, again a pair, Auden refuses to imbue this suffering with redemptive qualities. Instead, he dramatizes the failure of imaginative sympathy:

> They are and suffer; that is all they do:
> A bandage hides the place where each is living,
> His knowledge of the world restricted to
> The treatment that the instruments are giving.
>
> And lie apart like epochs from each other
> – Truth in their sense is how much they can bear;
> It is not talk like ours, but groans they smother —
> And are remote as plants; we stand elsewhere. (275, ll. 1–8)

If anything, the fact of being wounded heightens the soldiers' creatureliness, as Auden's use of the botanical metaphor in line 8 suggests. Instead of taking comfort in the knowledge that they are suffering in the name of some greater good, their only sensation is a pain that "we" cannot imagine or feel. The poet does not enter into the wounded soldiers' minds

but shows that their experience is inaccessible and alien.[16] The contrast with at least some varieties of Romanticism is clear. As Philip Shaw has shown, in sonnets about the Battle of Waterloo such as Wordsworth's, there is "an almost total disregard for the inner experience of wounding; bodies en masse are pierced, maimed, dismembered and crushed but descriptions of individual suffering are blandly erased, as if . . . the body had been emptied of personal and civil 'content'" (Shaw 25).[17] In Auden's poem, pace Wordsworth, the soldier's individual suffering is all that remains.

The next poem, which Auden called his Sassoon sonnet (Fuller 239), moves from suffering to death. Mourning the death of an unknown soldier, this poem provides a critique of the cenotaph. In the cenotaph, death is figured as "aestheticized anonymity" (Redfield 1999: 68): it presents the citizen with the prospect that his or her own sacrifice will be "instantly assimilated into the common death for the sake of the collective" (Vermeulen 101). Auden's unknown soldier, in contrast, "will not be introduced / When this campaign is tidied into books" (276). Like all the creatures in this poem, "Abandoned by his general and his lice" (276), the protagonist has been treated with contempt by a sovereign power collocated with the vermin that so tormented Isaac Rosenberg.[18] In the sestet, no redemption is to be found:

> He neither knew nor chose the Good, but taught us,
> And added meaning like a comma, when
> He turned to dust in China that our daughters

[16] In *On Sympathy* (2008), Sophie Ratcliffe shows how Auden's use of the dramatic monologue in *The Sea and the Mirror* puts forward a mystical notion of sympathy that problematizes the very possibility of ethical self-improvement.

[17] A century later, the horrors of trench warfare and the experience of shell-shock in World War I put a belief in political Romanticism (at least in its European form) to the test, but it persisted. Though poets such as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, and Isaac Rosenberg provided intense descriptions of the visceral suffering of the individual soldier (see Das) and though "the trench lyric rejects the Romantic praise of beauty in favor of an emphasis on the sheer ugliness of front line conditions" (Campbell 205), one must also take into account how these poems were modelled on the genre of the Romantic nature lyric (Clausson), how the ideology of sacrifice persisted (Houen and Schramm), and how the imagery of remembrance and mourning remained Romantic (Winter).

[18] Rosenberg's "Louse-Hunting" has been consistently read as a grotesque depiction of life in the trenches. As Ortwin de Graef has pointed out, however, "Louse-Hunting" was conceived and probably composed outside the trenches, "at a time of relative safety, with Rosenberg actively rummaging behind the lines to 'salvage' '[m]ore material for poem' among the 'grim and funny odds and ends' war bombards into being, instead of desperately recording the unimaginable materiality of trauma in what remains for poetry in the trenches" (117).

> Be fit to love the earth, and not again
> Disgraced before the dogs; that, where are waters,
> Mountains and houses, may be also men. (276, ll. 9–14)

The Romantic ideology of the aesthetic, which binds the beautiful with the good (here capitalized), is summarily dismissed. Even so, the soldier's death may have a pedagogical purpose. In a simile that is reminiscent of Karl Kraus's quip that Shanghai would not be burning if those in high places had taken better care of their commas, Auden compares the death of the soldier to this form of punctuation.[19] On paper, the comma allows one to catch one's breath; here, however, the motif refers to breath dying out. The simile thus juxtaposes nature (turning to dust) to creation (linguistic signs), returning the reader to the theme of man's creatureliness, his existence in between nature and creation. As such, the simile is aligned with the paratactical principles of the sonnet sequence. The different parts of "In Time of War" add meaning like commas: there is no legislating subject to impose unity on the different parts, but these different parts exist in a relational structure, like stones forming the arch of a bridge. In the same way, this soldier's death has no inherent meaning; it acquires meaning from its connection with other, different deaths. Indeed, the soldier's death "in China" is here said to affect "our" daughters, thus locating a specific space in a global narrative. The soldier is not shanghaied into the service of a particular ideology such as that of the nation; rather, the memory of his death instils an open encounter with alterity and a shared sense of humanity.

