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The Modernist Anti-Mental: Literary Life-Writing, Neurology and Medical Psychology, 1860-1939

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The Modernist Anti-Mental: Literary Life-Writing, Neurology and Medical Psychology, 1860-1939

Susie Christensen

Thesis for the degree of PhD in English
King’s College London, 2013
Abstract

This thesis examines the selves represented by early-twentieth century modernist writers in the light of neurological developments which occurred during the late-nineteenth century. After the 1860s, the nervous system was understood in newly evolutionary terms. This meant that the lowest and fundamentally non-mental aspects of the nervous system became the basis of the conscious mind and mentality. The central concern of the thesis is with what I call the modernist anti-mental. This manifests itself in three clear ways. Firstly, I use the anti-mentality as a term to describe a non-Freudian (or perhaps ambiguously Freudian) and explicitly physical mode of unconsciousness. Secondly, I argue that a certain strand of modernism itself, as a set of stylistic qualities and ideas emerging in both literature and medical science, was concerned with representing and often celebrating mindlessness and the primitive, and therefore debunked the rational mind. Thirdly, I use the term the anti-mental, or anti-mentality, to gather together the ways in which modernist writers, neurologists, and medical psychologists alike were concerned with placing the non-mental at the core and/or foundation of selfhood.

The introduction establishes modernist anti-mentality and the anti-mental as an alternative to the idea of the unconscious mind as well as examining the complex relationship between neurology and psychology during the period in question. The first chapter considers the foundational figure of the thesis, the neurologist John Hughlings Jackson, and argues that although he pathologised anti-mentality, his account of the nervous system also meant that it became the bedrock of human selfhood. Hughlings Jackson’s neurology is considered in relation to D. H. Lawrence’s writings which have the anti-mental at their heart. Chapter two examines the potential for the anti-mental to be spiritual and physical all at once, exploring various oceanic states and metaphors in the works of sexologist Havelock Ellis and writer H.D. Chapter three considers how the anti-mentality becomes a key concern for the modernist practices of sensory self-observation carried out in very different contexts by Virginia Woolf and the neurologist Henry Head. Chapter four questions the limits of textual expression of supposedly anti-mental states. It uses the diaries of Anaïs Nin and psychological writings by Otto Rank in order to challenge the modernist attempt to portray anti-mentality in textual forms.
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Introduction

'The nerves rather than the mind or the imagination are most affected'

Reviewing a performance of Stravinsky's latest ballet *Les Noces* for the *New Statesman* in 1926, J. W. Turner wrote that the ballet 'excited a response unlike the response of any other ballet save *The Spring Rite*'.¹ This response was unique because it evoked 'a queer sort of emotional intensity of a subconscious, root character'.² During this queer emotional intensity, Turner explained, '[t]he nerves rather than the mind or the imagination are most affected, but it is a different kind of nervous effect to that made by a successful Grand Guignol play, a more imaginative and less physical effect'.³ Although Turner found the state aroused in him by the ballet was more nervous than mental, he thought *Les Noces* provoked a more imaginative reaction than the physical horror shows which the French theatre Grand Guignol specialised in. Turner explained that his reaction to *Les Noces* had a 'near literary analogy to it in the prose of the American Gertrude Stein, who in her surrender of colour, of lyrical melody, of intellectual detail to a rhythmic tom-tom incantation produces an emotional tension which her admirers find thrilling'.⁴

Here, Turner specifically describes works of high modernism (Stravinsky and Stein) as affecting his nerves and not his mind, thus establishing a division between the nerves and the mind, and associating a non-mental nervous state with modernist art. The state he describes is also of a 'sub-conscious, root character'. The word 'root' associates his response with the base (most probably in evolutionary terms) of human nature. Turner's reaction to Stravinsky's ballet, which he associates with the work of Stein, might perhaps be described as an 'anti-mental' state. And yet, despite being

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³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
anti-mental, this condition created by the modernist works of Stravinsky and Stein (in opposition to the more popular, less avant-garde Grand Guignol play) is also, paradoxically, highly mental. Despite being conceived of as more nervous than mental, the response which Turner describes is also highly psychological and intellectual.

Although Turner's state is associated with the writing of Stein, its originating force was a ballet. It makes sense for such a form to prompt this reaction. In its pure, un-choreographed form, dance is a highly instinctive, even mindless, activity. In a context such as a Stravinsky ballet these unmediated bodily movements are transformed by forethought and dictated by the intellect as they are formed into a choreographed art work to fit with music and staging. Ballet as a form does seem to combine the intellect and mindlessness in a way such as Turner describes. However, Turner does not associate this response with ballet in general, but only with Les Noces and The Rite of Spring, seemingly because of the starkness and newness of Stravinsky's music (like Stein's writing): 'his music shedding its concrete detail of tune and colour and becoming like an abstract monochrome, a mere skeleton of rhythm'. Because of this Turner finds Les Noces 'simple and crude' and seeks the comfort of tradition: 'I enjoyed Les Noces, but I did not enjoy it to anything like the same degree as I enjoyed a recent performance at the Royal College of Music of Monteverde's three hundred year old opera, Orpheus'.

Turner's shocked response to modernist art was not unique. Yet why is it that Turner associated his reaction to modernist art with 'the nerves

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5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., p. 294.
7 For the apparently shocking effects of modernist art see, for example, Robert Hughes, The Shock of the New: Art and the Century of Change (London: Thames & Hudson, 1991). Science could also be shocking during this period, as Tim Armstrong has written: 'In looking at literature in the new scientific culture three interpenetrating categories can be deployed: texts which register shock; texts which incorporate the new science into their depiction of the world; and text which deploy science at the level of poetics' (Tim Armstrong, Modernism: A Cultural History (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), p. 116). The potential for science to shock is partly based in the notion that science itself can be described as modernist, a move taken by Dorothy Ross in her edited collection Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences 1870-1930 (1994). In her introduction to this book, Ross writes that 'The essays in this volume emerged from an effort to link the history of the human sciences between 1870-1930 to a broader crisis of Western culture and society [...] In the human sciences, as in every cultural domain, this new uncertainty led to efforts to reconstruct knowledge, value and representation' (Dorothy Ross, 'Introduction' to Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences 1870-1930 (1994)).
rather than the mind'? Where does this anti-mentality within and provoked by modernist art - a 'root' state - have its own roots? And why are the nerves (but not the mind) associated with the roots of human nature in the first place? These will be some of the central question this thesis seeks to address. And to do so it will turn to neurology and medical psychology alongside the self-representations of modernist writers because it will argue that apparently anti-mental, 'root' elements of selfhood were brought to the fore in all of these discourses as each attempted to redefine and represent the truth of selfhood. Specifically, the focus is on four pairs, each comprising one clinician (of very different kinds, ranging from neurologists to a sexologist and a lay analyst / psychotherapist) and one writer: D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) and John Hughlings Jackson (1835-1911); H.D. (1886-1961) and Havelock Ellis (1859-1939); Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) and Henry Head (1861-1941); Anais Nin (1903-1977) and Otto Rank (1884-1939). In arguing that late-nineteenth-century neurology was a foundational discourse for early-twentieth-century modernist life-writing and medical psychology this thesis addresses the following questions: To what extent were neurology and psychology related during this period? Can we consider 'the anti-mental' as an alternative non-Freudian model of the unconscious? To what extent was anti-mentality a key concern of modernism? How and why is modernist anti-mentality connected to life-writing? What were the affinities between modernist literary life-writing and neurology/medical psychology, and why did these affinities gather themselves around a focus on anti-mentality? How and why was it that Turner described his nerves as being other than his mind, and yet as still evoking a particularly imaginative sort of reaction? How much currency did this model have for writers, neurologists and medical psychologists in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries?

The Modernist Anti-Mental

The term anti-mental is intended to enable a focus on the manner in which the nerves were conceived of as other than the mind (due to a lingering Cartesian dualism which meant that the body and mind were frequently understood to

be separate, even if science and experience seemed to show otherwise) whilst at the same time the nerves came to be understood as forming the mind’s foundation, or were understood to produce the mind. This physical basis of the mind in a culture in which Cartesian dualism nevertheless proved a dominating mode of self conception meant that the mind itself became paradoxically and newly ‘anti-mental’, and that traditionally mental processes such as volition and will became inextricably bound up with supposedly non-mental processes such as instincts, bodily urges or physiological activities. Anti-mental states, I will argue, were frequently celebrated and placed at the centre of the accounts of selfhood given by various writers, neurologists and medical psychologists during this period, and they were also, paradoxically, specifically involved in a new understanding of the mind.

Anti-mentality itself also constitutes a defining aspect of one particular strand of what is called modernism or modernisms, and this is why I group a number of seemingly very different and divergent writers together under such a heading. This anti-mental modernism, I will argue, is specifically associated with primitivism, and it also frequently emerges in texts that we might consider as life-writing which focus on representing selfhood. In attempting to portray themselves, modernist writers transformed the understanding of the mind, and in doing so were frequently drawn to supposedly mindless primitive states which were understood to form the foundation of selfhood. These were concerns which also manifested themselves in the writings of neurologists and medical psychologists during the period in question. Therefore this anti-mental modernism extended its reach to incorporate modernist literary texts, as well as works by neurologists and medical psychologists.

This modernist celebration of the anti-mental can perhaps be traced back to Nietzsche who wrote that people were unhappy due to having been ‘reduced to their most fallible organ, their consciousness!’ and because they had been ‘forced to think, deduce, calculate, weigh cause and effect’, stressing what he felt to be the unwanted and unnatural nature of these mental processes. Following Nietzsche, (and Romanticism) some modernist writers celebrated instincual states in which volition was cast aside and they were no longer forced to think, deduce, calculate, weigh cause and effect, or carry out...

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any other particularly mental or rational activities. Louis A. Sass points to an 'antirationalist sentiment' which manifested itself among modernists in 'the romantic, Nietzschean, surrealist and poststructuralist traditions'. This notion of anti-rational modernism manifesting itself in 'romantic, Nietzschean, surrealist and poststructuralist traditions' begs the question of the periodicity of anti-mental modernism.

In 1976, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane described modernism as 'a historical phenomenon we now wish to root in time'. Today, this historically grounded conception of modernism has largely been usurped by the idea of modernism as something which need not be grounded in a particular time and place. In contemporary criticism, modernism is often seen as a set of stylistic qualities which transcend a particular time period. Pericles Lewis rejects a time-specific definition of modernism in *The Cambridge Companion to European Modernism* (2011):

> Even so classic and wide-ranging an earlier account as the collection that Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane edited in 1976, *Modernism: A Guide to European Literature, 1890-1930*, today seems strangely limited in its historical timeframe. Modernism now seems to be a movement whose roots go back well over a century and whose effects are still being felt today.

Elsewhere, Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goldman and Olga Taxidou write, in the introduction to their 1998 anthology of modernist sources and documents, that their selection of material has been driven by 'a revisionary impetus which extends beyond the question of periodisation'. Instead, following the work of Peter Nicholls in his 1995 book *Modernisms*, these writers suggest that 'modernism' can be replaced with 'modernisms' and that modernist art incorporates the following broad characteristics: a focus on psychological or subjective constructions of reality; avant-garde aesthetics; stream of

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consciousness narrative forms; an involved or reactionary relationship with modernity and its discourses and products; a turn towards the primitive; an increasing technologisation of the subject, and more.\textsuperscript{13} Although Lewis describes modernism as a 'movement', Kolocotroni, Goldman and Taxidou write that '[m]odernism is not a movement. It is a term that masks conflict and upheaval and any number of contradictory positions', emphasising the multiple and plural nature of modernism, as well as the difficulty involved in defining it.\textsuperscript{14} Here I will focus specifically on the aspects of modernism which were involved in renouncing the centrality of the rational mind, and following Kolocotroni, Goldman and Taxidou's belief in the need to 'read literature in conjunction with other texts' when considering modernism, I will examine this aspect of modernism across literary and medical-scientific texts.\textsuperscript{15}

Despite my agreement with this expansion of the time frame of modernism beyond the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, it is nevertheless this period which I focus on here. Although modernisms can exist in differing historical moments, each specific version of modernism will of course have certain characteristics which are related to its historical context. I believe that there is a particular strand in early-twentieth-century modernism which has not yet been fully explored in relation to another key discourse of modernity: neurology. Bradbury and McFarlane wrote that 'modernity is a new consciousness, a fresh condition of the human mind - a condition which modern art has explored, felt through, sometimes reacted against'.\textsuperscript{16} Here I will explore some of the ways in which this 'fresh condition of the human mind' which arose in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries rendered the mind anti-mental, transforming it, disturbingly, into something other than itself.

Furthermore, a reaction against the mind, volition and rationality can be seen as a key aspect of one of the 'contradictory positions' which manifested themselves within modernism, and within early-twentieth century modernism in particular. Gabriel Josipovici highlights these aspects of

\textsuperscript{13} Peter Nicholls, \textit{Modernisms: A Literary Guide} (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995).
\textsuperscript{14} Kolocotroni, Goldman and Taxidou, 'Introduction' to \textit{Modernism}, p. xvii.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. xviii.
\textsuperscript{16} Bradbury and McFarlane, 'The Name and Nature of Modernism', \textit{Modernism}, p. 22.
modernism in *Whatever Happened to Modernism?* (2010). For Josipovici, modernism is not exclusively a time period nor a specific style but

something that will, from now on, always be with us. Seen in this way, Modernism, I would suggest, becomes a response by artists to that 'disenchantment of the world' to which cultural historians have long been drawing our attention.\(^\text{17}\)

The neurological shifts I will be considering here were a key aspect of this disenchantment. For Josipovici, modernism is concerned with the modification 'which led to the disappearance of the numinous from everyday life' and is an attempt to reassert the numinous (this version of modernism, and its connections with spirituality will be especially explored in chapter two).\(^\text{18}\)

Josipovici thinks that modernism has therefore dwindled in England whilst it has prospered elsewhere because he believes that the English have tended to celebrate the move 'from an era of superstition to our modern era of common sense and scientific understanding, from the darkness of the Middle Ages to the light of the Enlightenment'.\(^\text{19}\)

Central to Josipovici's conception of modernism is that it was and is a reaction against Enlightenment reason and associated models of mind, and against 'common sense and scientific understanding'.

This aspect of modernism particularly asserts itself in the early-twentieth-century obsession with what critics have called the primitive or primitivism, as is evidenced in the paintings of Picasso and Gauguin which depict forms and objects from or associated with apparently less civilised locations such as prehistory, Africa or the orient. This association made by some early-twentieth-century modernists between oriental or African cultures, the primitive, and physicality has been explored in Marianna Torgovnick's work on modernism and primitivism. In *Gone Primitive* (1990) and *Primitive Passions* (1997) Torgovnick argues that the reason why western artists became obsessed with what they considered the primitive during the early-twentieth century was because this was a period during which science and rationalism were on the rise and religion and mysticism were declining in Europe and

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\(^{18}\) Ibid.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., pp. 11-12.
America as dominant cultural modes of understanding truth.\textsuperscript{20} She explains that the West was involved in defining itself in opposition to the primitive because there had been ‘a rejection of certain “irrational” or “mystical” aspects of the Western self, expressed in the attempt to project them onto groups marginalised in the West (Gypsies and women, for example) or onto primitives abroad’.\textsuperscript{21} ‘Europeans were increasingly ghettoising and repressing at home feelings and practices comparable to what they believed they saw among primitives’.\textsuperscript{22} She cites the increasingly popular disciplines of ethnology and anthropology by those such as Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942) as subject areas in which the primitive was set up as that which ‘we’ are not and argues that the early-twentieth-century modernist valorisation of the primitive expressed a desire to move beyond or away from the rational and highly mental modes of being which were understood as becoming increasingly dominant with the rise of science and technology in the west during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

One manifestation of this modernist primitivism was in the work of the Surrealists. Katherine Conley defines the Surrealists’ use of the primitive:

\begin{quote}
Surrealists responded so strongly to tribal art because they saw themselves as pursuing primitivist goals, according the French definition of \textit{primitive}: “Adj. 1. Which is at its origin, or close to it 2. Which is the first, the oldest. 3. Which is the source, the origin (of something with the same nature)” (\textit{Le Petit Robert}, 181).\textsuperscript{23}
\end{quote}

And when Robert Goldwater describes the Surrealists in his 1938 book \textit{Primitivism in Modern Art} he writes that ‘[i]n the first place they looked upon themselves as continuing a tradition of anti-rational exteriorising of the subconscious that went back to the Alchemists’.\textsuperscript{24} This anti-rational origin of the human is what Turner seems to be referring to in his review of \textit{Les Noces}, and he not only associated it with modernism but also with his nerves and not his mind. This was an aspect of the self which was brought to the fore in late-

\textsuperscript{21} Torgovnick, \textit{Primitive Passions}, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 14.
\textsuperscript{24} Robert Goldwater, \textit{Primitivism in Modern Art} (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. 217; Jung also compares the work of the alchemists to the search for the unconscious.
nineteenth-century neurology as well as in early-twentieth-century modernism.

Anti-rationality, or irrationality, and their bedfellow, intuition, have long been the concerns of feminist critics. Harnessing instinctive mindless drives formed the core of Hélène Cixous’s *Écriture Féminine*. Issues surrounding women, feminism and instinct will be explored in more depth later in the thesis, particularly in the chapters which deal with H.D. and Nin. Three of the four writers I focus on here are women; Lawrence is the only male writer. The doctors are all men, and this gender dynamic, although typical of the period, cannot pass entirely unremarked upon, especially given the ongoing association between women and intuition in various forms of cultural discourse. Whilst some of the doctors considered here - particularly Havelock Ellis and Otto Rank - associated women and anti-mentality, others, for example Hughlings Jackson and Head, placed the anti-mental at the core of the selfhood of both men and women alike. Nevertheless, the writings of both Hughlings Jackson and Head do reveal a certain gendering of the anti-mental. Gender will not form a key concern of this thesis, however, further work into the specific relationship between the anti-mental and women, gender or femininity/masculinity in relation to the issues discussed here, would no doubt be helpful and productive.

The modernism which early-twentieth-century primitivism establishes is one which is anti-mental, anti-rational, anti-idealistic, and often anti-intellectual. This contradicts other modernisms. For example, Thomas Schlich has portrayed a highly rationalized modernism in taking the ‘thoroughly rationalized and standardized treatment regime’ of the influential fracture specialist Lorenz Böhler (1885–1973) as part of ‘the specific version of modernism that emerged in Vienna before World War I’ which focused on the rational and rationality. However, in focusing on Viennese modernists such as Wittgenstein and Schoenberg, Schlich neglects other Viennese modernists such as Arthur Schnitzler, whose *Dream Story* (1926) embraces irrationality and anti-mental forces.

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Anti-mental modernism also challenges one of the modernisms offered by Peter Nicholls in *Modernisms* (1995) where Nicholls has written 'that triumph of form over 'bodily' content' is something 'on which one major strand of modernism will depend'. Modernist primitivism - which specifically seeks out and glamorises so-called 'bodily content' - offers a very different version of modernism. However, it might be suggested that in attempting to represent bodily content in literary form, the apparently anti-mental or primitive modernisms end up further compounding the distinction between aesthetic form and bodily content. Indeed, it has been argued that modern art itself is 'antithetical to notions of primitivity and of deficit or defect, for these art forms are characterized not so much by unreflectiveness and spontaneity as by acute self-consciousness and self-reference, and by alienation from action and experience'. This problematic relationship between textuality and the anti-mental will be especially explored in the second half of this thesis where a focus on diaries brings this issue to the fore.

Perhaps it was the versions of modernism presented here by Schlich and Nicholls which T. J. Jackson Lears had in mind when classifying a 'recoil from an "overcivilized" modern existence to more intense forms of physical or spiritual experience supposedly embodied in medieval or Oriental cultures' as 'antimodernism'. However, considering the multifaceted nature of modernism itself (one strand of which corresponds with exactly what Jackson Lears describes as antimodernism), perhaps anti-modernity might be a better term. Indeed, anti-mental modernism corresponds closely with the 'modernism as reaction to modernity' model of modernism in that its worship of primitivism and instincts frequently took the form of a revolt against modern civilisation (most famously in the work of Lawrence). Jackson Lears explains that what he calls antimodernism expresses a celebration of violence and savagery, and this manifests itself in the modern preoccupation with the primitive.

