

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

TCLC 212

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

**Criticism of the
Works of Novelists, Poets, Playwrights,
Short Story Writers, and Other Creative Writers
Who Lived between 1900 and 1999,
from the First Published Critical
Appraisals to Current Evaluations**



**Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism, Vol.
212**

Project Editors: Thomas J. Schoenberg and
Lawrence J. Trudeau

Editorial: Dana Ramel Barnes, Tom Burns,
Kathy D. Darrow, Kristen A. Dorsch,
Jaclyn R. Hermesmyer, Jeffrey W.
Hunter, Jelena O. Krstović, Michelle Lee

Data Capture: Frances Monroe, Gwen
Tucker

Indexing Services: Laurie Andriot

Rights and Acquisitions: Jennifer Altschul,
Margaret Abendroth, Beth Beaufore

Composition and Electronic Capture: Gary
Oudersluys

Manufacturing: Cynde Bishop

Associate Product Manager: Marc Cormier

© 2009 Gale, Cengage Learning

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this work covered by the copyright herein may be reproduced, transmitted, stored, or used in any form or by any means graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including but not limited to photocopying, recording, scanning, digitizing, taping, Web distribution, information networks, or information storage and retrieval systems, except as permitted under Section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

This publication is a creative work fully protected by all applicable copyright laws, as well as by misappropriation, trade secret, unfair competition, and other applicable laws. The authors and editors of this work have added value to the underlying factual material herein through one or more of the following: unique and original selection, coordination, expression, arrangement, and classification of the information.

For product information and technology assistance, contact us at
Gale Customer Support, 1-800-877-4253.

For permission to use material from this text or product,
submit all requests online at www.cengage.com/permissions.

Further permissions questions can be emailed to
permissionrequest@cengage.com

While every effort has been made to ensure the reliability of the information presented in this publication, Gale, a part of Cengage Learning, does not guarantee the accuracy of the data contained herein. Gale accepts no payment for listing; and inclusion in the publication of any organization, agency, institution, publication, service, or individual does not imply endorsement of the editors or publisher. Errors brought to the attention of the publisher and verified to the satisfaction of the publisher will be corrected in future editions.

Gale
27500 Drake Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI, 48331-3535

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG CARD NUMBER 76-46132

ISBN-13: 978-0-7876-9987-1
ISBN-10: 0-7876-9987-X

ISSN 0276-8178

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

Guide to Gale Literary Criticism Series

For criticism on	Consult these Gale series
Authors now living or who died after December 31, 1999	<i>CONTEMPORARY LITERARY CRITICISM (CLC)</i>
Authors who died between 1900 and 1999	<i>TWENTIETH-CENTURY LITERARY CRITICISM (TCLC)</i>
Authors who died between 1800 and 1899	<i>NINETEENTH-CENTURY LITERATURE CRITICISM (NCLC)</i>
Authors who died between 1400 and 1799	<i>LITERATURE CRITICISM FROM 1400 TO 1800 (LC)</i> <i>SHAKESPEAREAN CRITICISM (SC)</i>
Authors who died before 1400	<i>CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL LITERATURE CRITICISM (CMLC)</i>
Authors of books for children and young adults	<i>CHILDREN'S LITERATURE REVIEW (CLR)</i>
Dramatists	<i>DRAMA CRITICISM (DC)</i>
Poets	<i>POETRY CRITICISM (PC)</i>
Short story writers	<i>SHORT STORY CRITICISM (SSC)</i>
Literary topics and movements	<i>HARLEM RENAISSANCE: A GALE CRITICAL COMPANION (HR)</i> <i>THE BEAT GENERATION: A GALE CRITICAL COMPANION (BG)</i> <i>FÉMINISM IN LITERATURE: A GALE CRITICAL COMPANION (FL)</i> <i>GOTHIC LITERATURE: A GALE CRITICAL COMPANION (GL)</i>
Asian American writers of the last two hundred years	<i>ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE (AAL)</i>
Black writers of the past two hundred years	<i>BLACK LITERATURE CRITICISM (BLC-1)</i> <i>BLACK LITERATURE CRITICISM SUPPLEMENT (BLCS)</i> <i>BLACK LITERATURE CRITICISM: CLASSIC AND EMERGING AUTHORS SINCE 1950 (BLC-2)</i>
Hispanic writers of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries	<i>HISPANIC LITERATURE CRITICISM (HLC)</i> <i>HISPANIC LITERATURE CRITICISM SUPPLEMENT (HLCS)</i>
Native North American writers and orators of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries	<i>NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN LITERATURE (NNAL)</i>
Major authors from the Renaissance to the present	<i>WORLD LITERATURE CRITICISM, 1500 TO THE PRESENT (WLC)</i> <i>WORLD LITERATURE CRITICISM SUPPLEMENT (WLCS)</i>

Preface

Since its inception *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (TCLC) has been purchased and used by some 10,000 school, public, and college or university libraries. TCLC has covered more than 1000 authors, representing over 60 nationalities and nearly 50,000 titles. No other reference source has surveyed the critical response to twentieth-century authors and literature as thoroughly as TCLC. In the words of one reviewer, “there is nothing comparable available.” TCLC “is a gold mine of information—dates, pseudonyms, biographical information, and criticism from books and periodicals—which many librarians would have difficulty assembling on their own.”