[19] On 28 January 1932, a Chinese mob attacked five Japanese monks as they were exiting the International Settlement in Shanghai. Only later would it become clear that this was a staged assault, set up to afford the Japanese army an excuse for launching an invasion. When the Viennese satirist Karl Kraus was told of these atrocities, his response was, at first sight, almost laconic. The first record of this anecdote can be found in Ernst Krenek's 1936 obituary: "That this world had become alien to values [in der Entfremdung von den Werten lebte], was most readily apparent in that it had no qualms about occasionally mutilating texts [die Texte gelegentlich zu verstümmeln], and the intensity, patience, and relentlessness with which Kraus persecuted such offences often reached fantastic degrees. . . . When people were getting upset about the Japanese bombardment of Shanghai and I met Karl Kraus as he was occupied with one of his famous 'comma' problems ['Beistrich'-Probleme], he said something like: 'I know that all this is meaningless [sinnlos] when the house is on fire. But as long as it is in any way possible, I have to do it, because if the people who are obliged to make sure that the commas are in the right place had always taken care to do so [immer darauf geachtet], then Shanghai would not be burning'" (Krenek 237, my translation).

In the final analysis, then, "In Time of War" seems to be thinking about the value of cosmopolitanism in a world composed of creatures. Born out of a dialogue with the Romantic inheritance, Auden's cosmopolitanism is not predicated on a universalist conception of the human; rather, it locates our shared sense of humanity in that we can be reconciled through difference. Auden's argument is intellectual (insofar as he develops a particular conception of man's relationship with nature) as well as aesthetic (insofar as he develops a paratactical style). As such, the form of "In Time of War" differs markedly from other interwar responses to aerial bombing. Paul K. Saint-Amour has shown how interwar bombing in the colonial peripheries contributed to the creation of a culture of anxiety in Europe: "in the immediate wake of the First World War, the dread of another massive conflict saturated the Anglo-European imagination, amounting to a proleptic mass traumatization, a pre-traumatic stress syndrome whose symptoms arose in response to a potentially oncoming rather than an already realized catastrophe" (7–8). To express this proleptic trauma, he argues, modernist writers developed an encyclopaedic form, a form of narrative that aims to transmit total knowledge but in such a fragmentary way that in its transmission it risks its possible destruction. Although the form of Auden's poem is fragmented, it is not encyclopaedic but biblical. "In Time of War" does not seek to capture a knowledge that is "changing even as it is being transmitted" (Saint-Amour 189); it is in the act of transmission itself that knowledge resides. By expressing this transmission through a paratactical style in which differences are "reconciled," Auden makes his readers responsible for attending not to the war that is to come but to the peace that is to follow.

Works Cited

Adorno, Theodor W. 1990. "Punctuation Marks." *The Antioch Review* 48/3: 300–305.

———. 2019. "Parataxis: On Hölderlin's Late Poetry." In *Notes to Literature*. Ed. Rolf Tiedemann. Trans. Shierry Weber Nicholson. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 376–411.

Armstrong, Isobel. 2000. *The Radical Aesthetic*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Auden, W. H. 1938. "Thus the Missionaries Face the Invaders . . . " *The Birmingham Gazette*, June 16: 8. British Newspaper Archive.

———. 1939. "In Time of War." In *Journey to a War*, by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood. London: Faber and Faber, pp. 258–85.

———. 1948. "Squares and Oblongs." In *Poets at Work*, ed. Charles Abbott. New York: Harcourt, Brace, pp. 163–81.