27 Nicholls, *Modernisms*, p. 5.
30 Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace*, pp. 137-8. He also traces how this celebration led to an increasing valorisation of violence, and an association between violence and real life. Such ideas found extreme artistic expression in the work of the futurists, and a concrete actualisation in fascism.
Expanding on the work of Jackson Lears, Torgovnick and others, I will argue that this obsession with the primitive which preoccupied many modernist writers in the early-twentieth century was also often shared with clinicians who were ostensibly part of the rational and highly mental scientific and medical institutions which primitivism was seemingly a reaction against; the centrality these doctors gave to anti-mental forces implicitly undermined the very institutions they were a part of. This suggests, as Dorothy Ross has argued, that scientists and clinicians also held certain modernist values, although it expands the possibilities for their engagement with modernism beyond those offered by Ross who has written that ‘[d]uring the twentieth century [...] the separation and relations between the scientifically oriented successors to Enlightenment reason and the modernist heirs of Romantic aestheticism have become increasingly complex’.\(^3\) One element of this complexity is that through placing the anti-mental at the centre and foundation of their accounts of the self, modernist scientists and clinicians were involved in dismantling the Enlightenment reason which Ross argues they remained committed to. Ross has written that the new understanding of subjectivity associated with modernism 'produced very different consequences in different areas of culture [...] In the arts and in some areas of philosophy, it generated deep scepticism about the capacity of rationality to serve as a guide for modern life', but that scientific modernism did not take this form due to the ongoing commitment to scientific positivism.\(^3\) Despite this, I will explore the ways in which certain scientists and doctors (not all of whom could be described as positivists anyway) also - perhaps unwittingly, perhaps intentionally - let modernist anti-rationality or primitivism in through the back door and placed it as a key element in their accounts of the self and methodologies, allowing it to infiltrate and complicate the apparently rational discourse of science and/or medicine.

Louis A. Sass has associated this anti-mental modernism with mental illness. In *Madness and Modernism* (1992) Sass explores how some nineteenth- and twentieth-century modernists were involved in 'glorifying the clinical forms of madness for their presumed spontaneity and sensual abandon

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\(^3\) Ross, ‘Introduction’ to *Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences 1870-1930*, p. 3.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 2.
instead of condemning them for irrationality and evident loss of control'.

This is based on a conception of madness which Sass identifies as the common understanding (one which differs from his own understanding). That is:

Madness is irrationality, a condition involving decline or even disappearance of the role of rational factors in the organization of human conduct and experience: this is the core idea that, in various forms but with few true exceptions, has echoed down through the ages [...] And since reason has generally been seen as the distinctive feature of human nature itself, it would seem to follow that madmen must be not merely different but somehow deficient in essential qualities of humanity or personhood. Indeed, the very word reason means both the highest intellectual faculty and the sane mind.

Sass demonstrates that this model of madness had 'affinities with modernism'. However, despite Nietzsche and modernists who glorified such states, Sass writes,

[we find insanity being conceived of in much the same terms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: either as a kind of "dementia" or "mindlessness," or as "primitive and archaic drives returning from the depths of the unconscious in a dramatic manner".]

This is because '[t]he faith in reason that underlies this conception of insanity is central to Western thought'.

In arguing for the modernist anti-mental I examine the ways in which these forces of mindlessness – irrationality, primitiveness, loss of volition – came to be placed at the very foundation of the account of the self, meaning that reason was no longer 'the distinctive feature of human nature itself'. A central aspect of this dethroning of reason was, I argue, the evolved account of the nervous system given by John Hughlings Jackson. Sass has established the ways in which mindlessness and insanity were associated in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. However, these forces of mindlessness which present themselves in modernism need not be associated exclusively with insanity. Although, as Sass argues, Hughlings Jackson (along

33 Sass, Madness and Modernism, p. 4.
34 Ibid., p. 1.
36 Ibid., p. 3.
37 Ibid., p. 4.
38 Ibid., p. 1.
with many other clinicians, including Henry Maudsley (1835-1918) whom Hughlings Jackson influenced) pathologised mindlessness through his description of neurological disease as being caused by the dysfunction of the highest nervous centres (associated with mentality), and the unleashing of the non-mental lower nervous centres, his account of human functionality also placed these non-, or anti-mental processes at the core and base of the human and of the human ‘mind’. This meant that although these mindless states were associated with disease, they were also the fundamental building blocks of healthy selfhood. Hughlings Jackson’s neurology played a part in the unravelling of the Enlightenment enshrining of reason which Sass argues underpinned the common conception of insanity as mindlessness, and which has been seen to be central to modernity. In focusing on the anti-mental, my focus will not be insanity, but on states which exist at varying points on a spectrum of health and disease, and my primary concern will not be with illness or insanity, but largely with self representations which, like the very idea of a spectrum of health and disease, transcend, disrupt or are not primarily concerned with these categories.

Therefore, my exploration of what I am calling the 'anti-mental' does not, in the main, focus on insanity or the ways in which the anti-mental has been pathologised (although my opening chapter does establish Hughlings Jackson’s pathologisation of these forces). Instead, I argue that mindlessness or anti-mental processes were placed as a key aspect in self-representation and formed the core and foundation of the self, in not only the writings of modernist writers, but also in the work of the medical psychologists and neurologists with whom they associated. My argument is that, like modernist writers of a certain tradition, some psychological or neurological clinicians valorised such states rather than (or as well as) associating them with mental or neurological illness. Sass is right to establish Hughlings Jackson’s pathologisation of the anti-mental, but Hughlings Jackson’s account of the nervous system also established the anti-mental as a key aspect of human

39 For example, Michael Angelo Tata has written of ‘modernity, with its emphasis on the rational (Descartes)’, and how this normalised conception is challenged by various case study superstars: Michael Angelo Tata, ‘From Daniel Paul Schreber through the Dr. Phil Family: Modernity, Neurology and the Cult of the Case Study Superstar’, Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems, ed. Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.163-183 (p. 163).
functioning in health, and this paved the way for its celebration by the next generation of writers and thinkers. If, as Hughlings Jackson posited, non-mental aspects of the nervous system were the foundations of the mind, they become fundamental for its operations and understanding. Therefore the mind itself became strangely and newly anti-mental due to its association with the physiological nerves.

In 1990, Jonathan Crary wrote that '[a]ny effective account of modern culture must confront the ways in which modernism, rather than being a reaction against or transcendence of processes of scientific and economic rationalisation, is inseparable from them'. However, this assumes that science and medicine themselves, as aspects of modern culture, did not also transcend or challenge these models of scientific rationalisation. In *Modernism* (2005), Tim Armstrong has observed that modernist primitivism ostensibly offers a route back to the "original" and whole self; a vitalist self at one with its sexuality and being, freed from modes of censorship imposed by civilization. To encounter the primitive is to time-travel, returning to earlier stages of human development of which "vestiges" are buried within the psyche.

This thesis will demonstrate that modernist literary life-writing, neurology and medical psychology of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries all shared an obsession with the primitive in this sense as they were all deeply concerned with the buried - pre-mental - layers of selfhood. The 'vestiges' buried inside the self became a key concern for artists and scientists alike, and these vestiges destabilised and challenged the idea of a rational mind.

David Trotter has offered an alternative model of modernist primitivism which he calls 'Techno-Primitivism'. This is based on a reading of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* and places Lawrence's primitivism (as a model for modernism’s primitivism) firmly within the technological world of modernity, arguing that modernist primitivism cannot be seen entirely as a rejection of technology, civilization and the modern world. Perhaps this is why the body was so frequently conceived of in technological terms during this period, as

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Laura Otis, Sara Danius, Tim Armstrong and others have observed. Armstrong specifically associates both the turn to the primitive and the turn to technology, each key modernist concerns, with mindlessness, the emergence of what he calls 'a world without thinking': 'The confluence of the primitive and the technological [...] is a recurrent motif: both displace the human in favour of an object world, a world without thinking'. John A. Lester has argued that modernist writers were forced to 'dispense with fixity and the absolutes, and to embrace uncertainty', and part of this transformation was being faced with the newly mindless self. How to represent oneself in this 'world without thinking'? 

**Literary Life-Writing**

There has been an ongoing (and problematic) critical association between women and diaries, which form the literary textual focus of half of this thesis. Diaries have frequently been conceived of as both an instinctive and a feminine form, with much of the (limited) criticism available on diaries devoted to writing by women. Although this association between women, diaries and

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instinct is highly problematic, it does point towards why a focus on life-writing might fit particularly well within an account of anti-mental modernism. It is in attempting to represent the so often illogical life in its reality that apparently anti-mental ideas, processes and forms emerge most frequently. In using the term 'literary life-writing' I refer to a variety of autobiographical texts all written by literary writers who also wrote novels and/or poetry, and to texts which disrupt life-writing critic Philippe Lejeuene's conservative notions of a contractual autobiography and what constitutes a 'real' diary.\(^4\)

I focus on the diaries of Woolf and Nin, an autobiographical novel and an autobiographical essay by H.D., and essays and novels by D. H. Lawrence which all contain autobiographical elements. The least straightforwardly autobiographical texts are those by Lawrence. However, *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920) have frequently been described as containing elements of Lawrence's own life-story, and Birkin in *Women in Love* has been described as the 'Lawrence character' in the novel. Lawrence's psychology essays contain an autobiographical section describing Lawrence himself at the time of writing (sitting in a forest) showing that he felt this to be a central aspect of the texts he was composing. All these texts also seek to express Lawrence's life-philosophy and in his essay 'Why the Novel Matters' Lawrence argues that the novel is the only place in which the 'truth of life', so central to his vision, can be fully expressed, leading to the potential for understanding his novels as a form of 'life-writing'.\(^4\)

Furthermore, one of Lawrence's biographers, John Worthen, has written that Lawrence 'made his writing his

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life (and his life his writing) to a remarkable degree'. This remark could apply to any of the writers I am considering here, and my primary concern in reading all of their texts is with how these writers represented their versions of selfhood. These often clustered around their own self-representations and their perceptions of their own lives and being, which manifested themselves in a number of life-writing forms. Towards the end of this thesis, the very compatibility of textuality and the anti-mental - an issue brought to focus through focusing on life-writing forms, particularly diaries - will become a key concern.

This reading of diaries, essays and novels which are all autobiographical to differing degrees and in differing ways under the heading of literary life-writing is guided by Max Saunders's work in *Self Impression* (2010) in which he argues that the autobiographical was at the heart of modernist literature. This, he explains, 'extends the reach of autobiography, to cover genres not normally thought of as autobiographic. But it simultaneously calls the autobiographical into question'. Examining 'the profusion of modern literature's experiments with life-writing', Saunders argues that 'the autobiographical is central to modernist narrative'. Perhaps one of the reasons for this shift to the autobiographical within modernism was the newly anti-mental status ascribed to the mind by neurological discourses. Saunders cites 'a crisis of self and personality' as being central to modernism's shift to 'autobiographic writing' and 'autobiografiction', and the neurological and psychological developments I am describing formed an aspect of this crisis. As Saunders himself writes: 'the pressures of secularisation and psychological theory unsettled the categories of biography and autobiography and [...] this disturbance stirred up a proliferation of fictional experiments with the forms of life-writing'. 'Scepticism about the notion of the self as essential produces an awareness of performativity'. Therefore, literary life-writing is the perfect

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51 Ibid., pp. 8; 12.
52 Ibid., p. 506.
53 Ibid., p. 16.
54 Ibid., p. 500.
lens through which to examine the modernist anti-mental, which emerged out of discourses which undermined the essential nature of self and mind.  

For Saunders, ‘[l]ate-nineteenth-century autobiographies such as those by Mill, Ruskin, and Nietzsche move away from a sense of the self as essential, given, and intelligible, and towards narratives of multiplicity, uncertainty, breakdown and loss’. This uncertainty, breakdown and loss was also emerging out of neurological discourses which were beginning to describe apparently subjective experiences in terms of random physiological processes, giving them a bleak, biological randomness potentially devoid of intelligibility. However, as this thesis suggests, by the early-twentieth century this uncontrollable, anti-mental self was often being described as anything but bleak. For Lawrence, H.D., Woolf and Nin in their life-writings, as well as for clinicians with whom they associated - Havelock Ellis, Henry Head and Otto Rank - the unintelligible anti-mental self began to emerge as a cause for celebration and/or further investigation.

Saunders writes that ‘one story traced here is of how the progressive interiorisation of autobiography makes "truth" an increasingly private quality’. If one important aspect of modernism is an inwards turn, a focus on subjectivity or interiorisation, then one of my key concerns here is to give a picture of the ways in which this new landscape of the interior was dissociated from traditional models of the mind and mentality. This focus on subjectivity or the interior is also a key element of the anti-mental modernism I am portraying. This is brought to the fore by the title of Saunders’s book; in calling his book Self Impression, Saunders places impressionism, along with the autobiographical, at the heart of his account of modernism. This is a move also made by Jesse Matz in Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics (2001),

55 The focus on life-writing, or self-representation/expression as a key modernist concern is seemingly at odds with the strand of modernism concerned with what has been called ‘impersonality’. Rochelle Rives writes that ‘[t]he modernist distrust of "self-expression" and its connection to control and authority, to "being ruled," is especially typified in [...] texts by Eliot and Lewis’ (Rochelle Rives, Modernist Impersonalities: Affect, Authority, and the Subject (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 7.) However, it is also conceivable that so-called ‘modernist impersonality' - as a response to the increasingly explicit prominence of the "personality" in twentieth-century political, aesthetic, and literary culture' (Rives, Modernist Impersonalities, p. 2) is connected to the modernist anti-mentality which I am describing here. Both reject traditional structures of selfhood.

56 Saunders, Self Impression, p. 501.

57 Ibid., p. 524.
a book which will be central to my argument in chapter three that there is something specifically modernist about the sensory self-observation of both Woolf and Head. For Matz, literary impressionism is central to modernist aesthetics. Matz explains that in 'painting [...] impressions are momentary brushstrokes' and in 'philosophy, [...] impressions are primary sensations'. However, he distinguishes '[t]he literary Impressionists [who] meant that fiction should locate itself where we "have an impression": not in sense, nor in thought, but in the feeling that comes between; not in the moment that passes, nor in the decision that lasts, but in the intuition that lingers'. Here Matz specifically describes modernist literature as being involved in neither sense nor thought - apparently mental activities - but instead as being concerned with feeling and intuition. I want to extend Matz’s claim that modernism partly involved (and perhaps involves) neither sense nor thought beyond fiction, which Matz focuses on, arguing that this retreat from sense and thought was a central facet in modernism’s turn to life-writing. In chapter three in particular I argue that focusing on Woolf’s diaries as modernist texts brings these aspects of modernism even more sharply into focus.

Matz also describes a 'familiar problem' which his book attempts to deal with: 'the problem thinkers have sought to solve ever since the "aesthetic" emerged to mediate between human reason and alien nature, between the forms of thought and the content of the world'. The focus on 'life-writing' is a focus on texts which aim to move away from 'the forms of thought' towards 'the content of the world'. Matz also asks whether the impression - and therefore a model of modernism which is based around the impression - might not involve 'a sensualist debasement of the writer’s mind or require a sensitivity of which that mind may not be capable', and therefore whether modernism might not ‘render intellectual habits [...] obsolete?’ In calling the writers considered here modernist I understand them to be involved (to varying degrees) in this debasement of the mind which Matz describes as being a central aspect of impressionistic modernist aesthetics.

59 Ibid., p. 1.
60 Ibid., p. 11.
61 Ibid., p. 17.
The focus on life-writing and the impression also places the self at the centre of the strand of modernism I am focusing on. In *Place and Space in Modern Fiction* (2004), Wesley Kort identifies 'the self, subjectivity, and the personal' as one of the two main modernist sites.\(^{62}\) For Kort, the interior stands in opposition to the 'massive modern' found in the other key modernist location: the metropolis of modernity.\(^{63}\) Placing selfhood in opposition to the city connects this aspect of modernism with modernist primitivism which was also reacting against or retreating from modernisation. Selfhood, and the attempt to offer what they considered to be a 'true' representation of it was a key concern shared by Lawrence, H.D., Woolf and Nin.

The apparently modernist preoccupation with depicting consciousness in order to portray the truth of selfhood is often traced back to Virginia Woolf's call to modern novelists in her essay 'Modern Fiction' (1925):

> Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness.\(^ {64}\)

In this thesis, however, I will ask what happens to the tracing of the pattern made by the atoms upon the mind in a context in which neurological developments have led to the mind becoming other than itself (anti-mental) because these developments established the non-mental roots from which the mind had subsequently evolved.

**The Anti-Mental, Dualism, and Portrayals of the 'Freudian Unconscious'**

Due to the developmental account of the nervous system from which it emerges, perhaps the 'anti-mental' might be better described as the ante-mental or proto-mental. However, I retain anti-mental as a term because the purely physiological and bodily aspects of the human were conceived of as non-mental and therefore the mind - a concept which had emerged from Cartesian and metaphysical models - became strangely anti-mental as it was

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\(^{63}\) Kort, *Place and Space in Modern Fiction*, p. 207.

rooted in the materiality of the body. Therefore, as the mind became 'anti-mental', the body itself simultaneously became the very stuff of mentation.

The model of mind and the mental which the 'anti-mental' sets itself against is profoundly Cartesian and metaphysical, and is one which privileges volition, rationality, intellectualism, the cerebral and cognition. The anti-mental, therefore, describes states or processes which are bodily and often non-rational, non-cerebral, non-intellectual, non-volitional, and non-cognitive. It also describes states or processes which are potentially involved in mentality but which disregard definitions and models of the mind or the mental which focus on volition, cognition, rationality and intentionality. Moreover, the anti-mental specifically places itself in opposition to versions of the mind and the mental which are Cartesian and metaphysical. The anti-mental as a term relies on these Cartesian and rational models of the mind and mentality because they proved so influential in constructing definitions of mind and mentality used by writers during the time in question, even as they were apparently in decline. Many of the figures considered in this thesis describe apparent states of mindlessness which in fact have the potential to be deeply mental. States described here as non- or anti-mental are only 'mindless' in the sense that they work against models of the mind which rely of volition, cognition, intentionality and metaphysical, Cartesian models of the mind.

The anti-mental, therefore, is not in fact strictly and necessarily non-mental. Rather, I use it as a strategic term in this thesis in order to describe a transitional period when the older understandings of the mind and mentality - which the anti-mental works against - were being replaced with newer models of the mind and mentality. Therefore, in using anti-mental as a term it is necessary to disregard definitions of mind which have become particularly popular in recent years which constitute the mind and mentality as fundamentally embodied and potentially involving impulse, feeling, the non-rational and an absence of intentionality or intelligibility. At the same time, however, the anti-mental is used as a term to capture the very transition and shift towards this newer, embodied, model of the mind. My use of 'anti-mental' demonstrates how, for the key figures in this thesis, the mind was, in fact, fundamentally embodied and constituted by elements that were understood precede, but also subtend, the supposedly 'higher' faculties which
had previously been understood as the exclusive domain of the mind. Therefore, states which were understood or perceived as mindless are described in this way precisely because this was a moment of transition; that which appeared to be non- or anti-mental was in fact the mind or mentality appearing in a newly embodied, and potentially non-cognitive guise.

In using the term 'the anti-mental' another key concern is to establish something akin to a non-Freudian, more explicitly physical and less ideational, version of the unconscious within modernism. In chapter one I will offer a full account of Freud's unconscious (from his 1915 essay 'The Unconscious') and how it relates to and differs from the model of the unconscious offered by Hughlings Jackson which is unambiguously anti-mental. All of the neurologists and psychologists who I focus on here offer models of the unconscious which either precede or reject the Freudian model in some way. Therefore, a new term (the anti-mental) is required in order to sidestep the strong Freudian associations which are bound up with the term 'the unconscious'.

The anti-mental emerges specifically through focusing on neurology and medical psychology alongside one another. Taylor’s review of Les Noces establishes his belief that the ‘sub-conscious, root’ state he experienced was associated with the nerves and not the mind whilst simultaneously being associated, somehow, with the intellect. The new importance which the emerging discourse of neurology gave to the nerves in the formation and perception of the mind was a central force in the way in which the mind suddenly became other than the (Cartesian) mind through its newly material status, evidenced by titles such as George Henry Lewes’s The Physical Basis of Mind (1877).

