MODERNISM, RACE, AND MANIFESTOS

The modernist avant-garde used manifestos to outline their ideas, cultural programs, and political agendas. Yet the manifesto, as a document of revolutionary change and a formative genre of modernism, has received little critical attention. This study reappraises the central role of manifestos in shaping the modernist movement by investigating twentieth-century manifestos from Europe and the Black Atlantic. Manifestos by writers from the imperial metropolis and the colonial “periphery” emphasized very different elements in their recasting of histories and experiences of modernity. Laura Winkiel examines archival materials as well as canonical texts to analyze how Sylvia Pankhurst, Virginia Woolf, Mina Loy, Wyndham Lewis, Nancy Cunard, C. L. R. James, W. E. B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston, Aimé Césaire, and others presented their modernist projects. This new focus on manifestos in their geographical and historical context allows for a revised interpretation of modernism that foregrounds its cross-cultural aspects.

LAURA WINKIEL is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Colorado at Boulder.
MODERNISM, RACE, AND MANIFESTOS

LAURA WINKIEL

University of Colorado at Boulder
For Ali and Atiya
Contents

Acknowledgments page viii

1 Introduction: manifestos, race, and modernity 1

PART I COSMOPOLITAN LONDON, 1906–1914 43
2 Women’s suffrage melodrama and burlesque 45
3 Futurism’s music hall and India Docks 82
4 Vorticism’s cabaret modernism and racial spectacle 121

PART II TRANSNATIONAL MODERNISMS, 1934–1938 155
5 Nancy Cunard’s Negro and black transnationalism 157
6 Reading across the color line: Virginia Woolf, C. L. R. James, and Suzanne and Aimé Césaire 191
Epilogue: manifestos: then and now 232

Index 238
Acknowledgments

As I search out disavowed modernist collectivities in this book, it seems only fitting that I acknowledge the intellectual and social collectivities that supported and inspired me in its making. It gives me great pleasure to do so.

This book was begun at the University of Notre Dame as a PhD dissertation with the support of a challenging, engaged, and generous group of scholars, teachers, and friends: Kathleen Biddick, Joseph Buttigieg, Seamus Deane, Christine Doran, Barbara Green, Glenn Hendler, Anna Jones, Gloria-Jean Masciarotte, Ewa Plonowska Ziarek, and Krzysztof Ziarek. I am so grateful for their continued friendship and support. Since then, many others have helped me to reshape and complete this book: Rita Barnard, Jim Berg, Sarah Brouillette, Sascha Bru, Susan Carlson, Pamela Caughie, Brenda Daly, Susan Edmunds, Mary Lou Emery, Rita Felski, Susan Stanford Friedman, Jane Garrity, Mike Goode, Roger Hallas, Cassandra Laity, Pericles Lewis, Adela Licona, Janet Lyon, Jane Marcus, Gunther Martens, Laura Mielke, Chrisy Moutsatsos, Justus Nieland, Martin Puchner, Amy Randall, Urmila Seshagiri, Linda Shenk, Vincent Sherry, Jessica Shubow, Monika Wadman, and Rebecca L. Walkowitz. Thanks also to the Geomodernisms contributors from whom I have learned so much: Gerard Aching, Ian Baucom, Jessica Berman, Sung-Sheng Yvonne Chang, Patricia Chu, Laura Doyle (especially), Justine Dymond, Ariel Freedman, Susan Stanford Friedman, Simon Gikandi, Janet Lyon, Aldon Nielsen, Fernando J. Rosenberg, Ken Seigneurie, and Eluned Summers-Bremner. This book would not be possible without Ray Ryan, whose support brought the project to Cambridge, Maartje Scheltens, who saw it through production, and Rachel Potter and Michael Thurston who challenged me to make a better book than I had envisioned.

I am grateful as well for the financial and institutional support of this project. An American Academy of University Women American Fellowship, a Phillip Moore Dissertation Fellowship, and a Research Fellowship at the Center for the Humanities at Wesleyan University...
Acknowledgments

allowed me to write the dissertation without teaching duties and surrounded by a lively intellectual circle at Wesleyan. While finishing the dissertation, I am grateful to the University of Chicago’s Avant-Garde Workshop for their generosity and critique, especially Robert von Halleberg, Jessica Burstein, Lee Garver, Matthew Hofer, and Scarlett Higgins. At Iowa State University, I thank the Department of English for teaching releases that allowed me time to work on this book. I thank the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for summer research and travel money. Thanks go also to Brett de Bray for inviting me to be part of the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University for a year of exciting and productive scholarly exchange and to Martin Bernal for sharing with me his Bloomsbury connections. An Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship allowed me to conduct research at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin. I pay special thanks to Kurt Heinzelman, and to Barbara Harlow for her hospitality and spirit.

Gratitude also goes to my family: my parents, Nancy and Joe, and siblings, David, Steven, Gregg, Andrea, Kristin, and Susan, and our extended family (especially Larry, Bridget, Kathleen, and Jen) for being there and especially for their support during a very difficult time. The same goes for Robin, always.

This book is dedicated to Raza Ali Hasan, for his poetry, laughter, love, and unflinching critique of the West, and to Atiya Anna Hasan, whose joy opens new paths onto the future.

Portions of Chapters 1 and 3 were published in The Invention of Politics in the European Avant-Garde (1906–1940), edited by Sascha Bru and Gunther Martens (New York: Rodopi, 2006) and are reprinted by permission of Editions Rodopi. A portion of Chapter 2 and an earlier version of Chapter 5 were published in Modern Fiction Studies and Modernism/Modernity respectively and are reprinted by permission of Johns Hopkins University Press. An earlier version of Chapter 4 was published in Geomodernisms: Race, Modernism, Modernity, edited by Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel, and is reprinted by permission of Indiana University Press.

Permission to reprint Mina Loy’s “Parturition,” Songs to Johannes, “The Inefficual Marriage,” “Lion’s Jaws,” and “Souvenirs,” from The Lost Lunar Baedeker, ed. Roger L. Conover (New York: Noonday Press, 1996), and Mina Loy’s unpublished letter to Mabel Dodge Luhan was kindly granted by her editor, Roger L. Conover. Permission to publish excerpts from Nancy Cunard’s papers was given by Anthony
Acknowledgments

R. A. Hobson. Permission to reproduce a solarization of Nancy Cunard in beads by Barbara Ker-Seymer was kindly granted by Barbara Roett. Permission to quote from C. L. R. James’s unpublished material was granted by Professor Robert A. Hill. The cover illustration, by Carlo Carrà, “Composition with Female Figure,” 1915, detail, © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SIAE, Rome.