Scope of the Series

TCLC is designed to serve as an introduction to authors who died between 1900 and 1999 and to the most significant interpretations of these author’s works. Volumes published from 1978 through 1999 included authors who died between 1900 and 1960. The great poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, and philosophers of the period are frequently studied in high school and college literature courses. In organizing and reprinting the vast amount of critical material written on these authors, TCLC helps students develop valuable insight into literary history, promotes a better understanding of the texts, and sparks ideas for papers and assignments. Each entry in TCLC presents a comprehensive survey on an author’s career or an individual work of literature and provides the user with a multiplicity of interpretations and assessments. Such variety allows students to pursue their own interests; furthermore, it fosters an awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

Every fourth volume of TCLC is devoted to literary topics. These topics widen the focus of the series from the individual authors to such broader subjects as literary movements, prominent themes in twentieth-century literature, literary reaction to political and historical events, significant eras in literary history, prominent literary anniversaries, and the literatures of cultures that are often overlooked by English-speaking readers.

TCLC is designed as a companion series to Gale’s *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, (CLC) which reprints commentary on authors who died after 1999. Because of the different time periods under consideration, there is no duplication of material between CLC and TCLC.

Organization of the Book

A TCLC entry consists of the following elements:

- The **Author Heading** cites the name under which the author most commonly wrote, followed by birth and death dates. Also located here are any name variations under which an author wrote, including transliterated forms for authors whose native languages use nonroman alphabets. If the author wrote consistently under a pseudonym, the pseudonym is listed in the author heading and the author’s actual name is given in parenthesis on the first line of the biographical and critical information. Uncertain birth or death dates are indicated by question marks. Single-work entries are preceded by a heading that consists of the most common form of the title in English translation (if applicable) and the name of its author.
- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose

works have been translated into English, the English-language version of the title follows in brackets. Unless otherwise indicated, dramas are dated by first performance, not first publication. Lists of **Representative Works** by different authors appear with topic entries.

- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it originally appeared. All titles by the author featured in the text are printed in boldface type. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included. Criticism in topic entries is arranged chronologically under a variety of subheadings to facilitate the study of different aspects of the topic.
- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism. Source citations in the Literary Criticism Series follow University of Chicago Press style, as outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Gale.

Indexes

A **Cumulative Author Index** lists all of the authors that appear in a wide variety of reference sources published by Gale, including *TCLC*. A complete list of these sources is found facing the first page of the Author Index. The index also includes birth and death dates and cross references between pseudonyms and actual names.

A **Cumulative Topic Index** lists the literary themes and topics treated in *TCLC* as well as other Literature Criticism series.

A **Cumulative Nationality Index** lists all authors featured in *TCLC* by nationality, followed by the numbers of the *TCLC* volumes in which their entries appear.

An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *TCLC*. Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Gale also produces a paperbound edition of the *TCLC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

Citing *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*

When citing criticism reprinted in the Literary Criticism Series, students should provide complete bibliographic information so that the cited essay can be located in the original print or electronic source. Students who quote directly from reprinted criticism may use any accepted bibliographic format, such as University of Chicago Press style or Modern Language Association (MLA) style. Both the MLA and the University of Chicago formats are acceptable and recognized as being the current standards for citations. It is important, however, to choose one format for all citations; do not mix the two formats within a list of citations.

The examples below follow recommendations for preparing a bibliography set forth in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, (2003); the first example pertains to material drawn from periodicals, the second to material reprinted from books:

Cardone, Resha. "Reappearing Acts: Effigies and the Resurrection of Chilean Collective Memory in Marco Antonio de la Parra's *La tierra insomne o La puta madre*." *Hispania* 88, no. 2 (May 2005): 284-93. Reprinted in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Vol. 206, edited by Thomas J. Schoenberg and Lawrence J. Trudeau, 356-65. Detroit: Gale, 2008.

Kuester, Martin. "Myth and Postmodernist Turn in Canadian Short Fiction: Sheila Watson, 'Antigone' (1959)." In *The Canadian Short Story: Interpretations*, edited by Reginald M. Nischik, pp. 163-74. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2007. Reprinted in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Vol. 206, edited by Thomas J. Schoenberg and Lawrence J. Trudeau, 227-32. Detroit: Gale, 2008.

The examples below follow recommendations for preparing a works cited list set forth in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 5th ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1999); the first example pertains to material drawn from periodicals, the second to material reprinted from books:

Cardone, Resha. "Reappearing Acts: Effigies and the Resurrection of Chilean Collective Memory in Marco Antonio de la Parra's *La tierra insomne o La puta madre*." *Hispania* 88.2 (May 2005): 284-93. Reprinted in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. Thomas J. Schoenberg and Lawrence J. Trudeau. Vol. 206. Detroit: Gale, 2008. 356-65.

Kuester, Martin. "Myth and Postmodernist Turn in Canadian Short Fiction: Sheila Watson, 'Antigone' (1959)." *The Canadian Short Story: Interpretations*. Ed. Reginald M. Nischik. Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2007. 163-74. Reprinted in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. Thomas J. Schoenberg and Lawrence J. Trudeau. Vol. 206. Detroit: Gale, 2008. 227-32

Suggestions are Welcome

Readers who wish to suggest new features, topics, or authors to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions or comments are cordially invited to call, write, or fax the Associate Product Manager:

Associate Product Manager, Literary Criticism Series
Gale
27500 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535
1-800-347-4253 (GALE)
Fax: 248-699-8054

Acknowledgments

The editors wish to thank the copyright holders of the criticism included in this volume and the permissions managers of many book and magazine publishing companies for assisting us in securing reproduction rights. Following is a list of the copyright holders who have granted us permission to reproduce material in this volume of *TCLC*. Every effort has been made to trace copyright, but if omissions have been made, please let us know.

COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL IN *TCLC*, VOLUME 212, WAS REPRODUCED FROM THE FOLLOWING PERIODICALS:

American Literature, v. 69, March, 1997. Copyright © 1997 Duke University Press. All rights reserved. Used by permission of the publisher.—*Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, v. 51, January, 1974 for “The Reality of Words in the Poetry of Pedro Salinas” by Robert G. Havard; v. 76, summer, 1999 for “Mirrors and Pedro Salinas’ Doubled ‘You’” by Vialla Hartfield-Méndez. Copyright © 1974, 1999 Liverpool University Press. Both reproduced by permission of Taylor & Francis, Ltd., <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals>, conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, and the respective authors.—*CLA Journal*, v. 44, December, 2000. Copyright © 2000 by The College Language Association. All rights reserved. Used by permission of The College Language Association.—*Critique*, v. 7, spring, 1964. Copyright © 1964 by Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation. Reproduced with permission of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation, published by Heldref Publications, 1319 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1802.—*Forum for Modern Language Studies*, v. 20, January, 1984 for “‘Verdad de Mitos’: Some Aspects of the Use of Classical Mythology in the Poetry of Pedro Salinas” by Sandra Price. Copyright © 1984 Oxford University Press. Reproduced by permission of the publisher and the author.—*French Forum*, v. 24, January, 1999. Copyright © 1999 by French Forum, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the University of Nebraska Press.—*The French Review*, v. 43, February, 1970. Copyright © 1970 by the American Association of Teachers of French. Reproduced by permission.—*Frontiers*, v. 4, fall, 1979. Copyright © 1979 by the Frontiers Editorial Collective. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the University of Nebraska Press.—*Journal of Modern Literature*, v. 29, fall, 2005. Copyright © 2005 Indiana University Press. Reproduced by permission.—*MLN*, v. 100, March, 1985. Copyright © 1985 by The Johns Hopkins University Press. Reproduced by permission.—*Orbis Litterarum*, v. 47, 1992. Copyright © 1992 Basil Blackwell Ltd. Reproduced by permission of Blackwell Publishers.—*Paragraph*, v. 24, March, 2001. Copyright © 2001 Edinburgh University Press Ltd. Reproduced by permission.—*Renascence*, v. 24, winter, 1972. Copyright © 1972 Marquette University Press. Reproduced by permission.—*The Review of Contemporary Fiction*, v. 13, fall, 1993. Copyright © 1993 *The Review of Contemporary Fiction*. Reproduced by permission.—*Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, v. 20, May, 1986. Copyright © 1986 by Vassar College. Reproduced by permission.—*Romance Quarterly*, v. 35, May, 1988. Copyright © 1988 by The University Press of Kentucky. Reproduced with permission of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation, published by Heldref Publications, 1319 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1802.—*The Southern Review*, v. 5 n.s., January, 1969 for “Djuna Barnes’s Short Stories: An Estrangement of the Heart” by Suzanne C. Ferguson. Reproduced by permission of the author.—*Style*, v. 19, spring, 1985. Copyright © 1985 *Style*. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the publisher.—*Symposium*, v. 25, spring, 1971. Copyright © 1971 by Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation. Reproduced with permission of the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation, published by Heldref Publications, 1319 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1802.

COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL IN *TCLC*, VOLUME 212, WAS REPRODUCED FROM THE FOLLOWING BOOKS:

Allen, Carolyn. From “Writing toward *Nightwood*: Djuna Barnes’ Seduction Stories,” in *Silence and Power: A Reevaluation of Djuna Barnes*. Edited by Mary Lynn Broe. Southern Illinois University Press, 1991. Copyright © 1991 by the Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission of the publisher.—Antosh, Ruth B. From *Reality and Illusion in the Novels of J.-K. Huysmans*. Rodopi, 1986. Copyright © 1986 Editions Rodopi B.V., Amsterdam. Reproduced by permission.—Coffman, Christine E. From *Insane Passions: Lesbianism and Psychosis in Literature and Film*. Wesleyan University Press, 2006. Copyright © 2006 by Christine E. Coffman. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission Wesleyan University Press.—Emery, Elizabeth. From *Romancing the Cathedral: Gothic Architecture in Fin-de-Siècle French Culture*. State University of New York Press, 2001. Copyright © 2001 State University of New York. Reprinted by permission of the State University of New York Press.—Frank, Joseph. From *The Widening Gyre*:

Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature. Rutgers University Press, 1963. Copyright © 1963 by Rutgers, The State University, renewed 1991 by Joseph Frank. Reprinted by permission of Rutgers University Press.—Fuchs, Miriam. From “Dr. Matthew O’Connor: The Unhealthy Healer of Djuna Barnes’s *Nightwood*,” in *Images of Healers, Volume Two*. Edited by Anne Hudson Jones. State University of New York Press, 1983. Copyright © 1983 State University of New York. Reproduced by permission of the State University of New York Press.—Gerstenberger, Donna. From “The Radical Narrative of Djuna Barnes’s *Nightwood*,” in *Breaking the Sequence: Women’s Experimental Fiction*. Edited by Ellen G. Friedman and Miriam Fuchs. Princeton University Press, 1989. Copyright © 1989 by Princeton University Press. Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press.—Harris, Andrea L. From “The Third Sex: Figures of Inversion in Djuna Barnes’s *Nightwood*,” in *Eroticism and Containment: Notes from the Flood Plain*. Edited by Carol Siegel and Ann Kibbey. New York University Press, 1994. Copyright © 1994 by New York University. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Herring, Phillip F. From “Djuna Barnes and the Narrative of Violation,” in *Modes of Narrative: Approaches to American, Canadian and British Fiction Presented to Helmut Bonheim*. Edited by Reingard M. Nischik and Barbara Korte. Königshausen & Neumann, 1990. Copyright © 1990 Verlag Dr. Johannes Königshausen and Dr. Thomas Neumann, Würzburg. Reproduced by permission.—Kaivola, Karen. From *All Contraries Confounded: The Lyrical Fiction of Virginia Woolf, Djuna Barnes, and Marguerite Duras*. University of Iowa Press, 1991. Copyright © 1991 by the University of Iowa Press. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission from The University of Iowa Press.—Kannenstine, Louis F. From *The Art of Djuna Barnes: Duality and Damnation*. New York University Press, 1977. Copyright © 1977 by New York University. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—King, Brendan. From *Là Bas: A Journey into the Self* by J. K. Huysmans. Translated by Brendan King. Dedalus, 2001. Translation, introduction, and notes copyright © 2001 Brendan King. Afterword and chronology copyright © 1986 Robert Irwin. Reproduced by permission.—Lloyd, Christopher. From *J.-K. Huysmans and the Fin-de-siècle Novel*. Edinburgh University Press, 1990. www.eup.ed.ac.uk. Copyright © 1990 Christopher Lloyd. Reproduced by permission.—Lowrie, Joyce O. From *The Violent Mystique: Thematics of Retribution and Expiation in Balzac, Barbey d’Aurevilly, Bloy, and Huysmans*. Librairie Droz, 1974. Copyright © 1974 by Librairie Droz S. A., 11, rue Massot, 1211 Geneva 12 (Switzerland). Reproduced by permission.—Marcus, Jane. From “Laughing at Leviticus: *Nightwood* as Woman’s Circus Epic,” in *Silence and Power: A Reevaluation of Djuna Barnes*. Edited by Mary Lynn Broe. Southern Illinois University Press, 1991. Copyright © 1991 by the Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Martin, Ann. From *Red Riding Hood and the Wolf in Bed: Modernism’s Fairy Tales*. University of Toronto Press, 2006. Copyright © 2006 University of Toronto Press, Incorporated. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.—Orringer, Stephanie L. From *Pedro Salinas’ Theater of Self-Authentication*. Peter Lang, 1995. Copyright © 1995 Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., New York. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Parsons, Deborah. From *Djuna Barnes*. Northcote House, 2003. Copyright © 2003 by Deborah Parsons. Reproduced by permission.—Plumb, Cheryl J. From *Fancy’s Craft: Art and Identity in the Early Works of Djuna Barnes*. Susquehanna University Press, 1986. Copyright © 1986 by Cheryl J. Plumb. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.—Polansky, Susan G. From *The Poet as Hero: Pedro Salinas and His Theater*. Juan de la Cuesta, 2006. Copyright © 2006 by Juan de la Cuesta-Hispanic Monographs. Reproduced by permission.—Tyler-Bennett, Deborah. From “‘Her Wench of Bliss’: Gender and the Language of Djuna Barnes’ *Ladies Almanack*,” in *Language and Gender: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Edited by Sara Mills. Longman, 1995. Copyright © 1995 Longman Group Limited, except Chapt. 2 copyright © Deborah Cameron, Chapt. 3 copyright © by Liz Yorke and Chapt. 4 copyright © Margaret Williamson. Reproduced by permission of Pearson Education Limited.—Ziegler, Robert. From *The Mirror of Divinity: The World and Creation in J.-K. Huysmans*. University of Delaware Press, 2004. Copyright © 2004 by Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.

Gale Literature Product Advisory Board

The members of the Gale Literature Product Advisory Board—reference librarians from public and academic library systems—represent a cross-section of our customer base and offer a variety of informed perspectives on both the presentation and content of our literature products. Advisory board members assess and define such quality issues as the relevance, currency, and usefulness of the author coverage, critical content, and literary topics included in our series; evaluate the layout, presentation, and general quality of our printed volumes; provide feedback on the criteria used for selecting authors and topics covered in our series; provide suggestions for potential enhancements to our series; identify any gaps in our coverage of authors or literary topics, recommending authors or topics for inclusion; analyze the appropriateness of our content and presentation for various user audiences, such as high school students, undergraduates, graduate students, librarians, and educators; and offer feedback on any proposed changes/enhancements to our series. We wish to thank the following advisors for their advice throughout the year.

Barbara M. Bibel

Librarian
Oakland Public Library
Oakland, California

Dr. Toby Burrows

Principal Librarian
The Scholars' Centre
University of Western Australia Library
Nedlands, Western Australia

Celia C. Daniel

Associate Reference Librarian
Howard University Libraries
Washington, D.C.

David M. Durant

Reference Librarian
Joyner Library
East Carolina University
Greenville, North Carolina

Nancy T. Guidry

Librarian
Bakersfield Community College
Bakersfield, California

Heather Martin

Arts & Humanities Librarian
University of Alabama at Birmingham, Sterne Library
Birmingham, Alabama

Susan Mikula

Librarian
Indiana Free Library
Indiana, Pennsylvania

Thomas Nixon

Humanities Reference Librarian
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Davis
Library
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Mark Schumacher

Jackson Library
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina

Gwen Scott-Miller

Assistant Director
Sno-Isle Regional Library System
Marysville, Washington

Contents

Preface vii

Acknowledgments xi

Literary Criticism Series Advisory Board xiii

Djuna Barnes 1892-1982	1
<i>American novelist, short story writer, playwright, poet, and journalist</i>	
Joris-Karl Huysmans 1848-1907	224
<i>French novelist, critic, essayist, poet, biographer, and short story writer</i>	
<i>Entry devoted to the novel <i>Là-bas</i> (1891)</i>	
Pedro Salinas 1891?-1951	281
<i>Spanish poet, playwright, novelist, critic, essayist, and translator</i>	

Literary Criticism Series Cumulative Author Index 359

Literary Criticism Series Cumulative Topic Index 471

TCLC Cumulative Nationality Index 487

TCLC-212 Title Index 493

Djuna Barnes

1892-1982

(Also wrote under the pseudonym of Lydia Steptoe)
American novelist, short story writer, playwright, poet,
and journalist.