As the title of Jenny Bourne Taylor and Sally Shuttleworth’s exceptionally helpful anthology Embodied Selves: An Anthology of Psychological Texts 1830-1890 suggests, nineteenth-century psychology (as well as neurology) engendered a profound embodiment of the self. This was

65 It should be pointed out that the Freudian rather than the Jungian unconscious is my point of departure in this thesis. Jung does not feature frequently in this thesis, although he is mentioned a few times. Further analysis of Jung, and his conception of the unconscious (such as outlined in Psychology of the Unconscious) would no doubt be a fruitful area of further enquiry. See: C. G. Jung, Psychology of the Unconscious: A Study of the Transformations and Symbolisms of the Libido, A Contribution to the History of the Evolution of Thought (1912), trans. Beatrice M. Hinkle (London: Kegan Paul Trench, Truber, 1933).

because, as they argue, 'psychology contributed to an organic social theory in which the whole body, not just the brain, was seen as a collection of conscious and unconscious processes, linking the individual life to a collective narrative of change'. The nerves and neurology were at the centre of this psychological story of embodiment, which was so influential for modernism. The anti-mental as a term gathers together not only states which were perceived as being other than the mind, but also models of mind which can incorporate supposedly non-mental physical and neurological processes. However, I am aware that as a term, the anti-mental does re-inscribe dualism to a certain extent, but this is also appropriate as, despite its apparent dismantlement, dualism as an idea lingered within neurology and medical psychology, sometimes being loudly declared, and sometimes haunting and distorting declarations which seemed to oppose it.

The anti-mental, and neurology, both relate to what Harold B. Segel has called 'the extraordinary modernist preoccupation with physicality'. However, few works have focused on the central role of neurology within modernist embodiment. Although Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail, in their

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68 Harold B. Segel, Body Ascendant: Modernism and the Physical Imperative (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), p. 1. Elsewhere, Ulrika Maude has written that developments such as the discovery of the X ray in 1895 changed the way the body was perceived. Maude explains that this invention ‘made human beings more aware of their embodied state of being by revealing physiological processes and detailed anatomical information previously unavailable in living subjects’ (Ulrika Maude, ‘Modernist Bodies: Coming to Our Senses’, The Body and the Arts, eds. Corinne Saunders, Ulrika Maude and Jane Macnaughton (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 116-130 (p. 118). Maude’s focus on technology and the body draws upon work done by Sara Danius and Tim Armstrong in The Senses of Modernism and Modernism, Technology and the Body. Other works on modernism and embodiment have also appeared, for example: Renée Dickinson, Female Embodiment and Subjectivity in the Modernist Novel: The Corporeum of Virginia Woolf and Olive Moore (London: Routledge, 2009). However, neurology has rarely featured prominently in these works on modernism and the body/embodiment.

69 One particular reason why this seems surprising is the important influence which Henry Head had on Maurice Merleau-Ponty, whose work is a driving force behind many works in this critical turn. For example, Maude explains that in Phenomenology of Perception Merleau-Ponty argues that ‘the body, instead of being a mere object in the world, forms the foundation of all human experience’ (Maude, ‘Modernist Bodies: Coming to Our Senses’, The Body and the Arts, 116). In 1945 Merleau-Ponty posited that ‘we are conscious of the world through our bodies, or even more accurately, the body is the very condition of our having a world’ (Maude, ‘Modernist Bodies: Coming to Our Senses’, The Body and the Arts, 116). See: M. Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology
introduction to *Neurology and Modernity* (2010), have shown that ‘[t]he mid-nineteenth century, then, was the period when neurology became a distinct and, we will argue, a dominant mode for representing the more general vagaries of the embodied and mental life of the modern self’, thus establishing the fundamental role which neurology played in the merging of 'the embodied and mental life', and stating the central role which neurology played in modernist embodiment.  

This merging of the embodied and mental life meant that dualism was a fraught notion in psychological and neurological circles during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Psychoanalytic historian John Forrester has written of ‘the uncompromising dualism that Freud retained throughout his life’, and in 1930 Otto Rank spoke of ‘an inherent dualism in psychology’. However, as Forrester points out, Freud was apparently going against the contemporary intellectual trend for monism in clinging to dualism. Forrester offers a number of examples of nineteenth-century materialists who were not dualists such as Henri Bergson (1859-1941). Judith Ryan also points us towards anti-dualist psychological thinkers in *The Vanishing Subject* (1991), citing the examples of empiricist psychologists William James (1842-1910) and Ernest Mach (1838-1916) who rejected the notion of a metaphysical reality which existed beyond the senses.

This divergence between dualism and non-dualism created a psychology with an ambivalent relationship with the body. As Matthew Thomson has written, ‘[a]s a science, psychology has redefined human nature and reconstituted the body’. Yet it remained an area which ‘specialise[d] in the study of the mind’. After experimental psychology had been established,
with the opening of Wilhelm Wundt’s inaugural psychological laboratory in 1879, investigations focused on what Thomson calls ‘mental activities, such as perception, memory, and wilful inhibition’. He argues that ‘psychologists accepted the dualist nature of human existence - a mental sphere running parallel to the merely physical’ despite the fact that ‘the physiological paradigm also raised the question of how brain and mind were linked’. I introduce the anti-mental as a concept in part to emphasise the profound connection between psychology and the body which emerged at the same time as psychology declared itself to be a discourse of mind, as well as to emphasise its extreme interest in states such as loss of volitional will and irrationality which were akin to the anti-mental states of being sought out or embraced by certain modernist writers.

What does all of this mean for notions of unconsciousness? Seen in this light, the concept of the unconscious mind, so commonly used by critics in relation to the Freudian unconscious (even though Freud himself did not speak of unconscious states of mind, only unconscious ideas), becomes obsolete. For example, in establishing Freud as ‘the one figure who all reviews of Modernism privilege’, Peter Childs explains that his work must be understood in the context of other psychological thinkers who were involved in ‘the general increased level of inquiry at the turn of the century into the workings of the mind and its relation to society’. Childs describes the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries as a period which was ‘marked by a hunger for interpretation, and an urge to decode societies, minds and personalities’. Childs’s focus here is exclusively on the mind. However, in Hughlings Jackson’s work (which was influential for Freud’s notion of the unconscious), unconsciousness is specifically anti-mental as Hughlings Jackson did not believe in unconscious states of mind (see chapter one). Considered in this light the unconscious becomes an anti-mental force, and I will explore the ways in which, in the wake of neurological shifts pioneered by Hughlings Jackson and others, this anti-mental, non- (or ambiguously) Freudian unconscious was

75 Ibid., p. 292.
76 Ibid., p. 292 (all quotations). The first experimental psychology laboratory in Britain did not open until 1912 when it was established in Cambridge by C. S. Myers and W. H. R. Rivers.
78 Childs, Modernism, p. 57.
celebrated and placed at the centre of the self by modernist writers and early-twentieth-century medical psychologists.

The problem of dualism and the mind in relation to unconsciousness is also dealt with and demonstrated by Lancelot Law Whyte, in one of the foundational historical studies of the unconscious, *The Unconscious Before Freud* (1960). In his critique of dualism, Whyte constantly reinstates it, demonstrating just how entrenched it is in self-conception and the idea of 'the unconscious mind'. Whyte explains:

> Certainly the terms "conscious," "unconscious," "subconscious," and "preconscious," though valuable, are not entirely satisfactory [...] Until we can identify a law covering all mental processes, definitions cannot do more than flatter us into imagining we are thinking properly, when we are not.80

However, bringing neurology, an apparently bodily discourse seemingly concerned only with matter (although in reality one oddly haunted by psychology and the mind) explicitly into this story, forces us to think about what happens to unconsciousness when it is not conceived as a 'mental process' (as here) but as a potentially non- or anti-mental one as well.

Despite his focus on 'mental processes' when conceiving of the unconscious, Whyte's approach is profoundly anti-dualist: 'To postulate the existence of two separate realms, as Descartes did, may prove one of the fundamental blunders made by the human mind'. Yet as he makes this statement he reinforces dualism by using 'mind' as a metonym for humanity / selfhood, a linguistic turn he takes repeatedly throughout his book, despite arguing that 'a unified theory is possible and lies ahead, in which "material"

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81 Ibid., p. 26, my italics.
and "mental," "conscious" and "unconscious," aspects will be derivable as related components of one primary system of ideas’.\(^8\) He also argues that the very emergence of the unconscious mind is the product of Descartes' separation of mind and matter, and that within a monist paradigm, the unconscious mind would be nonsensical:

Prior to Descartes and his sharp definition of the dualism there was no cause to contemplate the possible existence of unconscious mentality as part of a separate realm of mind [...] Until an attempt had been made (with apparent success) to choose awareness as the defining characteristic of an independent mode of being called mind, there was no occasion to invent the idea of unconscious mind as a provisional correction of that choice.\(^8\)

Therefore, in the post-Cartesian world inaugurated by Darwinism and neurology, there was a demand for a new conception of the so-called 'unconscious mentality', which is where the anti-mental steps in, as it hopes to describe unconsciousness in a way which does not depend on this Cartesian conception of mind, and also to challenge the very idea of 'unconscious mentality'. Furthermore, it is also fitting that the 'anti-mental' as a term should (as Whyte does) re-assert dualism as it seeks to move away from it because despite the fact that neurological developments were placing the mind within the material body, Cartesianism was not, as a means of self conception, shaken off lightly, and it had a profound influence on the way in which 'mind' continued to be understood as a category involving awareness. The persistence of Cartesian dualism as a mode of self conception is demonstrated through the number of studies dedicated to dismantling it. These persisted not only during the period in question, but also into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries with influential figures such as Gilbert Ryle writing on 'Descartes Myth' in 1949 and Antonio Damasio on Descartes Error in 1995.\(^8\)

Freud's unconscious has, of course, already been understood in relation to a preoccupation which certain modernists had with irrationality. For example, Dorothy Ross quotes from H. Stuart Hughes's Consciousness and

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\(^8\) Ibid., p. 19, original italics.
\(^8\) Ibid., p. 28.
Hughes ‘understood the subjectivity of the generation of the 1890s as emotion, irrationality, and “supra- or infra-rational values.” Hence “the towering figure of era” was Sigmund Freud, whose discovery of the unconscious exposed the power of irrationality in human nature, the human nature of both social scientific observers and the social-political actors they studied.85

However, here, I will focus on a non-Freudian celebration of the irrational, and question the association (asserted through the language of some critics) between unconsciousness and the mind. In doing so I explore how the anti-mental was embraced and placed at the centre of selfhood by both writers and psychological or neurological clinicians of varying sorts, establishing a modernist tradition which spans medicine and the arts, and incorporates but transcends a focus on Freudianism, in which the rational faculties and thought have been dethroned, meaning that their absence is no longer understood to be entirely negative, but instead forms the core and foundations of human selfhood.

Of course, others have placed the non- or anti- mental at the centre of their discourses. Perhaps the most famous example from the period I am examining is in the work of Henri Bergson. For Bergson, people are much more than ‘pure intellects’, and he therefore focuses on a vitalistic account of selfhood.86 Bergson distinguishes ‘life’ from ‘intellect’ ‘[i]n order to transcend the point of view of the understanding’.87 Bergson’s belief that ‘the intellect has been formed, by an uninterrupted process, along a line which ascends through the vertebrate series up to man’ has frequently been explored in relation to modernism.88 What has been less often explored is the neurology which was part of what paved the way for and enabled such conclusions.

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85 Ross, Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences 1870-1930, p. 5.
87 Ibid., pp. xiv-xv.
More recently, Julia Kristeva has emphasised the anti-mental elements of experience in her psychoanalytic / linguistic of the semiotic which is non-cognitive and dependent on a version of subjectivity which transcends rational understanding:

The kinetic functional stage of the semiotic precedes the establishment of the sign; it is not therefore, cognitive in the sense of being assumed by a knowing, already constituted subject. The genesis of the functions organizing the semiotic process can be accurately elucidated only within a theory of the subject that does not reduce the subject to one of understanding, but instead opens up within the subject this other scene of pre-symbolic functions.  

Recent affect theory has also celebrated such states, although as Constantina Papoulias and Felicity Callard have argued in their excellent article, 'Biology's Gift', affect theory frequently involves a misunderstanding of contemporary science. This thesis is emphatically not affect theory, nor do I wish to situate myself in this critical tradition, although my creation of the anti-mental as a historically situated term does resound with some of the key concerns of this contemporary movement in theory. Elizabeth Wilson, influenced by affect theory's focus on the biological body, has argued for what she calls 'organic thought' (she argues that the gut can think) based on Sandor Ferenczi's (1873 - 1933) notion of the 'biological unconscious'. Wilson's work also aims to dismantle theoretical frameworks in which mind is conceptualised as being in opposition to body and biology, as well as criticising work which focuses on 'the body' without taking the body's biological and neurological realities into account.

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91 This notion of a thinking gut can be traced back to the 1921 discovery of the enteric nervous system, something which is crucial to Wilson's work. The enteric nervous system (the nervous system of the gut) operates independently of the central nervous system and brain and has thus been called the 'second brain'. It is a key site for further exploration of anti-mentality. Jean Walton has written about this in her article 'Modernity and the Peristaltic Subject' in *Neurology and Modernity* (pp. 245-266) in which she refers to J. N. Langley's book *The Automatic Nervous System* (1921) as it traces this enteric nervous system, a key site of apparent 'anti-mentality'.
My use of the anti-mental looks back past Freud to Hughlings Jackson who explicitly rejected unconscious states of mind in a move which meant that unconsciousness must be other than mind, and was in turn very influential for Freud’s early work (see chapter one). Taking this as a starting point I use it as a means through which to gather together some of the various ways in which twentieth-century modernist writers, neurologists and medical psychologists represented and approached states which were understood or perceived to be other than the mind, or rejected states traditionally understood to be of the mind, such as volition. This is means of focusing on the instincts and the unconscious in a manner which takes Freud into account but does not give him a central place. My approach also allows medical psychology and neurology to be read alongside one another, through paying attention to the physical basis of the mind which came to form the core of each discourse, paradoxically undermining and affirming dualism in the process.

The Nerves and the Mind, Neurology and Medical Psychology

Our contemporary view posits neurology and psychology (or psychiatry) as rather different - if not opposing - endeavours because the former supposedly deals with the material brain and nervous system, and the latter apparently with the mind or psyche. For example, in a recent review of the DSM-5 (the diagnostic handbook for American psychiatrists) in The London Review of Books, Ian Hacking speculates that in the coming years 'neurological causes [...] will gradually conquer more and more of psychiatry'.\(^92\) For neurological conquest to be a risk to psychiatry the two must be understood as having totally different - if not opposing - methods and concerns.

In the period 1860-1939, however, the nerves and the mind, and with them the disciplinary practices of neurology, psychiatry and psychology, had a complex and ever-changing relationship which very much depended on who was speaking and when, and was never articulated in a fully comprehensive manner. Trying to disentangle or work out their relationship is a highly confusing and complex enterprise, as historians of medicine have already

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\(^{92}\) Ian Hacking, 'Lost in the Forest', The London Review of Books (8 August 2013), Kindle Version.
observed. Neurology and psychology (and associated fields such as sexology, psychoanalysis and psychiatry) were all connected to one another and they had varying (and often unclear) allegiances with either mind, matter or both. As medical historian Roger Smith has written of the period around the turn of the twentieth century: 'Neurophysiology, general physiology, neurology, psychiatry, experimental psychology, and philosophy [...] The relations between these activities were themselves unclear and contested' and '[t]he division between what was properly a physiological and what was properly a psychological subject was contested. There was no consensus'. Janet Oppenheim also attests to this, stating that there was a 'considerable area of ambiguity between psychological illness and physiological disorder [which...] deeply perplexed Victorian medical practitioners'. And although she argues that 'by the end of the [1914-1918] war [...] British psychiatry and neurology [had been driven] apart', I believe that despite this, remnants of the confusion of the Victorian and Edwardian decades continued to haunt both disciplines after the war, and that the neurology-psychology relationship was never (and still is not) completely unambiguous.

Although all of the literary writing examined here is from the twentieth century, this thesis takes its starting point as 1860 because it was in this year that the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic in Queen Square, London (today called The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, a name which came into use in 1988) first opened its doors to patients. The hospital had been founded the previous year, which had also seen the publication of Darwin's On the Origin of Species (1859). As this suggests, evolution would play a central role in the early years of professional neurology.

We are used to placing the literary foundations of modernism in the mid- to

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93 The works of Roger Smith and Janet Oppenheim both provide particularly good explanations of this confusing and entwined relationship during this period: Roger Smith, Inhibition: History and Meaning in the Sciences of Mind and Brain (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992) and Janet Oppenheim, 'Shattered Nerves': Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
94 Smith, Inhibition, pp. 113, 142.
95 Oppenheim, 'Shattered Nerves', p. 7.
96 Ibid., p. 30.
late-nineteenth century, so it seems fitting to locate its neurological foundations in this period as well.\textsuperscript{98}

Gordon Holmes has written that '[n]eurology, or the study of the nervous system in health and disease, was still in its infancy when the National Hospital opened its doors to patients in 1860'.\textsuperscript{99} However, neurology in fact already had a rich and far-reaching history by 1860, as a number of medical historians and cultural critics have observed.\textsuperscript{100} For example, George Rousseau, whose excellent studies of eighteenth century nervous medical and literary cultures have paved the way in this field, has traced the history of the nerves and the self all the way back to ancient times, beginning his account with classical philosophers such as Aristotle.\textsuperscript{101} Rousseau cites John Evelyn who, in a religious tract dating from the 1670s, wrote that '[t]he soul, as seated more conspicuously in the brain, does, by the originated neurology, give intercourse to the animal spirits'.\textsuperscript{102} Rousseau comments that Evelyn 'seems to be up to the minute in his anatomy. He knows that the soul has relocated to the brain'.\textsuperscript{103}

Evelyn's remark, and the relocation of the soul to the brain during the seventeenth century, was influenced by the work of Thomas Willis (1621-1675). Willis has been described by the medical historian William Feindel as 'the founder of neurology' (a similar accolade to 'father of neurology' which has been given to Hughlings Jackson).\textsuperscript{104} Feindel writes of Willis: 'In his famous \textit{Cerebri Anatome} of 1664, Willis coined the term "neurology" to mean the

\textsuperscript{98} For example, in Peter Nicholls's \textit{Modernisms}, he locates the origins of modernism in Baudelaire's poem of 1845/6 poem 'To a Red-Haired Beggar Girl' (Nicholls, \textit{Modernisms}, p. 1).

\textsuperscript{99} Holmes, \textit{The National Hospital Queen Square}, p. 1.


\textsuperscript{101} Rousseau, \textit{Nervous Acts}, pp. 1-80. Rousseau's work has generally been pioneering in the field of literature and medicine. See, for example, G. S. Rousseau, 'Literature and Medicine: Towards a Simultaneity of Theory and Practice', \textit{Literature and Medicine}, 5 (1986), 152-181, which led the way in the burgeoning field of literature and medicine which today is so strong and active.

\textsuperscript{102} John Evelyn, quoted in Rousseau, \textit{Nervous Acts}, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{103} Rousseau, \textit{Nervous Acts}, p. 3.

doctrine (or teaching) of the nerves. For these writings and for his astute clinical observations on disorders of the nervous system, he has been reasonably claimed as the founder of neurology. Feindel locates the roots of our contemporary understanding of the brain and nervous system in Willis's work from the 1660s and 1670s.

However, despite its long reaching history, neurology nevertheless underwent profound shifts during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which disturbed the supremacy of the brain. In explaining Evelyn’s reaction to Willis’s work, Rousseau writes that 'by "originated" he implies that the brain is the source of everything occurring in the body: all physiological processes'. However, as Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail have illuminated, '[i]n the second half of the eighteenth century [...] neurology began to disrupt this dictatorship of the brain'. This marked a decisive turning point. In their introduction to Neurology and Modernity, Salisbury and Shail offer a concise history of the neurological developments preceding and during the period 1800-1950. The shift away from the brain to the nerves meant 'a new autonomy for the nerves' and eighteenth century physiologists such as William Cullen (1710-1790) began to conceive of nerves as 'a non-conscious brain diffused through the body'. By the late eighteenth-century '[n]erves were now seen as communicating with each other rather than simply running the errands of the brain'. The brain, and with it the centrality of conscious volition and intention, left centre stage. This was a key development for the rise of modernist anti-mentality.

A decisive shift in neurology was Charles Bell's The Nervous System of the Human Body (1830) in which he distinguished the sensory and motor functions of the nervous systems. Salisbury and Shail locate another important shift in the 1830s: Marshall Hall’s publication on the reflex arc (1832): 'The reflex arc was, he argued, a property of the spinal marrow which

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106 Feindel's essays is the first in A Short History of Neurology which traces these developments up until 1910.
108 Salisbury and Shail, 'Introduction' to Neurology and Modernity, p.12.
109 Ibid., p. 15.
110 Ibid., p. 16.
111 Holmes, The National Hospital Queen Square, p. 4.
turned sensation directly into action without that sensation needing to pass via the brain'. The reflex arc was renamed the diastaltic nervous system by Hall in 1850, and this, combined with the work of Laycock and William Benjamin Carpenter in the 1840s, which pointed out that 'the brain was merely an upward developmental extension of the spinal cord' meant that neurology was changed forever, having already undergone a series of revolutions in which the anti-mental asserted itself, before the National Hospital was founded in 1859.