———. 1973. "In Time of War." In *Journey to a War*, 2nd ed, by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood. London: Faber and Faber, pp. 246–58.
———. 1976. "Sonnets from China." In *Collected Poems*. Ed. Edward Mendelson. London: Faber and Faber, pp. 149–57.
———. 2002 [1939]. "Rilke in English." *The Complete Works of W. H. Auden: Prose. 1939–1948*. Ed. Edward Mendelson. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 25–27.
Benjamin, Walter. 1998 [1928]. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. Trans. John Osborne. London: Verso.
———. 2006 [1936–1939]. "The Work of Art in the Age of Technological Reproducibility: Third Version." *Selected Writings: 1938–1940*. Ed. Michael W. Jennings. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 251–83.
Boly, John R. 1982a. "Auden and the Romantic Tradition in 'The Age of Anxiety.'" *Daedalus* 111/3: 149–71.
———. 1982b. "Auden as Literary Evolutionist: Wordsworth's Dream and the Fate of Romanticism." *Diacritics* 12/1: 65–74.
Campbell, James. 1999. "Combat Gnosticism: The Ideology of First World War Poetry Criticism." *New Literary History* 30/1: 203–15.
Cappeluti, Jo-Anne. 2006. "Caliban to the Audience: Auden's Revision of Wordsworth's Sublime." *Studies in Romanticism* 45/4: 563–83.
———. 2014. "Making Nothing Happen: W. H. Auden's Romantic Legacy." *Renascence* 66/1: 3–24.
Christie, Stuart. 2005. "Disorientations: Canon without Context in Auden's 'Sonnets from China.'" *PMLA* 120/5: 1576–87.
Clausson, Nils. 2006. "'Perpetuating the Language': Romantic Tradition, the Genre Function, and the Origins of the Trench Lyric." *Journal of Modern Literature* 30/1: 104–128.
Coats, Jason M. 2014. "Sequence and Lyric Narrative in Auden and Isherwood's *Journey to a War*." *Narrative* 22/2: 169–84.
Das, Santanu. 2006. *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
de Graef, Ortwin. 2017. "Nudes Gibbering: Isaac Rosenberg Entrenched." *Image & Narrative* 18/1: 111–28.
de Man, Paul. 1978. "The Epistemology of Metaphor." *Critical Inquiry* 5/1: 13–30.
Fuller, John. 2007. *W. H. Auden: A Commentary*. London: Faber and Faber.
Haffenden, John, ed. 1997. *W. H. Auden: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge.
Hölderlin, Friedrich. 1992. "In lieblicher Bläue." In *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*. Ed. Michael Knaupp. Munich: Carl Hanser, I: 908–909.
Houen, Alex, and Jan-Melissa Schramm, eds. 2018. *Sacrifice and Modern War Literature: From the Battle of Waterloo to the War on Terror*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Isherwood, Christopher. 1976. *Christopher and His Kind*. New York: Sylvester & Orphanos.
Kant, Immanuel. 2007 [1790]. *Critique of Judgement*. Ed. Nicholas Walker. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Keats, John. 1991. *Complete Poems*. Edited by Jack Stillinger. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Kendall, Tim. 2006. *Modern English War Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Koepnick, Lutz P. 1996. "The Spectacle, the 'Trauerspiel,' and the Politics of Resolution: Benjamin Reading the Baroque Reading Weimar." *Critical Inquiry* 22/2: 268–91.
Krenek, Ernst. 1958. "Erinnerung an Karl Kraus." In *Zur Sprache Gebracht: Essays Über Musik*. München: Albert Langen/Georg Müller, pp. 229–40.
Leeder, Karen. 2010. "Rilke's Legacy in the English-Speaking World." In *The Cambridge Companion to Rilke*, ed. Karen Leeder and Robert Vilain. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 189–205.
Longenbach, James. 2004. *The Resistance to Poetry*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Lupton, Julia Reinhard. 2000. "Creature Caliban." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 51/1: 1–23.
McHale, Brian. 2001. "Weak Narrativity: The Case of Avant-Garde Narrative Poetry." *Narrative* 9/2: 161–67.
Mendelson, Edward. 2017. *Early Auden, Later Auden: A Critical Biography*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
———. 2019. "Auden Reports from China, 1938." *The W. H. Auden Society Newsletter* 39: 5–7.
Ratcliffe, Sophie. 2008. *On Sympathy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Redfield, Marc. 1996. *Phantom Formations: Aesthetic Ideology and the Bildungsroman*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
———. 1999. "Imagi-Nation: The Imagined Community and the Aesthetics of Mourning." *Diacritics* 29/4: 58–83.
Rilke, Rainer Maria. 1923. *Die Sonette an Orpheus: geschrieben als ein Grab-Mal für Wera Ouckama Knoop*. Leipzig: Insel Verlag. Translated by J. B. Leishman as *Sonnets to Orpheus: Written as a Monument for Wera Ouckama Knoop*. London: The Hogarth Press, 1936.
Saint-Amour, Paul K. 2015. *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopedic Form*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Santner, Eric L. 2006. *On Creaturely Life: Rilke, Benjamin, Sebald*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Scranton, Roy. 2019. *Total Mobilization: World War II and American Literature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Shaw, Philip. 2002. *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Tennyson, Alfred Lord. 1969. *The Poems of Tennyson*. Ed. Christopher Ricks. Harlow: Longman.

Vermeulen, Pieter. 2009. "Community and Literary Experience in (Between) Benedict Anderson and Jean-Luc Nancy." *Mosaic* 42/4: 96–112.

Watson, Cecelia. 2019. *Semicolon: The Past, Present, and Future of a Misunderstood Mark*. New York: Ecco.

Wildanger, Geoffrey. 2018. "Inheriting Hölderlin: Adorno, Parataxis." *MLN* 133/3: 585–603.

Winter, Jay. 1997. *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wordsworth, William. 2014. *The Poems of William Wordsworth: Collected Reading Texts from the Cornell Wordsworth Series*. Vol. 1. Ed. Jared R. Curtis. Penrith: Humanities-Ebooks.