The following entry provides an overview of Barnes's life and works. For additional information on her career, see *CLC*, Volumes 3, 4, 8, 11, 29, and 127.

INTRODUCTION

Djuna Barnes is an enigmatic literary figure, most often associated with the "Lost Generation" of American expatriates living in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s. She produced a small but varied body of work spread throughout her lifetime, consisting of plays, poems, and short stories, as well as two novels. She was also a well-known journalist before she turned to writing literature. Barnes is primarily remembered, however, for the experimental novel *Nightwood*, published in 1936, which examines issues related to sexuality, identity, alienation, and the disintegration of civilization. Considered an innovator in style and form, Barnes is frequently linked with the modernists of the early twentieth century. She often employed a satirical and parodic manipulation of conventional literary modes and styles, blended genres within individual works, and ignored linear narrative, adopting instead a non-chronological depiction of time, often described as "symphonic" or "fugal." While Barnes's formal choices are considered modernist, her reliance on symbol and use of gothic, nightmarish imagery connect her work to symbolist and surrealist literary traditions. In recent years scholars have increasingly examined Barnes's literary contributions and asserted her importance as an early twentieth-century writer. As Phillip F. Herring has declared, Barnes "combined in a unique way some of the century's most biting satire with a view of the human condition that expressed profoundest gloom. In the best modernist tradition, her writing is idiosyncratic, original and full of enigmas, but it reminds the reader at times of predecessors." Herring concludes that "while comparisons might help us to place her in the modern tradition, ultimately, from the early journalism to her latest creative work, Djuna Barnes' artistic achievement was quite original."

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Barnes was born on June 12, 1892, in Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York. Her father, Wald Barnes, an afflu-

ent, visionary, and independent American, moved the family to a farm in Long Island in an effort to escape the trappings of society, which he greatly distrusted. Barnes's British-born mother, Elizabeth Chappell, suffered her husband's unconventional lifestyle, including his various adulterous affairs. She even allowed his mistress, Fanny Faulkner, to move into their home. Wald Barnes, who believed in polygamy, fathered five children with Elizabeth and four additional children with Fanny.

Barnes's father and her paternal grandmother, Zadel Barnes Gustafson, oversaw much of her education, which focused on literature, painting, and music. Barnes later claimed that her grandmother, who took part in early feminist campaigns, was a journalist, and once conducted a London salon, had the greatest influence on her early life. Few additional details regarding Barnes's childhood are known. Although some biographers have contended that the author was sexually abused by her father, Barnes never confirmed this during her lifetime. In 1912, when forced to choose between his two families, Wald left Elizabeth and their children and settled with Fanny, whom he later married.

Following this separation Barnes moved to New York City, where she studied art at Pratt Institute and the Art Students' League. She published poems in *Harper's Weekly* in 1911, and in 1913 began contributing stories and illustrated articles to the *Brooklyn Eagle*. She quickly established herself as a journalist and began writing articles and conducting interviews for some of New York's leading newspapers and magazines, including *New York Morning Telegraph*, *New York Herald*, and, under the pseudonym of Lydia Steptoe, *Vanity Fair*.

While living in New York Barnes became acquainted with Guido Bruno, who exhibited some of her artwork in his Greenwich Village garret. In 1915 Bruno published a chapbook of her poems and drawings, titled *The Book of Repulsive Women: 8 Rhythms and 5 Drawings*. Barnes began writing plays during this time, as well, including three one-act plays, which were produced by the Provincetown Playhouse in 1919 and 1920. Many of her poems and stories appeared in both literary and popular magazines, including the *Little Review*, the *Dial*, *Charm*, and *Smart Set*. While launching her literary career, Barnes continued to work as a journalist, a career which she maintained until the 1930s.

In 1919 Barnes moved to Paris as a correspondent for *McCall's* magazine. She remained there throughout the

1920s and 1930s, establishing relationships with many influential expatriate writers residing in the city, including Robert McAlmon, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and James Joyce, whom she interviewed for *Vanity Fair* magazine. In 1921 she met poet and critic T. S. Eliot, who helped to launch her literary career. During this time, Barnes became romantically involved with Thelma Wood, an American artist, who is generally considered the inspiration for the character of Robin Vote in *Nightwood*. Barnes also began socializing with Natalie Clifford Barney, an Ohio heiress who ran a Paris salon frequented by many important writers and artists. Barney was also openly homosexual and developed a circle of lesbian authors, activists, and socialites, including Barnes, during the years after World War I.

In 1923 Barnes published a collection of short stories, plays, poems, and drawings, which she simply titled *A Book*. A revised edition of the collection, which included additional stories but removed the drawings, was published in 1929 as *A Night among the Horses*. In 1928 Barnes published *Ladies Almanack*, a satirical portrait that chronicled the sexual escapades of Barney and her circle of lesbian intellectuals. That same year Barnes also published her first novel, *Ryder*.

While Barnes lived primarily in Paris during the 1920s and 1930s, she also traveled extensively throughout Europe and returned to New York on several occasions. Between 1929 and 1931 she moved to Greenwich Village to be with Thelma Wood and worked as a columnist for *Theatre Guild Magazine*. The relationship between Wood and Barnes was fraught with difficulties, however, and Barnes eventually left Wood, returning to Paris in the fall of 1931.