Despite the important developments which had taken place in previous centuries, as well as earlier in the nineteenth century, the 1860s marked a turning point in neurology for two main reasons: evolution and professionalization. As I will explore further in my opening chapter which deals with John Hughlings Jackson, he was a, if not the, central figure in terms of bringing both of these factors to British neurology during in this period. Hughlings Jackson’s 'long connection with the National Hospital began in 1862' and during his time at the hospital he published many influential texts on the evolution of the nervous system. After the National Hospital opened its doors to patients, '[t]he years between 1870 and 1890 saw the emergence of a critical and mature neurological profession in Britain', as medical historian W. F. Bynum has written. The evolutionary turn in neurology, inaugurated by the work of the 1840s came to maturity in the neurology of John Hughlings Jackson, which I will explore further in chapter one.

Cerebral localisation was also a key trend in late-nineteenth century neurology and this has been emphasised by Anne Stiles and others. Experiments carried out by physiologists such as Pierre Paul Broca (1824-1880), Gustav Fritsch (1838-1927) and Eduard Hitzig (1839-1907) which located specific functions such as speech and movement in particular areas of the

112 Salisbury and Shail, 'Introduction' to Neurology and Modernity, p. 18.
113 Ibid., pp. 19; 21.
114 Holmes, The National Hospital Queen Square, p. 31.
116 The neurology of cerebral localisation is ostensibly the key concern of Anne Stiles’s recent book Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
brain exhibit this approach. However, historians of neurology such as John Forrester, Robert M. Young and L. S. Jacyna have tended to place Hughlings Jackson outside of this tradition due to either his psycho-physical parallelism or because of his holism, which emphasised the importance of patient stories alongside localising their lesion. Henry Head followed Hughlings Jackson in his rejection of localisation and practice of holist neurology.

Another factor which affected late-nineteenth-century neurology was the growth of psychology and psychiatry, which I have already touched upon. W. F. Bynum has traced the entangled histories of neurology and psychiatry in the late-nineteenth century, observing that when the neurological journal *Brain* was founded in 1878 it was ‘initially edited by two psychiatrists and two neurologists’. He observes that,

> in 1800 the "nervous doctor" had treated functional diseases of the nervous system, whereas psychiatrists had confidence in the underlying organic nature of the diseases which concerned them. By the century’s end, the roles were reversed: nerve doctors - neurologists - were concerned primarily with organic diseases, whereas the psychiatrists had accepted the reality of primary mental disease and were the principal doctors for nervous patients.  

This was a complex situation which gave rise to many paradoxes, amongst them Hughlings Jackson’s work.

Hughlings Jackson insisted that the mind was not the concern of neurologists, and that neurologists ought to study the physical and not psychological causes and symptoms of diseases. As George K York and David A Steinberg have explained, Hughlings Jackson’s work ‘further separated the disciplines of neurology and psychiatry conceptually and institutionally’. Yet at the same time, Hughlings Jackson brought seemingly psychic phenomena such as what he termed ‘dreamy states’ into the realm of neurology. Despite

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Hughlings Jackson’s assertion that neurologists ought to study disease in ‘a purely materialistic manner’ (seemingly excluding the psychological), Jacyna explains that ‘what was said to distinguish Jackson’s contribution to the field was his insistence on the need to consider the psychological aspects of aphasic disorders’. This meant that Hughlings Jackson was inserting psychology into neurology whilst he was removing it, a paradox which has caused no small amount of conceptual difficulty, and makes Hughlings Jackson’s work often rather wordy and difficult to read. As Forrester writes, Hughlings Jackson 'both secured neurology against a creeping psychologism and opened the door to a fully fledged psychology of aphasia'.

Neurologists such as Hughlings Jackson removed and inserted psychology into the practice of neurological medicine in the late-nineteenth century. At a Medico-Psychological association meeting in 1881, Daniel Hack Tuke (co-author with John Charles Bucknill of the 1858 A Manual of Psychological Medicine) apparently made remarks which ‘illustrate their [the society's] conviction that psychiatry and neurology were merely two aspects of a common enterprise’. The founding of another medical-psychological association in 1919, the medical section of the British Psychological Society (BPS), led by C. S. Myers, W. H. R. Rivers and Ernest Jones, had, in a sense, a similar effect, only this time the new discipline of psychoanalysis also formed a central aspect of the picture. John Forrester has traced, in a wonderfully rich and detailed article, how the founding of the medical psychological section of the BPS in 1919 explicitly brought together psychology, psychoanalysis, sexology, neurology and other branches of medicine. It also gave rise to the new category of medical psychology, which I adopt in this thesis to apply to a field which, although psychoanalysis was certainly a part of it, also extended far beyond the reaches of conventional psychoanalysis to include figures as

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123 Forrester, Language and the Origins of Psychoanalysis, p. 18. There will be more detail about Hughlings Jackson in chapter one.
diverse as Havelock Ellis, Henry Head, W. H. R. Rivers, and Otto Rank (although these figures were not all actually members of the medical section of the BPS). The founding of the medical section of the BPS broadened psychology out of the laboratory and into the clinic where, amongst other things, it met with neurology and modernism. Forrester emphasises the uniqueness of this 'brief period of fluidity after the Great War' challenging Oppenheim's assertion that by the time of the Great War, neurology and psychology had gone their separate ways.\textsuperscript{126}

W. H. R. Rivers, who will emerge again in the chapter on Woolf and Head as Head's co-experimenter, is an excellent case in point. His life merged neurology, anthropology, psychology, and more, in a way which was typical of this 'period of fluidity' which was so preoccupied with primitivism. Rivers was a central figure in the emergence of cultural anthropology and experimental psychology in Britain in the first half of the twentieth century. In 1889 he was invited to become a resident at Bart's and in 1891 he became a resident at Queen Square National Hospital. Here Hughlings Jackson was among his principle mentors and Henry Head was also his colleague.\textsuperscript{127} In 1897 Rivers was given a room in the physiology department at Cambridge for psychological research and he was director of the first two psychological laboratories in Britain, making him an essential part of the establishment of British experimental psychology.\textsuperscript{128} Whilst at Cambridge, Rivers was invited by zoologist A C Haddon to accompany the Cambridge anthropological expedition to the Torres Straits to investigate the primitive behaviours of the islanders. Not content with anthropology, psychology and neurology, Rivers also stood as a labour party candidate and knew Leonard Woolf in this capacity. And his later works, such as \textit{Instinct and the Unconscious: A Contribution to a Biological Theory of the Psycho-Neuroses} (1920), which drew on his experience treating shell shocked patients during the 1914-1918 war, were dedicated 'to the rendering of psychoanalysis in an acceptable "English" form'.\textsuperscript{129}

What then, is the role of Freud in this medical psychology-neurology nexus? Central, certainly, and although Freud is not one of my case studies

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., p. 89.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p. 16.
here, and the anti-mental purposefully seeks to transcend the Freudian unconscious, he nevertheless looms large in the thesis. Mark S. Micale has argued that one of the crucial transformations required if the field of modernism and psychology is to progress is ‘[t]he need to move beyond Freud’. While this is partly true, and there have been numerous studies concerning Freud and literature (and this is partly why I focus on the less well known figures of Hughlings Jackson, Ellis, Head and Rank who have received much less study in relation to modernist literature), it is not entirely true, as Freud simply cannot be left out of any such endeavour. Perhaps what is required, instead, is a new understanding of Freud, one which plays up to the simultaneous merging and converging of neurology and psychology during this period. After all, this was a process in which Freud’s role was central.

Elizabeth Wilson has argued for a new understanding of Freud in her book *Psychosomatic: Feminism and the Neurological Body* (2004), as well as in articles such as ‘Gut Feminism’ (2004), in the hope that this will alter the portrayal of the body in feminist criticism. Partly, her project is a specific backlash against feminist critics’ (such as Elaine Showalter) portrayal of the hysterical body as a non-physical and non-biological entity. But she also covers important aspects of Freud’s career which receive relatively little detailed critical coverage in relation to literature. Wilson begins her account of Freud with his 1878 publication on the nervous system of the lamprey (‘a primitive fish that lacks a jaw and cartilaginous skeleton and has a sucker mouth; it is eel-like in appearance, having scaleless, slimy skin’) rather than with his encounters with hysterical patients in the 1880s and 1890s, as has become customary. Even though she believes that by ’1924 Freud saw anatomy, physiology, and chemistry as demands on - resistances to - psychoanalysis’ - a point which I would contest - the importance of the nervous system of the lamprey, she argues, nevertheless resounds throughout his work, and can help to bring biology and neurology back into feminist accounts of the body. As well as the psyche, and psychological models of ‘the body’, she argues, ‘it is

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131 When citing the need to move beyond Freud, Micale provides a long list of works which have focused on Freud. See Micale, *The Mind of Modernism*, n. 25, p 371.
133 Ibid., p. 2.
important to keep the peripheral nervous system in mind when thinking about the nervous body'.

However, even Wilson’s work subscribes to the dualisms it seeks to undo. In ‘Gut Feminism’, she argues that Freud’s 1893 paper ‘Some Points for a Comparative Study of Organic and Hysterical Motor Paralyses’ ‘incorporates two kinds of Freudian approach to the body - one neurological, one psychological. More specifically,’ she writes, ‘the paper documents Freud’s transition from one mode of analysis (neurological) to another (psychological)’ and asks ‘[w]hat was the nature of that conceptual transition?’ Wilson’s language here reasserts the problem she is attempting to disentangle. Essentially Wilson is arguing for monism but her description of Freud specifically separates neurology and psychology, the apparent discourse of the body and the apparent discourse of the mind. Wilson describes this as a ‘conceptual transition’, and this is exactly what it was. Neurology and psychology were forced apart - and Freud was forced to move from one to the other - due to dictates of language, medicine, and professionalization. This forced a conceptual rupture between the mind and the body which re-asserted Cartesian dualism at the same time as the discoveries of neurologists and psychologists were dismantling this dualism. Wilson calls neurology and psychology ‘mode[s] of analysis’ and it is helpful to bear this in mind when considering the distinction between them. Neurology and psychology were distinct modes of analysis, and they became increasingly so. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the body (nerves) and the mind (psyche) were in reality separated from one another.

This is akin to what Freud said in A Project for a Scientific Psychology (1895) where he explains that ‘[t]he intention is to furnish a psychology that shall be a natural science: that is, to represent psychical processes as quantitatively determinate states of specifiable material particles, thus making those processes perspicuous and free from contradiction’. This text was mostly written as rough notes in letters to Wilhelm Fleiss (1858-1928). As

134 Ibid., p. 13.
Freud’s editor James Strachey explains in his introduction to this text in the *Standard Edition*:

> Anyone who examines the bibliographical indexes to the later volumes of the *Standard Edition* will be surprised to find in every single one of them references, and often very many references, back to the Fleiss letters and to the *Project*. [...] This circumstance is an expression of the remarkable truth that the *Project*, in spite of being ostensibly a neurological document, contains within itself the nucleus of a great part of Freud’s later psychological theories [...] in fact the *Project*, or rather its invisible ghost, haunts the whole series of Freud’s theoretical writings to the very end.\(^{137}\)

This 'invisible ghost' of neurology has continued to haunt psychoanalysis. Based on this, and attempting to transform neurology's presence in psychoanalysis from the ghostly to the concrete, Mark Solms and others have recently founded the field of neuropsychoanalysis, which aims to reunite neurology and psychoanalysis after many years, in line with Freud's original intentions.\(^{138}\) Solms is attempting to bridge the conceptual divide outlined by Wilson in relation to Freud. Neuropsychoanalysis emphasises once more that the divide was a conceptual necessity rather than a clearly defined concrete reality. Catherine Malabou has also recently considered neurology and psychoanalysis alongside one another and has further explored this conceptual divide in her philosophical book *The New Wounded* (2012).\(^{139}\)

> Despite Freud’s importance for this medical-cultural nexus, I will argue that the 'anti-mental' is a specifically non-Freudian form of unconsciousness throughout this thesis. It is a term which emerges through considering medical psychology and neurology alongside one another and as part of one another, focusing attention on their complex - almost incomprehensible - relationship.

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There have been a number of excellent studies which focus on literature and particularly modernist literature in relation to either psychoanalysis or psychology. Perhaps ever since Lionel Trilling wrote that '[t]he Freudian psychology is the only systematic account of the human mind which [...] deserves to stand beside the chaotic mass of psychological insights which literature has accumulated through the centuries', Freudian psychoanalysis has towered above other forms of psychology as both a mode of literary interpretation and a historical context for modernism. As Micale writes, '[a]n astonishing share of the scholarship about this subject continues to take the form of influence studies of psychoanalysis in which Freud - and occasionally Jung - are presented as the sole exemplars of psychological modernism'. However, despite Micale's claim, made in 2004, there had already been studies which has considered non-Freudian psychology and its relationship with modernist culture.

More recently, there has been a growth in studies which consider modernist and Victorian literature in relation to neurology. Following on from the work of George Rousseau and others such as Laura Otis, the 2007 collection *Neurology and Literature, 1860-1920*, edited by Anne Stiles, marked the start of a series of recent texts on this topic, and was followed by Salisbury

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143 For example, Judith Ryan had already pointed out the dominance of Freudian studies of modernism in her 1991 book *The Vanishing Subject*. Elsewhere, Tim Armstrong had examined a wide range of non-Freudian psychologies in *Modernism, Technology and the Body*, and much criticism on, for example, Gertrude Stein, has dealt with William James, for example: Lisa Ruddick, 'William James and the Modernism of Gertrude Stein', *Modernism Reconsidered*, eds. Robert Kiely and John Hildebidle (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 47-63. Kylie Valentine had also written on the relationships between modernism, psychoanalysis and in *Psychoanalysis, Psychiatry and Modernist Literature* (2003).
and Shail’s edited collection Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems, 1800-1950 (2010) and Stiles’s monograph Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century (2012), as well as a handful of other articles.\footnote{I have already referred to Rousseau’s work. See also, Laura Otis, Organic Memory: History and the Body in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries (London: University of Nebraska Press, 1994). More recently, Otis has also written on the nerves in Networking (2011) and on David Ferrier, Wilkie Collins and H. G. Wells in Neurology and Literature: Laura Otis, Networking: Communicating with Bodies and Machines in the Nineteenth Century (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), pp. 11-48 (where she writes on The Language of the Nerves as a metaphor for technological communication systems); Laura Otis, ‘Howled out of the Country: Wilkie Collins and H. G. Wells Retry David Ferrier’, Neurology and Literature, 1860-1920, ed. Anne Stiles (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 27-51. Beyond the three works mentioned here in the main text, Laura Salisbury and Chris Code have written on Hughlings Jackson and aphasia in a forthcoming article called ‘Jackson’s Parrot: Samuel Beckett, Aphasic Speech Automatisms, and Psychosomatic Language’, Talking Normal: Literature, Speech Disorders, and Disability, ed. Chris Eagle (London: Routledge, 2013). Elsewhere, Patricia Waugh has written on Woolf and neuroscience: Patricia Waugh, ‘“Did I not banish the soul?” Thinking Otherwise, Woolf-wise’, Contradictory Woolf: Selected Papers from the Twenty-First Annual International Conference on Virginia Woolf, ed. Derek Ryan and Stella Bolaki (Clemson: International Virginia Woolf Society and Clemson University Press, 2012), pp. 23-42, http://www.clemson.edu/cedp/cudp/pubs/vwcon/21.pdf (accessed on 16.10.12). There is also forthcoming work by Ulrika Maude, as well as a special edition of Modern Fiction Studies on Neuroscience which are set to expand this field: Ulrika Maude, ‘Literature and Neurology’, The Cambridge Companion to the Body in Literature, eds. David Hillman and Ulrika Maude (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming in 2015).} Across these studies on literature and neurology/psychology, there has been a trend for studies to proclaim a nominal focus on either neurology or psychology, despite the fact that all of these books contain references to works which fall outside or complicate the area named in their title.\footnote{Most studies have only ‘neurology’ or ‘psychology’ or similar in their titles, however, Melissa M. Littlefield’s Matter for Thought: The Psychon in Neurology, Psychology and American Culture, 1927-1943 is a notable exception: Melissa M. Littlefield, ‘Matter for Thought: The Psychon in Neurology, Psychology and American Culture, 1927-1943’, Neurology and Modernity, pp.267-286.} In the introduction to Neurology and Literature, Stiles notes that ‘the present collection of essays aims to demonstrate that, in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries at least, brain science and imaginative fiction shared common philosophical concerns and rhetorical strategies’.\footnote{Anne Stiles, ‘Introduction’ to Neurology and Literature, 1860-1920, pp. 1-23 (p. 1).} She also argues that
no simple reflective model of influence (science influencing literature or vice versa) will suffice for this volume; instead, one must speak of two-way conversations between disciplines or of broader cultural movements evolving out of several fields simultaneously.\textsuperscript{147}

In these methodological respects, I agree with Stiles in her approach to what she calls ‘the emergent “interdiscipline” of neurology and literature’, although I would question her use of ‘neurology’ and ‘brain science’ as interchangeable terms as neurology was concerned with the whole nervous system and not just the brain.\textsuperscript{148} However, unlike Stiles, I do not wish to focus on neurology in isolation from other scientific approaches to mental processes and disorders in this period, and would argue that this ‘emergent interdiscipline’ is perhaps more multi-faceted and complex than her approach, and her conception of neurology during this period, allows for.

In Stiles’s account, neurology becomes simply an account of the nerves (or more frequently the brain) and she does not allow for the fact that neurology was also deeply involved in accounting for psychical or psychological states, despite the fact that Hughlings Jackson specifically involved the nerves in the formation of mental experience. She describes the neurological climate as one of ‘extreme physiological reductionism’ and writes that the late-nineteenth century ushered

\[\text{in a period of biological determinism and physiological reductionism that reigned until shortly after the First World War, when Sigmund’s Freud’s psychoanalytic approach gained broader currency throughout Europe and America.}\textsuperscript{149}\]

However, this view is challenged by the complex relationship between neurology, psychoanalysis and psychology in this period, which I have outlined. Whilst there was a lot of reductionist and localisationist neurology, there was also some which wasn’t such as the holist neurology of Hughlings Jackson and Head. Furthermore, Stiles’s argument does not allow for the fact that the material basis of the mind (or soul) need not diminish its psychic (or spiritual) potential. Moreover, in making such a sharp distinction between neurological reductionism and Freud, she does not acknowledge Freud’s own ongoing

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., pp. 3, 1.
commitment to physiological reductionism, nor the enriching potential this might have for cultural accounts of the body (as outlined by Elizabeth Wilson). Stiles’s characterisation of materialism as necessarily reductive does not allow for the psychic potential of the body which was implicit in Hughlings Jackson’s neurological work. I want the anti-mental, as a term, to allow for a greater linkage between the seemingly spiritual or transcendental and the physical or material in moving away from the conception that only a metaphysical mind can be psychically meaningful.\textsuperscript{150}

In \textit{Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century} (2012) Stiles focuses - at least ostensibly - on localisationist neurologists. Stiles explains that her focus is on ‘the cerebral localization experiments of scientists such as David Ferrier and John Hughlings Jackson in England, Paul Broca in France, Gustav Fritsch and Eduard Hitzig in Germany’ in relation to Victorian popular fiction.\textsuperscript{151} Stiles’s placing of Hughlings Jackson in the same tradition of localization as Broca, Fritsch and Hitzig, ignores the work of Young, Jacyna and other neurological historians who have placed Hughlings Jackson in an opposing neurological tradition of the period, as I have outlined. In this book, Stiles traces an intricate and fascinating historical web between the neurology of localisation and Victorian popular fiction which manifested itself in a number of ways. I will extend this work through focusing on the associationist, holist tradition in neurology (Hughlings Jackson and Head) and its interrelationship with medical psychology as these fields impinged on the self-representation (often in private forms) of modernist writers - a set of literary texts which differs vastly from Victorian popular fiction.

The account of neurology which guides Salisbury and Shail’s collection \textit{Neurology and Modernity} (2010) is more complex and all encompassing than that offered by Stiles. There are chapters in Salisbury and Shail’s book which focus on the holist neurology of Head and Goldstein; the ‘second brain’ or enteric nervous system; neurology, psychology and the psychon; and a number of neurology’s cultural manifestations and ramifications, ranging from nerve

\textsuperscript{150} For more on this see Susie Christensen, ‘Review of \textit{Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century}, \textit{Literature and History}, 22 (2013), 139-141.
vibration treatments to phantom limbs and spiritualism.¹⁵² In their introduction to *Neurology and Modernity*, as I have suggested, Salisbury and Shail have traced a nineteenth- and twentieth-century neurology which, although it played host to much important research in cerebral localisation, also 'disrupt[ed] this dictatorship of the brain'.¹⁵³ The neurology I describe corresponds with theirs: one which includes but moves beyond cerebral localisation to consider the ways in which the nerves spread what had previously been considered the metaphysical mind throughout the body, in the process distorting the supposed mind-body distinction. Their claim that in both late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century neurology and literature '[t]hinking was [...] consistently represented as a visceral event' lies behind my understanding of the anti-mental as a state which describes apparently psychic or potentially intellectual states which were profoundly of the body and deeply related to instinct and non-mental neurological events.¹⁵⁴ Salisbury and Shail’s claim that historical modernity and neurology ‘were symbiotically related, complexly co-generative’ guides my methodology which focuses on one particular aspect of historical modernity: the self-representation of modernist writers. Furthermore, their assertion that neurology and psychology ‘conceived of consciousness in a similar way’ guides my placing of neurology and medical psychology alongside one another in this thesis which explores their relationships with modernist texts, as many of the authors of essays in *Neurology and Modernity* have also done, in this volume and elsewhere.¹⁵⁵

The writers I consider in this thesis - D. H. Lawrence, H.D., Virginia Woolf and Anaïs Nin - have received very little attention in relation to the neurology or neuroscience of their period. They do not feature in *Neurology*...
and Literature, 1860-1920 nor in Neurology and Modernity, and have received practically no attention in relation to neurology elsewhere (although they have more commonly been considered in relation to psychology and psychoanalysis). There are a few articles on Woolf and neuroscience, but these adopt a very different approach to my own as they tend to focus on contemporary neuroscience rather than neurology from Woolf’s own era, as I will outline in chapter three. In a less academic (but popular and influential) context, Jonah Lehrer has argued, in his provocatively titled book Proust was a Neuroscientist (2007), that late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century (predominantly modernist) writers, artists and composers had anticipated the discoveries of contemporary neuroscience.156 I believe it is more fruitful to consider these writers and artists in relation to the neuroscience of their own day.

In a recent review of Neurology and Modernity in the journal Modernism/modernity, the reviewer Sam Halliday wrote that

If there is one thing I kept wishing while reading the present volume, it was that someday, somebody could fully track relations between neurological, psychoanalytical, and other psychological and physiological schools of thought, both as they interact directly and as they impinge together on other cultural fields (clearly, this would take many people, and several decades).157

Halliday is right; this would be a gargantuan task. And yet, it would also be invaluable. Therefore, this thesis aims to take a very small step towards such an endeavour through exploring 'neurological, psychoanalytical, and other psychological and physiological schools of thought' together in a study of their various and interconnected relationships with aspects of modernist self-

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156 Jonah Lehrer, Proust was a Neuroscientist (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007), p. ix. Lehrer’s book is problematic as it over simplifies, forgetting histories and contexts. Lehrer describes reading Proust whilst working as a lab technician in a neuroscience lab: ‘The novelist had predicted my experiments. Proust and neuroscience shared a vision of how our memory works. It you listened closely, they were actually saying the same thing’ (Lehrer, Proust was a Neuroscientist, p. ix). Proust and his twenty-first century neuroscience experiment were not saying the same thing, although he might be right to observe certain intellectual resonances. This is what Patricia Waugh has also done, more fruitfully, in her work on Woolf and neuroscience, which also argues that Woolf’s writings resonate with contemporary neuroscience, rather than that from Woolf’s own day.

representation. Not being by several people, nor having been written over several decades, this thesis takes a case study approach with each chapter focusing in depth on one writer and one doctor. Halliday’s comment re-emphasises the fact that studies of culture in relation to neurology, psychology, psychoanalysis or other aspects of physiology tend to focus on only one of these areas in relation to literature. Mark S. Micale attempted to carry out what Halliday describes in *The Mind of Modernism*, which contains an impressively detailed ‘timeline’ and ‘map’ of the ‘modernist mind’ which includes art, psychology, neurology and more. However, Micale’s focus (at least nominally) on the ‘mind’ is too limited, and it makes the inclusion of supposed discourses of the body, such as neurology, both difficult and confusing. This is another reason why I use the term ‘anti-mental’, although I acknowledge that it too might be seen as a confusing or inappropriate term, and that perhaps there may be a more appropriate one available which has yet to present itself.

Methodology and Structure

In examining literary and medical-scientific texts side by side, this thesis clearly takes its place amongst the ever growing fields of literature and science and literature and medicine. These are fields of study which are particularly rich in relation to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, as a glance at almost any issue of *The Journal of Literature and Science* or *Literature and Medicine* will attest to. Science and medicine have become an increasingly central aspect for understanding modernism since these fields began to be established during the 1980s when a number of key works were published, and numerous important studies continue to appear today, most of which seek to dismantle the ‘two cultures’ idea popularised by C. P. Snow and F. R. Leavis.158

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158 C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); F. R. Leavis, *Two Cultures? The Significance of C P Snow* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962). Foundational works in this area were by George Rousseau and Gillian Beer, amongst others. See, Gillian Beer, *Darwin’s Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (1983) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). More recently the field has been expanding not only in the journals mentioned above, but also in the journal *Medical Humanities* as well as in a number of excellent monographs and edited collections such as: Sharon Ruston, ed., *Literature and Science* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2008); Laura Otis, ed., *Literature and Science in the*
Frequent strategies for achieving this aim are in either turning to the work of philosophers of science such as Bruno Latour and Thomas Kuhn, who characterise science as a means of cultural representation, or in citing the now commonplace 'influence works both ways' method as their approach.\textsuperscript{159} I will take it as a given that medical science and literary self-representation are both (very different) modes of culturally informed representation, and that each was influential for the other in various ways.

However, this study aims to move beyond, or sidestep, the influence model which characterises so many studies of literature and science or literature and medicine. Influence can be hard, or impossible, to trace and to prove. Nearly all of the pairings of writers and doctors which I consider here influenced each other in some way, but this will not be my main concern (although it is an important one). What I wish to pay particular attention to are textual and intellectual affinities between the works of the writers and doctors I consider, arguing that there was a celebration of and focus on anti-mental modes of being in modernist discourse which extended across literary self-representation, neurology and medical psychology, despite crucial and sometimes obvious, sometimes not so obvious, differences and points of divergence. Although Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson never met, my other three pairings (H.D. and Havelock Ellis, Virginia Woolf and Henry Head, and Anaïs Nin and Otto Rank) all had a doctor-patient relationship at some point in their lives. Even though this relationship will enter into my discussion, I


\textsuperscript{159} For example, Latour writes that 'we learned from science studies, there is nothing especially objective about science; this type of mediation simply generates a form of transfer' (Bruno Latour, 'How to Be Iconophilic in Art, Science and Religion?', \textit{Picturing Science, Producing Art}, eds. Caroline A Jones and Peter Galison (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 418-440 (p.429).) Dorothy Ross helpfully clarifies that '[a]lthough Thomas Kuhn did not abandon that distinction [between science and art], his work contributed powerfully to that result by showing that scientific knowledge was, like all interpretive knowledge, enclosed within history and its hermeneutic horizons' (Ross, 'Introduction' to \textit{Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences 1870-1930}, p. 11). Just because science - like art - is historically and culturally informed, this does not mean that any form of distinction between science and art breaks down.
predominantly hope to bypass this focus on the doctor-patient relationship (and the speculative conclusions it can so frequently lead to) in order to focus on intellectual and textual resonances between the pairs which their biographical connections can often obscure. This is despite the fact that, of course, the biographical connections between each pairing are also an important aspect of their relationship, particularly, I will argue, in the case of Nin and Rank. Due to the differing nature of each relationship, each chapter adopts a slightly different model of influence and/or affinity in explaining the connections between its protagonists, but the general approach is one in which it is assumed that intellectual or textual resonances which exist beyond straightforward ‘influence’ matter.

Thus, the idea of parallel developments exists alongside the idea of influence as an important mode through which to suggest that various neurological and psychological clinicians, like some modernists, celebrated anti-mental aspects of selfhood. The fact that neurology, medical psychology and modernist literary life-writing were all involved in a turn towards the anti-mental not only suggests an important new mode of affinity between these fields, it also demonstrates that the clinicians did not only pathologise the anti-mental and treat modernists, they were also involved in producing a discourse which was shared with these modernists, one in which the anti-mental was and could be a celebrated and understood as a central aspect of selfhood in various respects.

Chapter one focuses on D. H. Lawrence and John Hughlings Jackson and argues that there were many resonances between the two, despite Lawrence’s supposed hatred of science. It considers the effect which Lawrence’s reading of a neurological textbook in 1918 had for his essays *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (1921) and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922) with their languages of ganglia and plexuses. It also considers resonances between *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920) and Hughlings Jackson’s works on the evolution of the nervous system and on epilepsy. The central thesis of this chapter is that whilst Hughlings Jackson pathologised the anti-mental, Lawrence celebrated it as the fundamental aspect of life. However, despite Hughlings Jackson’s pathologisation of the anti-mental, it was his account of the evolved nervous system, which gave non-
mental nervous processes a foundational role in the formation of mind and selfhood, that placed these elements at the core of the self, and was part of what paved the way for modernists such as Lawrence to glorify these states. Hughlings Jackson's model of the unconscious was different to Freud's, and it is Hughlings Jackson's model, not Freud's, which resonates with Lawrence's conception of unconsciousness.

Chapter two takes H.D. and the sexologist Havelock Ellis as its focus, examining the ways in which both H.D. and Ellis united spirituality, physicality and the sea in their works. It argues against the frequently held position which deems a material self to be a non-spiritual self, arguing that both H.D. and Ellis offered highly physicalised accounts of selfhood which were also very spiritual. Darwinism and materialism dismantled metaphysical theology and religion meaning that spiritual experiences could be relocated to the body, leading to narratives which incorporated religious experiences into the story of human evolution. Therefore, a key element in H.D. and Ellis's discourse of material spirituality is the ocean and sea-creatures. Through looking back through evolutionary time to apparently 'low' sea creatures such as jellyfish, and to what they imagined as primitive marine environments, both H.D. and Ellis look beyond consciousness and beyond volition to give an account of the mystical anti-mental which is firmly rooted in the body, and often particularly in primitive nervous systems or the lower nervous centres. In particular, the focus is on *Notes on Thought and Vision* (written 1919) in which H.D. uses a jellyfish as a metaphor for both the nervous system and spirituality, and on *Asphodel* (written 1921-2) in which mysticism and mindlessness come to be associated with pregnancy. These texts are read alongside Ellis's *Man and Woman* (1894, revised 1929) which associated both women and ecclesiastics with the lower nervous centres and also gives a specifically non-Freudian account of the unconscious, and 'Undinism' (1928) which connects spiritually uplifting sexual experiences involving urination with humanity's evolutionary pre-history as sea-creatures.

Chapter three examines the diaries of Virginia Woolf from 1915-1930 alongside 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division' (1908), carried out by Henry Head and W. H. R. Rivers during 1903-07. Sidestepping the usual focus on their clinical encounter, I examine certain intellectual resonances between Woolf
and Head, her one-time doctor. The methods of sensory-self observation used by both Woolf and Head in these contexts are the focus of the chapter and I argue that when observing their own sensations, both Woolf and Head seemed to adopt a state which was not of the mind, an anti-mental state. Therefore, the connection between awareness and the mind is disrupted as Woolf and Head seem to both exist in a heightened state of awareness when their minds are specifically not involved in the process of observation. I also argue that both Woolf and Head can be considered as exemplary modernists, and that therefore this anti-mental method of sensory self-observation was a particularly modernist one, which extended across literary and psychological-neurological practices. The sensory self-observations carried out by Woolf and Head both took place during illness or after injury and when away from London. It is in Woolf's diaries written during illness at Monk's House in which she observes her own sensations, and Head's sensory self observation took place in Cambridge after he had voluntarily allowed a lesion to be created in his own nervous system. A paradox at the heart of the anti-mental as an idea also emerges in this chapter. Whilst both Woolf and Head were 'anti-mental' when observing their own sensations, they were both also in a state of heightened psychological awareness. The questions raised by this combination of anti-mentality with extreme psychological awareness will be scrutinised in this chapter.

In chapter four, which deals predominantly with writings from the 1930s, the latest in the thesis, I focus on Anaïs Nin and Otto Rank, and use their work to challenge the very notion of a textual anti-mental which the thesis so far has been establishing. A particular focus is on Nin's diary-writing which documents events during 1931-1937. Nin's diaries are characterised by their author as demonstrating a turn to instinct, the anti-mental and the primitive, in terms of composition method, form and content. However, the fact that Nin constantly re-wrote and edited these apparently instinctive texts, as well as their contested truth status, challenges this notion of diaries as instinctive or anti-mental writing. Nevertheless, instinct and the anti-mental remained Nin's key concerns in writing her diary, despite the fact that their textual performativity brings the gap between these anti-mental life-processes, and the highly mental means through which they find textual
expression, to light. The writings I focus on by Rank (who was originally in Freud's inner circle) are all taken from his post-Freudian period (after 1926), which was also the time during which he came to know Nin (1933-1936). However, although Rank's works from the early 1930s focus on anti-mental states whilst fusing them with concepts such as volitional control of the ego and the importance of the will, after his relationship with Nin this seemed to change. He only wrote one book after he knew Nin - *Beyond Psychology* (written 1939, published 1941) - and here he argues that due to the fundamental anti-mentality of humans, no discourse can ever encapsulate human nature. He rejects both modernism and psychology, suggesting that neither, as textual forms, is able to represent the reality of life, which is fundamentally anti-mental.

Having begun with Turner's review of *Les Noces*, the thesis also ends with an account of dance. Focusing on Nin’s portrayal of a night during which she and Rank danced together in Harlem, the idea of the anti-mental as the force at the core of selfhood is firmly established, whilst its existence as a textual entity is challenged.
1. The Anti-Mental in the works of D. H. Lawrence and John Hughlings Jackson

D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) is well-known for valorising the body, sensuality and intuitional living. And yet this has rarely, if ever, been considered in relation to an important discourse of the body which was gaining its modern identity in the years preceding Lawrence's writing and which Lawrence engaged with directly: neurology.¹ Here I will offer an account of these aspects of Lawrence's work alongside a consideration of the neurologist John Hughlings Jackson (1835-1911). In doing so I will argue that, despite their many differences, there is a surprisingly strong intellectual affinity between Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson which provides an alternative spin on Lawrence's well known disagreements (and resonances) with psychoanalysis.²

¹ Paul Poplawski, ed., Writing the Body in D. H. Lawrence: Essays on Language, Representation, and Sexuality (London: Greenwood Press, 2001). In the preface Poplawski declares that 'It is widely recognised that one of D. H. Lawrence’s main concerns in his art was to explore and experiment with new ways of writing about the body and bodily experience' (Poplawski, Writing the Body in D. H. Lawrence, p. ix) and that his volume aims to put this into cultural, ideological and theoretical contexts. However, there is no mention of neurology in the book. There are also many works on Lawrence and sexuality or sensuality. For example: Linda Ruth Williams, Sex in the Head: Visions of Femininity and Film in D. H. Lawrence (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993); Gerald Doherty, Oriental Lawrence: The Quest for the Secrets of Sex (New York: Peter Lang, 2001); Keith Cushman and Earl G. Ingersoll, eds., D. H. Lawrence: New Worlds (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003). None of these works on Lawrence and the body mention neurology. There is a very brief mention of Lawrence in Janet Oppenheim’s excellent book ‘Shattered Nerves’: Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) where she mentions a doctor in Lady Chatterley’s Lover referring to Connie’s lack of vitality as ‘nothing but nerves’ whilst acknowledging that there was nothing organically wrong with her (Oppenheim, ‘Shattered Nerves’, p. 131). This alludes to Lawrence’s familiarity with this discourse but this is not explored at any length by Oppenheim.

In what follows, I will give a short introduction to Hughlings Jackson and how and why a consideration of him and Lawrence together will be a valuable addition to the existing field of study on Lawrence. I will then explore various aspects of their work alongside one another, demonstrating how reading Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson's work alongside one another illuminates the ideas of them both. Throughout, I will argue that both men advocated what I call the 'anti-mental' and I will use their work to help define this term. Essentially, I see it as a non-Freudian and more specifically physical type of unconscious. I will argue that there are many intellectual affinities between Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson but that there were also, of course, important and drastic differences in the conclusions they reached based on these shared ideas. Specifically, I will argue that while D. H. Lawrence celebrated the anti-mental, John Hughlings Jackson pathologised it. Throughout this chapter I will examine the ways in which both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson placed pre- or non-mental aspects of experience and functionality at the centre of their accounts of the human; yet, whilst Lawrence sought out and valorised what he saw as this too often neglected aspect of experience, Hughlings Jackson placed the anti-mental elements of the nervous system at the heart of his account of nervous disease.

John Hughlings Jackson was one of the foremost neurologists of the late-nineteenth century, and remains important to this day. He worked at the Queen Square Neurological Hospital from 1862, just a few years after it opened in 1860. The neurological journal *Brain*, of which Hughlings Jackson was a founding editor (the first issue appeared in April 1878), dedicated its October 2011 issue to Hughlings Jackson to honour the centenary of his death. Articles in this edition of articles on Lawrence and psychoanalysis which I have made use of in this chapter, particularly those by Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Max Saunders and John Turner.

3 When the first issue of *Brain* appeared in 1878, it listed the name of its editor as Hughlings-Jackson with a hyphen. (Alastair Compston, 'Editorial', *Brain*, 134 (2011), 2791-2794 (p. 2791.) Elizabeth A. Franz and Grant Gillett write: 'We note here that John Hughlings-Jackson preferred the hyphenated version of his name [...] However, we have decided in the present article to present his surnames without hyphenation to be consistent with most written accounts in the literature, although we always present both names together (Hughlings Jackson) so as to preserve the link, as he wished.' (Elizabeth A. Franz and Grant Gillett 'John Hughlings Jackson's Evolutionary Neurology: A Unifying Framework for Cognitive Neuroscience', *Brain*, 134 (2011), 3114-3120 (p. 3115.).) I will follow Franz and Gillett in the way in which I refer to Hughlings Jackson.


5 Dedicatory volumes to Hughlings Jackson have appeared at intervals throughout the twentieth century, demonstrating his importance to the neurological community both
Brain by George K. York and David A. Steinberg and Elizabeth A. Franz and Grant Gillett both emphasise the fact that Hughlings Jackson 'elaborated the neurological ideas that became foundations of modern neurology' and that his 'evolutionary ideas [...] would become "a" if not "the" leading theory of brain organisation of the 21st century (and perhaps beyond).'

Hughlings Jackson's own philosophical influences and leanings have been well established and the historian of neurology L. S. Jacyna argues 'that Hughlings Jackson's work does indeed display a decided philosophical bent that distinguishes it among the neurological writings of his contemporaries.' C. U. M. Smith has argued that Hughlings Jackson was an influence on twentieth-century modernist philosophers such as Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) as well as more recent work by Gerald Endelman in 1998 and Ned Block in 1997: 'all sought to express Jackson's neurological insight.' Furthermore, Franz and Gillett note 'his [Hughlings Jackson's] influence on one of the most famous psychologists in history, William James,' explaining that 'in The Principles of Psychology [...] James articulated Hughlings Jackson's view of psychical evolution.' Although Smith has acknowledged Hughlings Jackson's influence on modern philosophers, and Franz and Gillett and York and Steinberg have explored his influence on modern psychologists, neurologists and neuroscientists, an exploration of his influence or affinities with during and after his lifetime.

during and after his lifetime. The editorial about Hughlings Jackson in the October 2011 issue of Brain mentions the 1907 issue of Brain which marked his 50th year in medical practice. In 1935 The Clinic for Nervous and Mental Diseases in Hungary published a multilingual Hughlings Jackson memorial volume of Neurological and Psychiatric Papers. This was to celebrate the centenary of Jackson's birth: Ladislaw Benedek, ed., Neurological and Psychiatric Papers from the Clinic for Nervous and Mental Diseases of the Stephen Tisza University, Hughlings Jackson Memorial Volume (Debrecen: The Clinic for Nervous and Mental Diseases, 1935).