Over the next few years Barnes focused on her literary career and spent several summers writing while a guest of Peggy Guggenheim in England. Barnes's next novel, *Nightwood*, which is generally considered her masterpiece, was published in London in 1936, then in America the following year. The book was edited and introduced by T. S. Eliot, which helped it garner considerable critical interest and praise. Following the publication of *Nightwood*, Barnes spent several years in London. In 1940 she returned to New York, residing in Greenwich Village.

During the last decades of her life, Barnes lived a reclusive lifestyle, which she described as her "Trappist" period. After her return to the United States, she did not publish any work until 1958, when she produced a complex verse play titled *The Antiphon*. In the last years of her life, she continued writing and spent much of her time working on an unfinished volume of poetry. Barnes died on June 18, 1982, at the age of ninety.

MAJOR WORKS

Although not as well known as her later literary achievements, Barnes's early work has increasingly drawn critical attention. In her experimental first novel, *Ryder*, Barnes comically treats themes related to humanity's estrangement from the natural world and the disintegration of social order, while challenging the values of patriarchal society. Some critics have emphasized the autobiographical overtones of the novel, which revolves around the Ryder family, particularly the patriarch, Wendell Ryder. Wendell prides himself on being a free-thinker and champions polygamy, while causing pain in the lives of the women around him. Formally, the novel is comprised of fifty chapters and employs various literary and poetic modes, parodying scripture, fable, and the epic, while ignoring some of the cardinal conventions of traditional narrative, such as verisimilitude, standard dialogue, and chronological plot development.

While a number of critics have assessed the novel as an inferior forerunner to *Nightwood*, others have emphasized its formal and thematic accomplishments. Deborah Parsons has contended that *Ryder* "is at once a picaresque novel, social satire and eccentric family chronicle, but also a parable of the politics of sexual reproduction." Parsons further notes that in this early work, Barnes "eschews the conventional chronology and realist style of the family saga, which is told as if from hindsight, thus merging past, present and future. The stylized language and diction mimic earlier literary periods," while the "subtle juxtaposition and reworking of styles and genres," along with "breaks in conventional linearity of plot and narrative, indicate the strategies of modernism."

Ladies Almanack has also received renewed critical interest, particularly among feminist scholars. The book centers on the character of Evangeline Musset, modeled after Natalie Barney, who is described as a saint and the rescuer of young women. Throughout the narrative, Musset celebrates her lesbianism while she surrounds herself with a circle of lovers. *Ladies Almanack* borrows the almanac form, based on the twelve-month calendar, and employs religious imagery and Elizabethan language and style. Barnes's calendar, however, is based on moon and tide cycles, and is thus associated with the female experience of time through cycles of menstruation. The text, which is interspersed with parables, songs, and poems, is accompanied by over twenty original pen and ink drawings by the author.

While *Ladies Almanack* is considered a parody of Barney's circle, it employs an amiable tone, leading some scholars to maintain that the work's primary objective is to openly confront questions of sexual identity, by blurring distinctions between the genders, and to present

a critique of patriarchal society from the often marginalized perspective of lesbian culture. Susan Sniader Lanser has described *Ladies Almanack* as "a linguistic and literary experiment, a dense and barely coherent discourse which spurns the conventions of realism, wanders far from the story it is supposed to tell, adopts a host of patriarchal forms and combines them in uneasy parody. The surface form of the text is the monthly chronicle, the almanac, but the book resembles the picaresque fable in structure, the mock epic in tone; it uses or parodies a host of forms including the saint's life, the ode, the prayer, the love song, the allegory, classical mythology, and Sacred Scripture itself." Lanser concludes that the book "creates a lesbian-feminist cultural mythology and even suggests a radical critique of patriarchy by recognizing the personal/sexual as political."

Barnes is best remembered for her novel *Nightwood*, which is generally considered her greatest artistic achievement. The novel is thematically structured, rather than driven by plot, and revolves around the character of Robin Vote, a magnetic American woman who refuses to attach herself to her surroundings or form lasting relations with others. In addition to examining themes related to sexuality and gender definition, the novel explores the effects of decaying civilization and the individual's disintegrating sense of personal identity.

The first chapter opens with the birth of Felix Volkbein, who is orphaned soon after entering the world. Born a Jew and a "Baron" with a fake pedigree, Felix inherits his father's wealth and grows up idealizing the past. Eventually he meets and marries Robin. They move to Vienna, and Robin gives birth to a son, Guido, named after Felix's father. Robin soon succumbs to her wanderlust, however, and leaves both her husband and her son behind in Vienna. In the second chapter, titled "La Somnambule," Barnes chronicles Robin's wanderings and introduces the character of Dr. Matthew O'Connor, whose commentary dominates much of the novel.

In the chapter "Night Watch," Robin meets Nora Flood, an American journalist in Europe. Robin and Nora become romantically involved, but Robin eventually leaves Nora for Jenny Petherbridge. Through much of the remainder of the novel Nora struggles to overcome her obsession with Robin, confiding in Dr. O'Connor and seeking his help as a sort of father-confessor. The controversial final chapter of the novel, titled "The Possessed," takes place in a rural area of the United States, where Nora owns a house. Disturbed by her dog's barking, Nora searches a small chapel on the property and discovers that Robin, now a ruined version of her former self, has been living there. The novel ends with Robin crawling along the ground, barking and snarling with Nora's dog.