7 L. Stephen Jacyna, 'Process and Progress: John Hughlings Jackson's Philosophy of Science', Brain, 134 (2011), 3121-3126 (p.3122). Hughlings Jackson's connections with philosophy have also been noted by a number of commentators. Macdonald Critchely (1964) explains how Hughlings Jackson was tempted to leave medicine to pursue a philosophical career but was dissuaded by his friend Jonathan Hutchinson; C. U. M. Smith has explored Hughlings Jackson's relationship with philosophy in detail in articles from 1982 and 2012; York and Steinberg (2006) have documented the influence which philosophers such as Leibniz had on Hughlings Jackson.


modern/modernist literature remains minimal, despite the recent publication of a few works which address his work in relation to literature.\textsuperscript{10}

The neurological work of Hughlings Jackson resonates with modernist literary self-representation in a number of ways, which I will explore here in relation to the work of D. H. Lawrence. Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson were variously and indirectly connected; they had a shared intellectual tradition, both having read and been influenced by thinkers such as Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) and they had both known, in person, the pioneer British Freudian, neurologist turned psychoanalyst, Ernest Jones (I will explore these connections in more depth in the course of the chapter).\textsuperscript{11} There is no evidence to suggest that Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson ever met or to suggest that Lawrence had read Hughlings Jackson's work. Hughlings Jackson could not have read Lawrence's work as he died in 1911, the year in which Lawrence’s first novel, The White Peacock, was published. Nevertheless, it is still valuable to consider their work in relation to one another as a means through

\textsuperscript{10} In Neurology and Literature, 1860-1920 (2007), ed. Anne Stiles, Hughlings Jackson only features briefly in the introduction, neither is he a major player in Stiles’s 2012 book Brain Science and Popular Fiction in the Late Nineteenth Century where he is mentioned a number of times but only in passing. In the introduction to Neurology and Modernity there is a brief exposition of Hughlings Jackson’s evolutionary account of the nervous system, specifically in relation to aphasia. He is also mentioned briefly in essays in this volume by Jane F. Thrailkill and Laura Salisbury but there is no in depth exploration of Jackson’s work in relation to literature in this volume. However, Laura Salisbury and Chris Code have paid attention to Hughlings Jackson’s work in relation to Samuel Beckett in a forthcoming article: ‘Jackson’s Parrot: Samuel Beckett, Aphasic Speech Automatisms, and Psychosomatic Language’, Talking Normal: Literature, Speech Disorders, and Disability, ed. Chris Eagle (London: Routledge, 2013). Adam Winstanely has also suggested, in a recent PhD thesis, that Beckett was familiar with Hughlings Jackson’s work through his reading of William Osler’s Principles and Practice of Modern Medicine (1895). See: Adam Winstanley, "'First dirty, then make clean"': Samuel Beckett's Peristaltic Modernism, 1932-1958 (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2013). Hughlings Jackson’s work has also been explored by Tim Armstrong in Modernism, Tehcnology and the Body (1998), and another recent article has suggested that Hughlings Jackson’s concept of the dreamy state was influenced by literature: Esther Lardreau, ‘An Approach to Nineteenth-Century Medical Lexicon: The Term “Dreamy State”’, Journal for the History of the Neurosciences: Basic and Clinical Perspectives, 20 (2011), 34-41.

\textsuperscript{11} Freud added a footnote to The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), in 1914 which demonstrates the fact that Ernest Jones had conversations about psychology and neurology with Hughlings Jackson: 'As Hughlings Jackson said: "Find out all about dreams and you will have found out all about insanity." [Quoted by Ernest Jones (1911), who had heard it at first hand from Hughlings Jackson]' (Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, trans. and ed. James Strachey et. al. (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 723. Furthermore, in Ernest Jones’s autobiography, Free Associations (1959) he mentions meeting Lawrence whilst amongst some 'non-Bloomsbury intelligentsia': 'A most interesting person in this collection was D. H. Lawrence. I probably met him first through the Eders'. (Ernest Jones, Free Associations (New York: Basic Books, 1959), pp. 250, 251).
which to examine the ways in which neurology and modernism were in many ways products of the same intellectual moment and tradition and how, as Salisbury and Shail have argued in relation to neurology and modernity, 'the two were symbiotically related, complexly co-generative'. In this chapter I will establish the intellectual affinities (rather than direct influence) between Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson and use them to help establish the concept of the anti-mental - a more physicalised and non-mental type of what we might otherwise call the unconscious mind - as I will explore it in relation to H.D., Havelock Ellis, Virginia Woolf, Henry Head, Anaïs Nin and Otto Rank. In doing so I wish to assert Hughlings Jackson’s importance as a foundational scientific/philosophical figure for modernism alongside more well known claimants to this position such as Darwin, Freud and Bergson.

Lawrence’s two 'psychology books' (as Mark Kinkead-Weekes has called them), *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* (1921) and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922) could perhaps be considered the ultimate anti-mental manifestos. In these short texts Lawrence ambitiously takes issue with psychoanalysis, explains his theory of the development of child consciousness, describes the manner in which he felt that human societies had evolved after the melting of the glaciers, gives a statement on the reforms he felt were needed for modern education, describes the importance of trees and nature for his work and gives an account of the human nervous system. Bruce Steele, in his introduction to the Cambridge edition of the essays, has described them, and *Fantasia* in particular, as providing 'a thematic and analytic key' and 'an indispensible guide to his fiction and poetry'. These essays are central for understanding Lawrence’s work. They are also, crucially, the main texts in which he gives his account of the human nervous system, which he uses to describe his theory of the evolution of consciousness. In doing so he argues that consciousness develops on successive 'planes' in the body and that the root of consciousness lies in the non-mental solar plexus (a nerve centre in the stomach). Lawrence uses this account to criticise the dominance of mental and idea-driven consciousness which he saw as

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destructive and wrongfully dominant in western societies during his time. In these books Lawrence talks explicitly and at length about the nervous system and uses neurological terms such as plexuses and ganglia throughout. Despite this there has been no in-depth study of Lawrence in relation to neurology.

In 1997, Max Saunders wrote that Lawrence's terms in the psychology essays 'need to be seen in the context of the pioneering neurological work going on in the 1920s'. He suggested W. H. R. Rivers, Henry Head and Lord Adrian as possible neurological figures from the 1920s to be explored in relation to Lawrence but he goes no further in making this exploration, and neither has this line of enquiry been taken up by anyone else since, although Dolores LaChapelle has considered Lawrence in relation to neuroscientific work from the 1960s.

More recently, L. S. Jacyna has revealed, in his new biography of Henry Head, that apparently there was an attempt to try and make Lawrence visit Head as a patient, although Lawrence turned this offer down, probably because of his lifelong hatred of doctors (he even shunned medical attention when dying of tuberculosis).

Enquiries into Lawrence's connection with Head and the neurology of the 1920s would no doubt be fruitful. However, here I am not going to explore Lawrence in relation to the neurology of the 1920s but in relation to one of the most important neurological figures from the final decades of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth: John Hughlings Jackson. Hughlings Jackson was a major influence on the figures cited by Saunders and can in many ways be seen as the founding father of the neurological tradition to which they belonged. As L. S. Jacyna has written, 'John Hughlings Jackson was, in Head's view, a lonely genius who had sketched an alternative, more fruitful approach to the subject [neurology]' than the rest of his Victorian contemporaries.

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We know that Lawrence had seen at least one contemporary neurological textbook. In May 1918 Lawrence wrote to his friend Edith Eder (wife of the psychoanalyst David Eder) asking,

[c]ould you lend me or borrow for me anywhere a book which describes the human nervous system, and gives a sort of map of the nerves of the human body? Do try and find a book to lend me - I want to see this. Ask [Ernest?] Jones or somebody. 19

Presumably he thought she might ask psychoanalyst Jones as he worked at Queen Square hospital and knew a number of neurologists (including Hughlings Jackson). Edith Eder obliged Lawrence and sent him a book, although he was not very happy with it. A few days later he wrote to her again:

I got the pages of the medical book - many thanks. Certain things I was able to find from it: but it was repulsive with diagnoses, and not very plain for me - I wanted of course a book of physiology rather than medicine. But it managed. I send it you back now. 20

There is no evidence in any of the scholarly work on Lawrence (which so diligently lists his reading when it is known) that suggests which neurological textbook Edith Eder might have sent to Lawrence. 21 It is unlikely that it was by Hughlings Jackson as he did not publish any kind of coherent text book, only articles in medical journals such as *Brain* or the *BMJ*, but it is likely to have been by one of his colleagues and probably would have mentioned his work. It is also likely that Hughlings Jackson was familiar with the book in question. What is crucially important is that Lawrence had specifically sought out and seen a neurological textbook. Although he was disgusted by the medical diagnoses in the book he felt that understanding the physiology of the nervous system was important for his literary projects. It seems likely that at least part of his conception of the solar

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21 For example there is no mention of what this book might have been in the collected letters, the three volume Cambridge biography, nor in any other work of criticism which mentions this neurological textbook, often written by authors who are very familiar with Lawrence’s archive (such as Mark Kinkead-Weekes, one of Lawrence’s biographer’s who has also written on the genesis of the psychology books).
plexus was based upon what he saw in this book as he calls upon it to back himself up in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*:

You've got first and foremost a solar plexus, dear reader; and the solar plexus is a great nerve centre which lies behind your stomach. I can't be accused of impropriety or untruth, because any book of science or medicine which deals with the nerve-system of the human body will show it to you quite plainly (*Fantasia*, 27).

Considering that Lawrence sought out this textbook and then reacted negatively to it, we might consider his engagement with neurology as a sort of influence by disagreement; Lawrence incorporated certain aspects of neurology from his day only to turn them on their head. Perhaps this reading of the neurological textbook lies behind some of Lawrence's intellectual affinities with Hughlings Jackson, and his rejection of its diagnoses behind his celebration of what Hughlings Jackson classified as disease. This idea of influence by disagreement will co-exist in this chapter alongside intellectual affinities which defy influence in a straightforward sense as a means through which to understand Lawrence's engagement with neurology from his era.

One of Lawrence's key aims in the psychology books was to explain the centrality of the anti-mental primal/primary consciousness (or unconscious - he confusingly used the terms interchangeably) for human life. In the psychology essays (written in the early 1920s), he located this anti-mental primal consciousness in the solar plexus, the nerve centre in the stomach. Earlier he had situated it in the blood, calling it 'blood-consciousness' or 'blood-knowledge' by which he meant an intuitional and sensual mode of being which existed independently of the mind and of conscious knowing. The 'first full statement of Lawrence's "blood-knowledge" philosophy' was made in a letter to Ernest Collings on 17 January 1913. Here he wrote that:

My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true. The intellect is only a bit and a bridle. What do I care about knowledge. All I want is to answer to my blood, direct, without fribbling intervention of mind, or moral, or what-not.  

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In December 1915 he wrote to Bertrand Russell that 'there is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness'. At this stage he also felt that the non-mental blood-consciousness existed independently of the 'nerve system'. By the time Lawrence came to write *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* this had changed; 'he would now place this other consciousness in the nerve centres of the body rather than exclusively in the blood'. 'Blood-consciousness' relocated to the solar plexus. Bruce Steele suggests that it 'was under the influences of psychoanalytic theory and his reading of theosophical and anthropological works that he was led to revise his account of non-mental consciousness'. I will briefly explore the influences which psychoanalysis and theosophy had on Lawrence before moving on to ask whether neurology might not also have been an important aspect of this shift from the blood to the solar plexus, seeing as it took place after he had read a neurological textbook.

Lawrence was introduced to psychoanalytic ideas through a range of sources. His wife Frieda had had an affair with psychoanalyst Otto Gross in 1907 and therefore by 1912 (when he met Frieda) Lawrence had heard about psychoanalysis through this connection. By 1915 he had become friends with a number of 'pioneer English Freudians' namely David and Edith Eder and Barbara Low. Through the Eders and Low Lawrence met Freudian champion Ernest Jones. Jones had trained as a neurologist at Queen Square and known Hughlings Jackson in this capacity. Lawrence had met Barbara Low through her niece Ivy

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24 Ibid., p 393.
25 Ibid. Of course, we must take into account that Lawrence's letters were partly performative. These comments are taken from a letter to Bertrand Russell, and Lawrence may have had a point to prove; Dolores LaChapelle points to Lawrence's later disagreement with Russell when he rejected his rational and logical method of knowing and philosophy (LaChapelle, *D. H. Lawrence Future Primitive*, p. 81).
27 Ibid.
29 Ibid., p. 154.
who had enjoyed *Sons and Lovers* (1913) and contacted Lawrence to say so.\(^{32}\) *Sons and Lovers* provided another means through which Lawrence came into contact with psychoanalysis as it was reviewed as an apparently Oedipal text in *The Psychoanalytic Review*. Although Lawrence hated this review and hated psychoanalysis being read into his works in this way, he did read the edition of *The Psychoanalytic Review* in which this review featured after Barbara Low sent it to him. There is no evidence that Lawrence ever read Freud (his work did not feature in this issue of the journal), leading critics to suggest it was 'Freud' rather than Freud which Lawrence took issue with in the psychology books.\(^{33}\) However, he is known to have read Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1916) and it has also been suggested he read some of Jung's other books too. Furthermore, his friend David Eder’s affinities and connections with both Freud and Jung would have given Lawrence access to both traditions, as John Turner has argued.\(^{34}\)

Lawrence was also deeply attracted to the work of the Jungian Trigant Burrow. Bruce Steele has argued that the opening chapter of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* drew heavily on Burrow’s paper 'The Origin of the Incest-Awe' (1918).\(^{35}\) In this paper Burrow wrote that 'Nature abhors consciousness' thus expressing a sentiment which Lawrence shared.\(^{36}\) Steele explains that 'in this explanation, so different from the Freudian repressed unconscious, Lawrence believed he had found support for his idea of a primary non-mental consciousness'.\(^{37}\)

The theosophy of James Pryse, as Steele suggests, was another important influence for Lawrence in locating the non- or anti-mental consciousness described in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious* in the solar plexus. In 1916 Lawrence met the occultist Meredith Starr. From him he borrowed James Pryse’s book *The Apocalypse Unsealed* (1910) which Lawrence enjoyed so much that he recommended it as reading to David Eder in

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32 Steele, 'Introduction' to D. H. Lawrence, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious*.
This theosophical text drew on ancient Indian 'neurology' in order to describe the 'psycho-physiology necessary for even a superficial survey of the Apocalypse'. Pryse wrote that the body has four principle life-centres which are, roughly speaking, analogues of the four worlds, and of the four manifested generic powers of the soul; these four somatic divisions are as follows:

1. The head, or brain, is the organ of the Nous, or higher mind.
2. The region of the heart, including all the organs above the diaphragm, is the seat of the lower mind (phrên, or thumos), including the psychic nature.
3. The region of the navel is the centre of the passional nature (epithumia), comprising the emotions, desires, appetites, and passions.
4. The procreative centre is the seat of the vivifying forces on the lowest plane of existence.

Mark Kinkead-Weekes explains that Pryse's ideas were incorporated into the re-writing of *Women in Love* during 1916 and describes this as the genesis of *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*. Then, according to Kinkead-Weekes, writing about American literature in 1917-18 'took Lawrence back to Pryse, whose non-European neurology had in fact spoken of two structures of the nervous system, the cerebral and the sympathetic, and four kinds of consciousness centred in the brain, the heart, the navel, and the genitals'. This, Kinkead-Weekes argues, led to Lawrence's own 'pseudo-scientific neurology'.

These psychoanalytic and theosophical influences are well established. But what about the connection between Lawrence's own 'pseudo-scientific neurology' and the more conventional medical-scientific neurology? It was after having read the neurological textbook in 1918 that Lawrence moved non-mental consciousness from the blood to the nerves in the psychology books. Like Pryse, Lawrence divided the human body into higher and lower centres which he based in the nervous system, believing that '[c]onsciousness develops on successive planes' (*Psychoanalysis*, 233), and this also resounds with some neurological work of this period. For example, Hughlings Jackson, who divided the nervous system into higher and lower centres according to evolutionary development of the nervous system, believed this, or something very similar, as well. Hughlings

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38 Steele, 'Introduction' to D. H. Lawrence, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious*, p. xxxvii.
42 Ibid., p. 163.
Jackson, like Lawrence, rooted the anti-mental, less evolved, more primitive, original roots of consciousness in the 'lower' parts of the nervous system. For Hughlings Jackson this was the 'anterior horns (some lowest centres)' of the spinal cord, and for Lawrence this was the solar plexus: 'in all mammals the centre of primal, constructive consciousness and activity lies in the middle front of the abdomen, beneath the navel, in the great nerve centre called the solar plexus' (Psychoanalysis, 219). Considering that Lawrence shifted his anti-mental primary consciousness from the blood to the solar plexus after having read a neurological textbook, and that he has a surprisingly strong intellectual affinity with Hughlings Jackson, 'the father of English neurology', a reading of them alongside one another seems appropriate, illuminating and necessary.

In this chapter, I explore the ideas of Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence alongside one another. This is not a work of genetic criticism nor a description of straightforward influence, or retrospective influence: ‘Nachträglichkeit, or back formation’, as Steven Connor calls it, borrowing Freud’s term. If there was any direct way in which Hughlings Jackson influenced Lawrence (through Ernest Jones or the textbook perhaps?) it is impossible to trace or prove. Even though the neurological textbook was undoubtedly a direct influence, and one which contained ideas which Lawrence incorporated only to distort, this cannot be traced specifically to Hughlings Jackson without incorporating a certain amount of speculation. Lawrence's direct influences have been explored so thoroughly that an explanation of the very important connections between Lawrence's work and the neurological tradition which began with Hughlings Jackson needs to be traced in a way which defies influence and explores instead their important intellectual affinities alongside the idea of influence by rejection.

Thinking about Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson together is important in terms of considering neurology's relationship with modernism in a broad sense, and it also expands the field of Lawrence studies. Such an endeavour not only begins to fill the gap in Lawrence criticism when it comes to neurology but it also further complicates the critical understanding of Lawrence's relationship with

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science more generally. Lawrence was famously, and perhaps misleadingly, called a ‘hater of scientific knowing’ by his friend Aldous Huxley in 1932. More recently, Leo Salter, in his article ‘Lawrence, Newton and Einstein’, has argued that ‘the ideas of modern physics are used as both a structuring and liberating concept by Lawrence’. Because of this, Salter argues that Lawrence was not in fact a hater of scientific knowing as Huxley states. However, I disagree with Salter because I think that despite his friendships with the scientifically informed, and wide scientific reading, Lawrence was indeed a hater of scientific knowing, meaning that he disliked the systems of thought and ways of knowing which underpinned science.

Or, seeing as Lawrence calls for a 'subjective science' (Fantasia, 12) which would draw on ancient wisdom in Fantasia of the Unconscious, it might be more accurate to say that Lawrence was a hater of scientific knowing when it manifested itself in the form of positivism (which it was most likely to do in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and did in Hughlings Jackson's work). Positivism is 'the doctrine that science is limited to observed fact and to what can be rigorously deduced from facts'. It is true that, as James Cowan has written, 'a position more antithetical to Lawrence's than logical positivism is difficult to imagine'. However, Cowan also believes that there is one 'inconsistency of his [Lawrence's] embracing the anti-positivist position in everything except in his emphasis on the structures of the peripheral nervous system' in Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious and Fantasia of the Unconscious. However, we could perhaps reconsider whether it is in fact an 'inconsistency' that Lawrence attempted to provide his own scientific version of the nervous system.

In Jeff Wallace's book D.H. Lawrence, Science and the Posthuman (2005), he sets out to prove wrong 'all those who have pointed out to me, over the years, that a study of D. H. Lawrence and science could, surely, only ever be a very slim

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid., p. 24.
volume'. His response to those who ask him, wasn't 'Lawrence deeply and volubly antagonistic to the scientific reduction of life to mechanism', is 'a complex "yes and no"'. Wallace sets about providing this answer by questioning the version of science which is assumed by literary critics:

We [so-called “interdisciplinary” humanities intellectuals] are delighted to learn that science is an imaginative activity; are we similarly moved by the prospect of imagination as a scientific activity? How deep is our investment in the humanistic project of literary studies, and to what extent does this investment rest upon a set of inherited assumptions about science?

Wallace uses such ideas to complicate our understanding of Lawrence's relationship with science. Traditionally, he argues, it has been understood that Lawrence held an 'anti-science' position. This is a tradition which he believes stems back to F. R. Leavis who held Lawrence up as a beacon of humanism. This, says Wallace, was part of the process by which 'since its inception as an intellectual discipline in the early-twentieth century, "English" or literary studies has prospered on the back of the idea that it defends the "human" against the reductive mechanisms of science'. Wallace uses contemporary posthumanism to reassess the complexity of Lawrence's encounter with science. He argues that although there was a Lawrence who was, as Aldous Huxley said, a ‘hater of scientific knowing’, there was another Lawrence who wrote what he called 'pure science' and who was 'in tune with contemporary, post-Darwinian science in its critical interrogation of all aspects of the "human"'. However, Wallace adds, 'in the literary criticism within which Lawrence's reputation as a humanist was forged, neither this version of Lawrence nor this version of science is readily available'.

Through considering John Hughlings Jackson - a doctor committed to the methods of positivism - as an intellectual mirror for Lawrence, I hope to further Wallace's attempt to complicate the understanding we have of Lawrence's relationship with science so that he emerges as both a hater of scientific knowing,

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52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., p. 4.
54 Ibid., p. 2
55 Ibid., p. 18.
56 Ibid.
but also a writer who was deeply involved with and committed to scientific ideas. Furthermore, this will begin to fill the current critical gap which exists concerning Lawrence and neurology (which Wallace's book does not mention). Through reading Lawrence's novels *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920) and his essays, especially his two 'psychology books' *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, alongside Hughlings Jackson's work, we see that they had a surprising amount in common, intellectually, despite their obviously and drastically different intellectual commitments and practical objectives. Hughlings Jackson provides a new way of reading Lawrence's work, and through examining Hughlings Jackson, who made such Lawrentian remarks as 'subject consciousness is something deeper than knowledge', in light of Lawrence, he emerges as a sort-of (and very surprising) proto-Lawrentian and proto-modernist.\(^{57}\)

In the remainder of this chapter I will explore four key areas of intersection between the work and thought of Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson: evolution, primitivism, the rejection of unconscious mental states, and shaking in association with blankness. Examining these areas reveals the way in which the anti-mental was at the centre of the projects of both men, and furthermore demonstrates the ways in which Lawrence celebrated the anti-mental whilst Hughlings Jackson pathologised it.

'The mind is but the last flower': Evolution

Herbert Spencer, who offered a non-Darwinian theory of evolution, was influential for both Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence and his ideas are evident, if not central, in the works of both of them. In *First Principles* (1867) - his 'towering intellectual reputation' in the 1870s and 1880s apparently 'rested on this one book' - Herbert Spencer offered his formula for evolution, although it had also previously been stated less explicitly in his earlier works from the 1850s.\(^{58}\) According to Spencer's theory of evolution every single thing in 'the whole of the

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\(^{57}\) Hughlings Jackson, 'Evolution and Dissolution of the Nervous System', *Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson: Volume 2*, p. 96.

cosmos, from the nebulae to moral sentiments, obeyed the same general laws.\textsuperscript{59} Apparently, the idea behind \textit{First Principles} came to Spencer in 1857 and he was sure to make it clear that he had arrived at his formula before the publication of Darwin's \textit{On the Origin of Species} in 1859.\textsuperscript{60} Although Spencer did not reject natural selection he saw more importance in Lamarckian use-inheritance. Furthermore, he understood natural selection as 'a mechanism by which the evolutionary process could operate within the sphere of organic life, rather than as a description of the evolutionary process itself'.\textsuperscript{61}

According to Spencer's version of evolution, everything in 'the knowable universe - whether inorganic, organic, or superorganic (his term for human artefacts like language or society) - developed according to a process which he described variously as the "law," "formula" or "principle" of evolution'.\textsuperscript{62} Spencer described evolution as 'an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity'.\textsuperscript{63} Spencer thought that everything was gradually developing 'from simple to complex, diffuse to integrated, incoherent to coherent, independent to interdependent, undifferentiated to differentiated; from homogenous and uniform to heterogeneous and multiform'.\textsuperscript{64} This applied to everything from cells to societies to the human nervous system and meant that higher life forms had evolved from lower ones and also that human reasoning and thought had evolved from the automatic responses of lower beings.\textsuperscript{65}

Spencer also posited what he saw as the inverse process of evolution, which he called dissolution. This meant that the evolutionary ascendancy was undone again, and the structure in question descended back into simplicity and homogeneity. Dissolution - which he understood as evolution reversing itself, being undone - meant, for Spencer 'a lapsing away of life from the universe' and meant life energy was 'gradually coming to an end' and a progressing towards 'omnipresent death'.\textsuperscript{66}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}
  \item \textsuperscript{60} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. v, xiii.
  \item \textsuperscript{61} \textit{Ibid.}, p. xiii.
  \item \textsuperscript{62} \textit{Ibid.}, p. xii.
  \item \textsuperscript{63} \textit{Ibid.}, p. xii.
  \item \textsuperscript{64} Spencer, \textit{First Principles}, p. 396.
  \item \textsuperscript{65} Taylor, preface to \textit{First Principles}, pp. xii-xiii.
  \item \textsuperscript{66} Herbert Spencer, \textit{The Principles of Psychology: Volume 1} (New York: D. Appleton, 1855)
  \item \textsuperscript{67} Roger Ebbatson, \textit{The Evolutionary Self: Hardy, Forster, Lawrence} (Brighton: Harvester, 1982), p. 104; Spencer, First Principles, pp. 416, 413.
\end{itemize}
Hughlings Jackson's debt to Spencer has been widely acknowledged by critics such as Smith, Jacyna and York and Steinberg. It was also directly acknowledged by Hughlings Jackson himself. Even though Darwin's thought was coming to prominence during the period in which Hughlings Jackson's career was established, there is no mention of Darwin in his selected writings. Instead Hughlings Jackson turned to Spencer. In his 'Remarks on the Evolution and Dissolution of the Nervous System' (1881) Hughlings Jackson opens with a description of Spencer's theory of evolution and how he stands in its debt. He wrote that 'I have long thought that Herbert Spencer's hypothesis of dissolution will enable us to develop a science of disease of the nervous system'.

Lawrence was well informed about evolutionary theories and philosophies; as a young man he read evolutionary thinkers such as Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer and Henri Bergson. Roger Ebbatson has argued that Lawrence's use of 'evolutionary theory' as a 'creative stimulus to the novelistic imagination' drew not only on scientific materialist thinkers such as Spencer but also on Romantic Naturphilosophie. He has argued that 'Lawrence reconciles causal evolution with nature mysticism' and 'Lawrence's work centres upon the clash between the rationalist-materialist reading of the Universe expounded by Darwinism and the trascendental-vitalist reading of the Romantic Nature tradition'. Hughlings Jackson's associations with Naturphilosophie are less established although C. U. M. Smith hints at them when he writes that 'Richard Owen, Darwin's major, though sometimes hidden, antagonist in the 1860 debates, held a Coleridgean Naturphilosophic view of the evolutionary process.

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70 Ebbatson, The Evolutionary Self, p. ix.
71 Ebbatson, Lawrence and the Nature Tradition, pp. 240, 258. More recently, critics have used these ideas to situate Lawrence as a precursor to recent trends in ecological writing. See, for example, Dolores LaChapelle, D.H. Lawrence Future Primitive in which "Future Primitive is a contemporary ecological term which is used to encourage people to revive some of the old sense of belonging to the natural world, of being a part of nature, and not hostile to it' (Raymond Dasmann in The Ecologist, quoted in LaChapelle, D.H. Lawrence Future Primitive, p x).
[...] It was Owen’s essentially epigenetic theory of evolution, rather than the random variation/selective retention theory that Darwin was later to propose, that attracted Jackson’. 72

Although Lawrence drew heavily on Romantic Naturphilosophie (and Ebbatson also emphasises the influence of earlier novelists such as Richard Jeffries on his evolutionary ideas), it was the evolutionary theories of Herbert Spencer which Lawrence (like Hughlings Jackson) was particularly taken with. Many of Paul Morel’s ideas in Sons and Lovers are based on Spencer’s works and, according to Ebbatson, ‘The Rainbow and Women in Love offer us a magnificently actualised presentation of Spencer’s principle of evolution and dissolution’. 73

Ebbatson has pointed to Spencer’s ideas as a source for both the development of society from simple to complex in The Rainbow as evolution and Gerald’s descent away from life in Women in Love as dissolution. 74 I will add to Ebbatson’s account of the novels in arguing that we can also see something of Spencer in Lawrence’s assertion in Fantasia of the Unconscious that ‘the mind is but the last flower’ (Fantasia, 34).

Lawrence’s description of the evolution of consciousness from pristine to mental in the psychology books is very Spencerian. It is also very Jacksonian which is significant as Lawrence’s own account is based in the nervous system and Hughlings Jackson applied Spencer’s insight to the science of the nervous system. This evolutionary understanding of the nervous system, informed by Herbert Spencer, is one of the fundamental similarities between the life philosophies of Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson who both saw fluency between the different levels of evolution within the nervous system as essential, and (even though Lawrence’s description of the evolution of the nervous system in his psychology books was ontogenetic, whereas Hughlings Jackson’s was phylogenetic) both described the anti- or non-mental as the root of and therefore a fundamental aspect of mental consciousness.

One of the key concerns of Lawrence’s psychology books was to communicate his (Spencerian) theory of the evolution of the human nervous system. The solar plexus, a nerve centre in the stomach, which Lawrence

74 Ebbatson provides detailed readings of these novels in these terms. See The Evolutionary Self, chapters 4 and 5.
established from the outset as being opposed to thought and the mind, is at the
centre of this account. Lawrence saw the solar plexus as the original part of the
nervous system, the 'root' from which the rest developed or evolved: 'This root of
all knowledge and being is established in the solar plexus; it is dynamic, pre-
mental knowledge, such as cannot be transferred into thought [...] The
knowledge that I am I can never be thought: only known'.  

He then describes how another centre, 'the lumbar ganglion,' develops after the 'original nucleus' of the solar plexus divides in two: 'the original nucleus divides. The first division, as
science knows, is a division of recoil [...] This second nucleus, the nucleus born of
recoil' (Fantasia, 35) is the lumbar ganglion, 'the nuclei of assertive individualism'
(Fantasía, 35). While the solar plexus is the root of our sense of interconnectedness, the lumbar ganglion, which develops out of the solar plexus, creates our sense of separateness and individuality: 'But at the lumbar ganglion,
which is the centre of separate identity, the knowledge is of a different mode,
though the term is the same. At the lumbar ganglion I know that I am I, in
distinction from a whole universe, which is not as I am' (Fantasia, 35). So, the
solar plexus is the root of original and non-mental consciousness. From this the
lumbar ganglion emerges in a reactionary way to assert the fiction of individuality
and separateness of the self from the rest of the universe. Lawrence explains how
the solar plexus makes the child believe it is one with the mother, while the
lumbar ganglion forces it to assert its individuality and separateness from the
mother.

Lawrence then describes the next process which occurs as the nervous
system evolves or develops: 'there is a new thrill of conjunction or collision
between the divided nuclei, and at once the second birth takes place. The two
nuclei now split horizontally' (Fantasia, 37) and two further upper centres, the
cardiac plexus and the thoracic ganglion, emerge. 'The horizontal division wall is
the diaphragm' (Fantasia, 37). As with the solar plexus and lumbar ganglion, one
is 'primal' (Fantasia, 37) and the other 'voluntary' (Fantasia, 37) and thus the
upper centres mimic their lower counterparts from which they have emerged:

75 D. H. Lawrence, Fantasia of the Unconscious in Fantasia of the Unconscious and
Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), pp. 34-5. All
quotations are from this edition and will be included in the text as either Fantasia or
Psychoanalysis with the page number.
In the centre of the breast, the cardiac plexus acts as the great sympathetic mode of new dynamic activity, new dynamic consciousness. And near the spine, by the wall of the shoulders, the thoracic ganglion acts as the powerful voluntary centre of separateness and power, in the same vertical line as the lumbar ganglion, but horizontally, so different. (Fantasia, 37)

Here we see how Lawrence's description of the nervous system in the psychology books is specifically developmental; he is concerned with giving an account of the evolution of the nervous system. In this account the non- or anti-mental (the solar plexus) is the original part of the nervous system from which consciousness producing mental elements subsequently evolve.

Thus it is established that Lawrence believed that the non-mental preceded the mental in the evolution of the nervous system and consciousness:

The primal consciousness in man is pre-mental, and has nothing to do with cognition. It is the same as in the animals. And this pre-mental consciousness remains as long as we live the powerful root and body of our consciousness. The mind is but the last flower, the cul de sac. The first seat of our primal consciousness is the solar plexus, the great nerve-centre situated behind the stomach. From this centre we are first dynamically conscious (Fantasia, 34).

Here Lawrence describes the mind as 'the last flower', emphasising the fact that he saw the mind as something which had evolved out of the more fundamental 'primal consciousness' of the solar plexus. This means that, for Lawrence, the mind developed out of non-mental consciousness and was thought of as a late evolutionary addition, rather than a driving force behind the human being. For Lawrence, in Fantasia of the Unconscious it is 'as a result' (Fantasia, 49) of the senses developing that the mind develops. Lawrence understood the anti-mental as the most fundamental and original state of consciousness, and the mind as a late blossoming flower which has evolved out of it. Like a flower, the mind has only a limited duration, it is a 'cul de sac'. Lawrence's metaphors here, whether botanical or topographical, both suggest that the mind is a late evolutionary addition to humanity and is limited in terms of its capacity to lead anywhere meaningful.

Following Spencer, Hughlings Jackson saw the nervous system as having evolved as follows: 'it is an ascending development in a particular order [...] (1) Evolution is a passage from the most to the least organised [...] (2) Evolution is a passage from the most simple to the most complex [...] (3) Evolution is a passage
from the most automatic to the most voluntary. He argued that as the nervous system evolved it had become more complex, less organised, and more voluntary. He thought that consciousness and the mind had evolved in order to allow us to function in our world which had changed so much from the state of nature. His description of the nervous system posited the non-mental as the most fundamental and also the lowest aspect of it, meaning that for him, as for Lawrence, the mind and mentality evolved after and out of the anti-mental. This meant that these so-called 'mental' qualities such as volition and consciousness were in fact made out of and built upon non-mental processes within the nervous system. As mentation was a product of non-mental physical processes, this also meant that the mind (or soul) was reduced to being a product of the nervous system's functionality rather than a central driving force behind and outside of it (as Cartesian dualism, Christianity, and earlier and some contemporary neurological work would have it). Hughlings Jackson paradoxically made the mind the most evolved, civilised and 'highest' state associated with the nervous system whilst simultaneously undermining qualities which had traditionally been associated with it such as volition, will and the metaphysical.

The Spencerian evolutionary understanding of the nervous system, with the mind as the last flower, which both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson shared, meant that they both came to describe the brain as a 're-representing' telegraph instrument or machine, removing its agency. Hughlings Jackson described the nervous system as an anti-mental sensori-motor machine. He believed 'that the whole central nervous system (the organ of mind included - the mind, of course, not included) is a sensori-motor mechanism of three levels'. In describing the nervous system as a mechanism or machine which does not include the mind he removed absolutely any sense of consciously motivated control within the system. With this machine set in its evolutionary framework, Hughlings Jackson

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76 Hughlings Jackson, 'The Evolution and Dissolution of the Nervous System', Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson: Volume 2, p. 46.
78 Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson were not the only writers of this era to describe the nervous system as a telegraph instrument. It was an extremely popular metaphor, as Vike Plock has outlined in her essay "I guess I'm just Nervous, then": Neuropathology and Edith Wharton's Exploration of Interior Geographies, Neurology and Modernity, pp. 184-203 (p. 188). Laura Otis has also emphasised this metaphor, observing that it dates back to 1851 (Otis, Networking, p. 11).
understood the brain as an agent of representation, something which mechanistically produced a meta-reality. He saw the brain as either re-representing or re-re-representing (depending on which brain area was involved) sensori-motor activities meaning that anti-mental, physical states were the basis of consciously experienced states such as emotions, time and space.

In his second Croonian lecture of 1884 Hughlings Jackson explained his evolutionary hierarchy of the nervous system in these terms:

The lowest motor centres are the anterior horns of the spinal cord and these represent certain parts of the body; The middle motor centres are the convolutions making up Ferrier’s motor region. These are more complex and less organised and represent wider regions of the body doubly indirectly; they are re-re-representative [...] The highest motor centres are the most complex and least organised centres, and represent widest regions (movements of the body) triply indirectly; they are re-re-representative.\(^80\)

For Hughlings Jackson, 'the highest centres represent, through the intermediation of the middle and lowest centres - that is re-re-represent - all parts of the organism in most intricate combinations'.\(^81\) Again, this meant that what people were accustomed to thinking of as conscious thought, or metaphysical constructs or feelings, were reduced by Hughlings Jackson to being the products of anti-mental sensori-motor activity. He wrote that '[m]entation involves emotion; as the highest emotions are (Spencer) compounded out of the lower, there will be, on the physical side, in man a large re-representation in his highest centres of the organic parts concerned during emotional manifestations'.\(^82\) This meant that the way in which an emotion or thought was experienced depended entirely on the non-mental nervous arrangements which underpinned it. C. U. M. Smith elaborates on this notion, focusing on Hughlings Jackson’s conception of time:

Our sense of time, says Jackson, derives from the cerebral re-re-representation of the cardiac systole [...] According to Jackson, the rhythmicity originating in the heartbeat forms the physiological substratum of the time-sense, and it is from this that the time “constant” has evolved [...] The third-order representation loses all contact with this low-level activity. The origin of the time-sense, writes Jackson, has “been forgotten”, and the higher order representation is, in a sense, “smeared” throughout the most recently evolved layer of the brain.\(^83\)

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\(^{81}\) Ibid., p. 64.

\(^{82}\) Ibid., p. 72.

In this context, Hughlings Jackson’s work becomes involved in the modernist project of documenting the subjective nature of time.

Lawrence’s understanding of mind and mental consciousness as ‘the final manifestation’ (*Psychoanalysis*, 247) of the process of evolution of the self also led him to understand the brain as an agent involved in re-representation of non-mental processes. When describing this idea he also, like Hughlings Jackson (who talks of machines and mechanisms), used technological metaphors. For Lawrence, the brain became a switchboard or telegraph instrument: 'For at first the control is non-mental, even non-cerebral. The brain acts only as a sort of switchboard' (*Fantasia*, 49). For Lawrence, the mind is not an end in itself, nor is it representing or outputting anything original. Rather it is described as a switchboard through which the desired contents of the telephone call, or bodily experience, (whose complex cross wiring is what has necessitated the creation of the switchboard or brain in the first place) can be accessed. He also wrote that the brain ‘prints off like a telegraph instrument, the glyphs and graphic representations which we call percepts, concepts, ideas. It produces a new reality’ (*Psychoanalysis*, 247). The brain only allows indirect access to ‘the circumambient universe’ (*Psychoanalysis*, 247). In this account, as in Hughlings Jackson’s, the brain becomes a means of comprehending and in some way consciously accessing or constructing the external universe. What we call concepts and ideas became highly mediated representations of the universe which can only be accessed through a re-representing ‘telegraph instrument’ which ‘produces a new reality’ based upon the anti-mental aspects of the nervous system and body.

Despite this similarity between the understanding of the brain as a re-representing machine, there were also crucial differences between the ways in which Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson applied their evolutionary understanding of the nervous system. Hughlings Jackson understood nervous disease as dissolution; lesions in the higher centres meant that the activities of the lower centres (which are usually suppressed by the higher centres) became visible, were unleashed. He understood nervous disease of the higher centres as dissolution (and he took the term directly from Spencer) as he believed that it allowed parts of the nervous system which were less evolved to come to the fore, and for the patient to experience their associated states which were usually hidden:
Disease is said to "cause" the symptoms of insanity. I submit that disease only produces negative mental symptoms answering to the dissolution, that all elaborate positive mental symptoms (illusions, hallucinations, delusions, and extravagant conduct) are the outcome of activity of the lower level of evolution remaining.\textsuperscript{84}

The implication here is that insanity is demonstrative of a less evolved state. The metaphors Hughlings Jackson uses to further put this point across are telling, revealing some of the social ideas which lay behind Spencer's notion of evolution: 'The higher nervous arrangements evolved out of the lower keep down those lower, just as government evolved out of a nation controls as well as directs that nation.'\textsuperscript{85} Health is described here in terms of governance; a healthy individual is one in which their higher nervous centres maintain a strict and repressive governance over the lower ones.