Although desire and sexual expression are important themes in *Nightwood*, humanity's struggle with its basic animal nature is another central concern for Barnes. The author expresses this theme primarily through the character of Robin Vote, who wanders from lover to lover, and from place to place, satisfying her most basic urges without guilt or remorse. While Robin's amorality is a destructive force in the lives of the other characters, some critics have averred that by embracing her bestial nature, she is able to return to a state of innocence, beyond conscience and society's constraints. Formally *Nightwood*, like most of Barnes's work, defies categorization and subverts traditional literary conventions. Describing the effect of the novel's formal structure, Joseph Frank has suggested that "the eight chapters of *Nightwood* are like searchlights, probing the darkness each from a different direction yet ultimately illuminating the same entanglement of the human spirit."

Barnes eschews a linear depiction of time in the novel, as well, and in describing its narrative structure, many commentators have borrowed terminology from music, asserting that the book's form is fugal, contrapuntal, or symphonic. Donna Gerstenberger has observed that *Nightwood* demands "a reading against the dominant text of binary oppositions by which the Western world inscribes itself. It is a novel that rages against the imprisoning structures of the language and narratives of the 'day,' which create a history built on the oppositions of night/day, past/present, reason/madness, 'normal'/'abnormal,' truth/falsehood, gender, and origins (both historical and textual). It is a book that relentlessly undermines grounds for categorization. The ideal and the real, the beautiful and the ugly, subject and object become irrelevant distinctions; even the language of the novel works to slip the acculturated binary assumptions of signifier and signified, and the nature of narrative itself is destabilized as traditional categories are emptied of meaning."

Barnes's late work, *The Antiphon*, is often considered her most complex literary effort. Like many of her earlier publications, *The Antiphon* defies facile classifications. Bridging the genres of poetry and drama, it is most often described as a verse play. As in *Ryder*, Barnes seems to draw, once again, from her own childhood in her depiction of the Hobbsses, an American family divided over the past actions of the patriarch, Titus Hobbs. The work is set at the beginning of World War II and takes place at the family's ancestral home in England, where the Hobbsses have briefly gathered despite their differences. Exploring themes related to molestation, sexuality, power, and submission, Barnes abandons the comic tone she employed in *Ryder*, and ultimately rejects the possibility of reconciliation. Augusta and her daughter, Miranda, both victimized and betrayed by Titus, remain estranged from each other, despite their mu-

tual suffering. *The Antiphon* ends tragically with both Augusta and Miranda dead on stage.

The play is written in blank verse and borrows from Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatic traditions, while utilizing modern elements of symbolism, absurdism, and surrealism. Although it is a respected work in the context of Barnes's oeuvre, the play has failed to attract a wide audience, partly, as some critics have argued, because of its obscure allusions, archaic diction, and difficult syntax. Louis F. Kannenstine has affirmed the play's importance, declaring that *The Antiphon* "taps the origin of modern drama in rituals of the medieval Christian church, suggests variations upon the forms of Greek tragedy and early closet drama, and most directly revives the tone of grandeur of Elizabethan drama with a nod at the Jacobean tradition as well. Also with the prominence of the set as a work of art and the multiple-level musicality of the verse, the play attempts to broaden the scope of dramatic form, to present new possibilities for modern theater." Kannenstine concludes, however, that *The Antiphon* "speaks out against the standards of the marketplace, the dominance of clock time, and the illusion of recorded history. Its effort to get back to a lost reality is intense enough to risk obscurity and ambiguity."

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Although Barnes was celebrated among her peers during the 1920s and 1930s, and achieved some success with her early literary efforts, she remains a marginal figure of the twentieth century. Her first novel, *Ryder*, which was reviewed widely, became a best-seller in the United States after its publication in 1928, but in the decades since has fallen into relative obscurity. Barnes is primarily remembered today for her single masterpiece, *Nightwood*, a work that continues to perplex and challenge critics and readers alike. In his introduction to the 1936 edition, T. S. Eliot commented that readers with "sensibilities trained on poetry" would be best suited to fully appreciate the novel. Eliot praised the novel's "great achievement of a style, the beauty of phrasing, the brilliance of wit and characterization" and asserted that it possessed "a quality of horror and doom very nearly related to that of Elizabethan tragedy."

Many critics since, while not always agreeing with Eliot's assessment, have recognized the book as an important and innovative contribution to American literature, comparable to the writings of James Joyce or Marcel Proust. In the words of Joseph Frank, *Nightwood* is an "amazing book, which combines the simple majesty of a medieval morality play with the verbal subtlety and refinement of a Symbolist poem." Some commentators, however, have argued that *Nightwood* is an odd and frustrating novel, unnecessarily difficult to decipher, and therefore limited in its importance. In fact, the esoteric

and overtly experimental nature of all of Barnes's writing, despite what many regard as her obvious literary talents, has ensured her relative obscurity and diminished status in American letters. Barnes herself was quoted as saying that she was "the most famous unknown of the century."

Commenting on this point in 1964, Alan Williamson observed that "Djuna Barnes, as a lesser member of the cluster of Lost Generation writers, has suffered from becoming the idol of an avant-garde cult while remaining unknown to the general public and deprecated by critics. On the one hand, she is justly praised for the strangeness and profundity of her psychological portraits, the eccentric keenness of her thought, the brilliant rendering of doom and decay, and a style which is at the same time precise and evocative. On the other hand, she is damned for the obscurity of her style and thought, for the morbidity and abnormality of her concerns, and for the unyielding pessimism with which she views man and his destiny." Williamson concludes that "the ultimate appraisal must fall closer to that of the cultist than to that of the philistine. Nonetheless, attempts in the heat of combat to exalt her into a major figure are unsound; she is clearly a writer of a very limited range and meager production, and as such must be relegated to the status of a brilliant minor writer."

In recent years Barnes scholarship has expanded to include lesser-known titles in her body of work. Whereas previous examinations focused on the author's formal and stylistic innovations, more recent studies have discussed the themes addressed in Barnes's work, as well as the author's commentary and stance on political, social, and sexual issues. For many scholars Barnes remains an inscrutable figure, who operated both in and out of literary, social, and political conventions. Discussing the author's use of satire and parody, Lissa Schneider has commented that "Barnes's satiric didacticism is both complex and unsettling in its ambiguities. Her satire is sharply double-edged. Through both structure and theme, her writings establish self-consciously structured oppositions between male and female, bourgeois and working class, artist and audience, only to paradoxically collapse or dissolve the bounds of those differences."

Barnes's treatment of sexuality and gender identity has prompted numerous debates among critics. During the 1970s some scholars, citing themes and characters from her work, championed Barnes as an important and inspirational lesbian writer. In the years that followed, however, other critics described Barnes as homophobic, noting that she denied her lesbianism later in her life. While some regarded her work as revolutionary, bringing the marginalized experience of homosexuals and other outcasts into focus, others countered that Barnes's often ambiguous renderings of lesbian and gay experience reinforced, rather than challenged, the prejudices

of the dominant culture. Regardless, many critics continue to view *Nightwood* and *Ladies Almanack* as pioneering works of lesbian literature.

Writing in 1997 Dianne Chisholm suggested that “instead of viewing this author of American modernism as an unwitting agent in the production and legitimization of dominant culture, we might see her as the artificer of an obscene resistance, laboring in tacit solidarity with her Surrealist contemporaries. We might reconsider the view of *Nightwood* as a lesbian novel whose reception as such had to be deferred until it found an audience among lesbian and gay readers who knew how to recover its latent homosexual content.” Two years later Mary E. Galvin praised Barnes’s willingness to foreground homosexual experience in her work, asserting that she “consistently presents lesbian sexuality as central to her urban settings and her depictions of her times; the ‘otherness’ her characters experience is integral to the modernist scene.” Galvin concluded that “Barnes consistently pushes at the boundaries of language, genre, and formal expectations with wit, humor, and exaggeration in order to make a space for lesbian existence in our literary heritage.”

As many of Barnes’s critics have noted, any one assessment of or approach to her work ultimately remains exclusive and incomplete. In the words of Margaret Bocking, Barnes could satirize “conventional expectations, religious and patriarchal tenets, and biased socio-historical constructions (of public personalities, journalists, women, Jews, homosexuals)” while at the same time romanticize “solitude and privacy, flights of fancy, the ‘simpler’ pleasures of the past, ‘quaint’ personalities, ardent love, and relentless melancholy.” Despite the varied opinions of Barnes’s themes and her merits as a literary artist, most critics would concur with Galvin’s appraisal: “In all her works, Barnes explores the real world of sexuality and creativity, human desire and consciousness, often, though not always, against the backdrop of repressive social structures and violence. The ‘real story’ behind her life choices and running continuously through her works is the story of a struggle for sexual and creative autonomy, the desire to enjoy the freedoms of modernism, against all personal, social, and cultural odds.”

PRINCIPAL WORKS

The Book of Repulsive Women: 8 Rhythms and 5 Drawings (poetry and drawings) 1915

Kurzy of the Sea (play) 1920

**A Book* (short stories, plays, poetry, and drawings) 1923; revised as *A Night among the Horses*, 1929, and *Spillway*, 1962

Ladies Almanack (prose) 1928

Ryder (novel) 1928

Nightwood (novel) 1936

The Antiphon (play) 1958

Vagaries Malicieux: Two Stories (short stories) 1974

Creatures in an Alphabet (poetry) 1982

Smoke, and Other Early Stories (short stories) 1982

Poe’s Mother: Selected Drawings of Djuna Barnes (drawings) 1995

At the Roots of the Stars: The Short Plays (plays) 1995

Collected Stories (short stories) 1996

Collected Poems (poetry) 2005

*This work includes the plays *Three from the Earth*, *To the Dogs*, and *The Dove*.

CRITICISM

Joseph Frank (essay date 1963)

SOURCE: Frank, Joseph. “Djuna Barnes: *Nightwood*.” In *The Widening Gyre: Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature*, pp. 25-49. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1963.

[In the following excerpt, Frank argues that *Nightwood* makes sense only when it is read not as a description of “an extra-artistic ‘objective’ world” but as “an autonomous structure.”]

The name of Djuna Barnes first became known to those readers who followed, with any care, the stream of pamphlets, books, magazines, and anthologies that poured forth to enlighten America in the feverish days of literary expatriation. Miss Barnes, it is true, must always have remained a somewhat enigmatic figure even to the most attentive reader. Born in New York State, she spent most of her time in England and France; and the glimpses one catches of her in the memoirs of the period are brief and unrevealing. She appears in *The Dial* from time to time with a drawing or a poem; she crops up now and again in some anthology of advance-guard writers—the usual agglomeration of people who are later to become famous or to sink into the melancholy oblivion of frustrated promise. Before the publication of *Nightwood*, indeed, one might have been inclined to place her name in the latter group. For while she had a book of short stories and an earlier novel to her credit, neither prepares one for the maturity of achievement so conspicuous in every line of this work.

Of the fantastical quality of her imagination; of the gift for imagery that, as T. S. Eliot has said in his preface to *Nightwood*, gives one a sense of horror and doom akin