Through locating primal consciousness or the true pristine anti-mental unconsciousness in the solar plexus Lawrence launched an assault upon this kind of governance. He believed that ‘[t]he ideal mind' which he located in 'the brain[,] has become the vampire of modern life, sucking up the blood and the life' \textit{(Fantasia, 69)}. With his previous description of non-mental and non-ideal consciousness as blood-consciousness it is no coincidence that he described the brain - 'the seat of the ideal consciousness' \textit{(Psychoanalysis, 217)} - as a vampire. Lawrence felt that 'the vast bulk of consciousness is non-cerebral' \textit{(Psychoanalysis, 217)} but that the modern western world had forgotten this fact and had become dangerously and blindly obsessed with the type of ideal, cerebral, mental consciousness which Lawrence (like Hughlings Jackson) associated with the brain. Lawrence understood such neglect of solar plexus consciousness and an over dominance of the mind to be dangerous. Hughlings Jackson, on the other hand, thought that in health, the so-called 'lower' aspects of the nervous system ought to be kept in check by the higher, more evolved, faculties. He thought that in nervous disease the presentations of lower arrangements are present due to the 'no longer controlled activity of the next lower level of evolution (third layer)'.’\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{84} Hughlings Jackson, 'The Evolution and Dissolution of the Nervous System', \textit{Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson: Volume 2}, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., p. 58.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.
However, whereas Hughlings Jackson associated the destruction of the highest centres with neurological disease, Lawrence connected sickness with the dominance of the highest and most evolved centres. Lawrence wrote that

An idea which is merely introduced into the brain, and started spinning there like some outrageous insect, is the cause of all our misery today. Instead of living from the spontaneous centres, we live from the head [...] We are a people – and not we alone – of idiots, imbeciles and epileptics, and we don't even know we are raving (Fantasia, 82-3).

Here Lawrence uses the terms of neurological and psychiatric illness to describe the dominance of the highest centres of consciousness, the destruction of which Hughlings Jackson had identified as the cause of symptoms which were often associated with insanity. Although both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson placed the lower anti-mental level as the fundamental aspect of human consciousness, they had different attitudes towards it; for Lawrence it was desired, for Hughlings Jackson it was disease.

Both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson saw the anti-mental as the lowest and primary aspect of the nervous system. The anti-mental was, for them both, the least evolved, and therefore most primitive part of the nervous system. We have seen how they shared evolutionary ideas, and also how they diverged, in that Lawrence celebrated the primitive anti-mental whilst Hughlings Jackson involved it with his concept of neurological disease. Therefore, the evolutionary understanding of the nervous system of both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson, and the conclusions they drew from this understanding, will be central in informing the following section on primitivism which further explores the reactions of Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence to this most fundamental aspect of human functionality. Their evolutionary understanding of the anti-mental placed the primitive centre stage.

Primitivism

As various theories of evolution gained popularity, ['i]n the first quarter of the twentieth century, anthropology emerged as an academic discipline grounded in research on non-Western cultures and conceived of as moving toward the status
of science'.

Lawrence's relationship with the primitive or primitivism, and the influence which anthropology had upon him has been explored by a variety of scholars such as Trotter, Torgovnick and Jackson Lears. Jackson Lears specifically connects this "transatlantic revolt against overcivilisation [to...] what D. H. Lawrence called the "primal, dark veracity" underlying conventional pieties and civililities". D. H. Lawrence's primitivism tied into his interest in and valorisation of primal blood/solar plexus consciousness, which was both rooted in and inspired his interest in anthropology. In a letter to Bertrand Russell from 1915 he directly connected his anthropological reading with his belief in non-mental consciousness: 'I have been reading Frazer's *Golden Bough* and *Totemism and Exogamy.* Now I am convinced of what I believed when I was about twenty - that there [...] is a blood-consciousness which exists in us independently of the ordinary mental consciousness'. The evolution of the nervous system, as described by both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson, provides a new context in which to consider these ideas.

This fascination with the primitive was also part of what had attracted Lawrence to American literature which he felt contained something 'un-European and challenging to so-called civilised consciousness'. It was the quest for this un-European and un-civilised consciousness that led Lawrence on his travels around the world as it also did for anthropologists such as Malinowski and Haddon.

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Lawrence's journey to America (via Italy, Ceylon and Australia) was 'a quest for the symbols and myths whereby what he regarded as the waste land of modern western civilisation might be revived'.

It was no coincidence that Lawrence described Mexico as the solar plexus of America because he saw it as being in opposition to the white America of New Mexico: New Mexico had impressed him only with the soul of violent white America. What he felt he had uncovered in Mexico was "the sort of solar plexus of North America": the bundle of nerves at the pit of the stomach. Here solar plexus consciousness is explicitly (and problematically) described as non-European and non-Western and in particular it is characterised as non-white.

Lawrence's association between whiteness and mentality was bound up with the way in which he articulated the difference, as he saw it, between southern and northern Europeans. From autumn 1912 until spring 1913 Lawrence and his future wife Frieda spent some time living in the north of Italy. They journeyed to Italy from Germany, going on foot across the alps. In 1916, Lawrence published a book called *Twilight in Italy*. This is a collection of essays which describes and explores Lawrence's experiences of living in Italy during 1912 and 1913. One of the essays contained in this book began as a travel sketch in 1913 and was called 'The Lemon Gardens of Signor di P'. Lawrence then revised this in 1915 after the suppression of *The Rainbow* and when he did so added long philosophical sections to the essay and changed its name to simply 'The Lemon Gardens'. It is this revised version which appears in *Twilight in Italy*. This essay contains a number of musings about what Lawrence saw as the differences between Italian and Northern European traits. In 'The Lemon Gardens' Lawrence wrote that

This is the soul of the Italian since the Renaissance. In the sunshine he basks asleep, gathering up a vintage into his veins which in the night-time he will distil into ecstatic sensual delight, the intense, white-cold ecstasy of darkness and moonlight, the raucous, cat-like, destructive enjoyment, the senses conscious

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92 Cowan, *D. H. Lawrence's American Journey*, p. 1. Also see: Gasiorek, 'War, "Primitivism", and the Future of "the West": Reflections on D. H. Lawrence and Wyndham Lewis', *Modernism and Colonialism*, p. 95. Here Lawrence’s contempt for western attitudes, western decline and his journey away from the west are connected to his hatred of the 1914-1918 war.


and crying out in their consciousness in the pangs of enjoyment, which has consumed the southern nation, perhaps all Latin races since the Renaissance. It is a lapse back, back to the original position, the Mosaic position of the divinity of the flesh, and the absoluteness of its laws. [...] So the Italian, through centuries, has avoided our Northern purposive industry, because it has seemed to him a form of nothingness.  

Lawrence thought that whilst southern Europeans, such as the Italians, had remained in touch with their flesh and their sensual consciousness, the northern Europeans, such as the British, had lost touch with these aspects of themselves in favour of their mental consciousness as they had been too focused on the development of industry, science and machines. Lawrence began writing *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* when he was in Italy. Perhaps the sensual blood-consciousness he believed enveloped him in Italy inspired the valorisation of the anti-mental solar plexus in this book. He had also been in Italy when he wrote his important letter in which he first described 'blood-knowledge' in 1913. In this letter he explained to Ernest Collings that this 'is why I like to live in Italy. The people are so unconscious. They only feel and want: they don't know. We know too much'. The fact that Lawrence's first psychology book and his letter from 1913 in which he first formulated the notion of blood-consciousness were both written in Italy is particularly significant, and ties into Lawrence's increasingly racialised conception of blood-knowledge and the solar plexus. Lawrence's feelings about Italy were also relevant for *Women in Love* which he was writing at around the same time as he was revising the *Twilight in Italy* essays. David Bradshaw writes that *Twilight in Italy* 'leads on directly to the mythic sweep of *Women in Love*'.  

The first essay in *Twilight in Italy* is called 'The Crucifix Across the Mountains' and describes the route over the alps which Lawrence and Frieda took when walking to Italy. The opening sentence of this essay reads: 'The imperial road to Italy goes from Munich across the Tyrol through Innsbruck and Bozen to Verona, over the mountains. Here the great processions passed as the emperors went South, or came home again from rosy Italy to their own Germany.' This is also the setting for the dramatic denouement of *Women in Love*, describing the

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95 D. H. Lawrence, ‘Twilight in Italy’, *D. H. Lawrence and Italy*, pp. 1-168 (pp. 35-6).  
98 Lawrence, ‘Twilight in Italy’, *D. H. Lawrence and Italy*, p. 3.
road that Gerald fails to take at the end of the novel because he falls to his death before he can do so. With this in mind, David Bradshaw has observed that:

> For Lawrence, then, the Alps were not just a range of mountains, but a cultural fault-line. In failing to haul himself to the summit of the pass by means of the "great rope" used by the mountain guides, in order to descend "down the steep, steep fall of the south-side, down into the dark valley with its pines, on to the great Imperial road leading south to Italy" (*Wil*, p496), but to struggle onwards and upwards, past a "half-buried Crucifix" (*Wil*, p492) to oblivion, Gerald Crich meets his profoundly symbolic fate in the Tyrol.99

Gerald's fate is symbolic because he cannot escape into Lawrence's sensual Italy from the cold and snowy north with which he is associated.

Throughout *Women in Love* Gerald has been associated with northernness and snow and these images serve to demonstrate the over dominance of his mental consciousness, particularly in his relationship with Gudrun which is based upon her initial attraction to his northernness. When Gudrun sees Gerald for the first time in the novel she thinks that '[t]here was something northern about him that magnetised her. In his clear northern flesh and his fair hair was a glisten like cold sunshine refracted through crystals of ice'.100 Similar descriptions which associate Gerald with the north and with snow and ice appear frequently throughout the novel. And it is no coincidence that he is also repeatedly associated with death and destruction: he accidentally shot his brother as a child; his sister drowns; his father suffers a long and drawn out death; and then he himself dies and his corpse ends up frozen solid mimicking the state of his inner self. We have been encouraged to think of Gerald as cold, northern and industrious throughout the book and then he literally freezes to death. This aspect of Gerald's character is also demonstrated through his commitment to industrialisation and increasing productivity in his coal mine. In the chapter called 'In the Train' we get a sense that Birkin thinks that Gerald is doomed because he has no faith in love but instead has a blind faith in production and modernity. In the chapter called 'The Industrial Magnate' we glimpse Gerald's thoughts in relation to the mine:

> Everything was run on the most accurate and delicate scientific method, educated and expert men were in control everywhere, the miners were reduced

99 Bradshaw, 'Introduction' to *Women in Love*, p. xxi.
to mere mechanical instruments [...] He had converted the industry into a new and terrible purity. There was a greater output of coal than ever, the wonderful and delicate system ran almost perfectly (Women in Love, 238-9).

These are the qualities which Lawrence had associated with northern mental consciousness in Twilight in Italy.

Most importantly for Women in Love, Gerald and Gudrun's relationship, based upon an initial attraction to northern qualities, seems to be doomed to failure because of the over dominance of the mind as a force within it. After Gerald's father dies he comes to see Gudrun in the night but this is not portrayed as a sensual and mindless coming together, but instead, throughout their encounter 'Gudrun lay wide awake, destroyed into perfect consciousness' (Women in Love, 359). Later, when Gudrun asks Gerald if he loves her 'it was her voice only that coaxed him. Her senses were entirely apart from him, cold and destructive of him. It was her overbearing will that insisted' (Women in Love, 460). By the end of the novel Gudrun is feeling frustration towards Gerald who 'pressed upon her like a frost, deadening her' (Women in Love, 458). Gerald's frostiness is here associated with the dominance of his mental will and the detachment from the senses which his love creates in Gudrun.

Gudrun and Gerald's relationship rapidly deteriorates when Gudrun becomes increasingly friendly and flirtatious with the degenerate and primitive artist figure Loerke in the mountains. Gudrun's relationship with Loerke is associated with anti-mental understanding and non-European races, the very opposite of her relationship with Gerald:

They had a curious game with each other, Gudrun and Loerke [...] Their whole correspondence was in a strange, barely comprehensible suggestivity, they kindled themselves at the subtle lusts of the Egyptians or the Mexicans. The whole game was one of subtle inter-suggestivity, and they wanted to keep it on the plane of suggestion. From their verbal and physical nuances they got the highest satisfaction of the nerves, from a queer interchange of half-suggested ideas, looks, expressions and gestures, which were quite intolerable, though incomprehensible, to Gerald. He had no terms in which to think of their commerce, his terms were much too gross (Women in Love, 465-6).

Gudrun and Loerke seem to be able to communicate in a way which transcends their mental consciousnesses, satisfies their nerves, and associates them with Egyptians or Mexicans. This is too much for Gerald who is limited to the gross northern mental understanding and the vocabulary of 'commerce'. After finding
Gudrun and Loerke picnicking together Gerald hits Loerke and tries to strangle Gudrun before walking to his death thinking 'I've had enough - I want to go to sleep. I've had enough' (Women in Love, 491). Gerald 'might have gone on, down the steep, steep fall of the south-side, down into the dark valley with its pine, on to the great Imperial road leading south to Italy' (Women in Love, 496). But in this novel Gerald could not make it over the mountains into Italy. It is only Birkin and Ursula who make this journey south.

Unlike Gerald and Gudrun, Birkin and Ursula transcend their minds, and eventually themselves, in their relationship. We read of Ursula in relation to Birkin that 'she seemed to touch the quick of the mystery of darkness that was bodily him' (Women in Love, 325) and elsewhere that '[s]milingly they delighted in each other's presence, pure presence, not to be thought of, even known' (Women in Love, 324). Birkin tells Ursula that he wants sensuality 'and nothing else, at this point. It is a fulfilment - the great dark knowledge you can't have in your head - the dark involuntary being. It is death to one self - but it is the coming into being of another' (Women in Love, 42). This desire for sensuality and a relationship based on blood knowledge is what leads Birkin to demand a union beyond the self with Ursula. He says,

I want to find you, where you don't know your own existence, the you that your common self denies utterly. But I don't want your good looks, and I don't want your womanly feelings, and I don't want your thoughts nor opinions nor your ideas - they are all bagatelles to me (Women in Love, 151-2).

At first Ursula refuses and is mildly upset and offended, as perhaps anyone might be at such a proposition. However, by the end of the novel, after she has married Birkin, travelled to the mountains and then decided that she must leave to go to Italy, we hear Ursula voicing similar views as she says to Gudrun that 'Love is too human and little. I believe in something inhuman, of which love is only a little part' (Women in Love, 455). The great success of Birkin and Ursula is depicted as their transcendence of self, mind and identity.

Towards the end of the novel Ursula suddenly begins to feel that she must go south and away from the snow. She suggests this to Birkin and not long later they make the journey south to Italy, a country which Lawrence has described in Twilight in Italy as being mindless and sensual. Lawrence seems to be making a very clear point about the types of values he associated with what he
saw as the cold and overly mental north and the warm and sensual south. He organises the world, like the nervous system, into a vertical hierarchy which has various levels, each of which is associated with a different type or level of consciousness, ascending from least to most mental.

Within this hierarchy of Lawrence's, and on a conventional map, Africa lies even further south of, and below, Italy. The clash between the views of Birkin and of Gerald and Lawrence's understanding of primitivism also becomes associated with African statues - 'negro statues, wood-carvings from West Africa, strange and disturbing' (Women in Love, 74) - which appear in Women in Love. Birkin celebrates what he sees the African statues as representing: 'Pure culture in sensation, culture in the physical consciousness, really ultimate physical consciousness, mindless, utterly sensual' (Women in Love, 80). Gerald, on the other hand, 'hated the sheer African thing' (Women in Love, 80). When Gerald sees these statues in his friend Halliday's flat in London he is both shocked and awed, and Lawrence uses this scene to connect primitivism with child-bearing women and childbirth. Gerald thinks 'the carved negroes looked almost like the foetus of a human being' (Women in Love, 74) and finds the face of one of these statues which depicts a woman in childbirth to be 'conveying the suggestion of the extreme of physical sensation, beyond the limits of mental consciousness' (Women in Love, 74). Regarding Lawrence's portrayal of these statues in Women in Love, Marianna Torgovnick explains that 'for Lawrence the primitive represented a lost awareness of the body [...] To understand Lawrence's version of the primitive, we need to re-imagine the profound linkage in his mind between primitive societies and origins'. This connection between the primitive and origins is demonstrated here by the association between the African statues, foetuses and childbirth which are repeatedly described in terms of an absence of mind. This is also re-established through Lawrence's description of mindless, sensual, solar plexus consciousness as the origin of 'primal' human consciousness in the psychology books.

Later in Women in Love, Birkin thinks of the African sculptures just after he and Ursula have declared their feelings for one another, meaning that what the statues represent becomes associated with their relationship. Birkin reflects on how he sees the statues as representing 'mindless, progressive, knowledge

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101 Torgovnick, Gone Primitive, p. 160.
through the senses, knowledge arrested and ending in the senses, mystic
knowledge in disintegration and dissolution, knowledge such as the beetles have,
which live purely within the world of corruption and cold dissolution' (Women in
Love, 263). Here he describes this mindless and sensual knowledge as having
occurred in the Africans through dissolution which Lawrence uses here in the
Spencerian sense. Birkin (acting as Lawrence's mouthpiece) sees mindlessness,
which he celebrates, as the result of backwards evolution, a reversion of the
development which has resulted in the dominance of mental consciousness.
Birkin thinks that 't[h]ousands of years ago, that which was imminent in himself
must have taken place in these Africans [...]There remained this way, this awful
African process, to be fulfilled. It would be done differently by the white races'
(Women in Love, 263), for whom it would take the form of 'ice-destructive
knowledge, snow-abstract annihilation' (Women in Love, 263). This is something
like the dissolution which Gerald undergoes and which Birkin foreshadows by
thinking of Gerald at this moment: 'Birkin thought of Gerald. He was one of these
strange white wonderful demons from the north, fulfilled in the destructive frost
mystery' (Women in Love, 264). Only this is not quite right. Gerald, who hates the
African sculptures, does not achieve what Birkin calls this 'awful African process'
of mindlessness in his destruction in the snow. The 'African' process would be
achieved through a dissolution of mind and the self in favour of sensuality, and
this is much more akin to Birkin's own dissolution of his self in order to achieve a
relationship beyond the terms of mind, self and identity, which is a process and
type of relationship that Gerald explicitly rejects. In fact, Birkin and not Gerald is
the character in the novel who comes closest to fulfilling the ideals which he
associates with the African statues.

Hughlings Jackson also characterised a loss of mental volition as being a
process of dissolution as he associated the conscious mind with the highest and
most evolved centres of the nervous system. Like Lawrence, Hughlings Jackson
saw mindlessness as the result of dissolution, but while Lawrence sought and
valorised such mindlessness, Hughlings Jackson described it as disease and
therefore, for him, the primitive (or less evolved) became pathologised. Although
Hughlings Jackson's neurology placed the primitive at the very core and
foundation of human selfhood, he didn't use the term primitivism or embark on a
discussion of race. However, he did associate the lower nervous arrangements
with lower (and therefore more primitive) social classes and with anarchy through his use of metaphor:

The higher nervous arrangements evolved out of the lower and keep down those lower, just as government evolved out of a nation controls as well as directs that nation. If this be the process of evolution, then the reverse process of dissolution is not only "a taking off" of the higher, but us at the very same time a "letting go" of the lower. If the governing body of this country were destroyed suddenly, we should have two causes of lamentation: (1) the loss of services of eminent men; and (2) the anarchy of the now uncontrolled people. The loss of the governing body answers to the dissolution in our patient (the exhaustion of the highest two layers of his highest centres); the anarchy answers to the no longer controlled activity of the next lower level of evolution (third layer).\(^{102}\)

Dissolution in nervous disease is equated to the destruction of 'eminent men' and the letting loose of 'uncontrolled people' now free to indulge in 'anarchy' which they are normally only held back from by the powerful and apparently much more respectable and healthy governing forces. Note that the controlled and eminent class are all men, whereas the anarchic and uncontrolled underclass are 'people' of undetermined gender.\(^{103}\) Here Hughlings Jackson also associates the lower levels of the nervous system with a class of people he evidently (although perhaps not consciously) saw as a more primitive and less evolved class. Hughlings Jackson feared the primitivity he understood to lie at the base of the nervous system (it was anarchy) whereas Lawrence embraced and celebrated it. Both communicated a response to modernity in their description of the nervous system in these terms.\(^{104}\)

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103 Torgovnick explains how notions associated with the primitive were often projected onto women (Torgovnick, Primitive Passions, p. 8).
104 Hughlings Jackson’s description of the nervous system in these terms was by no means unique to him. In Inhibition: History and Meaning in the Sciences of Mind and Brain (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), Roger Smith describes the medical history of inhibition. He explains how Hughlings Jackson’s ""principle" of "loss of control" [...] reformulated already widespread ways of thinking about human action' (Smith, Inhibition, p. 23). Smith compares the passage from Hughlings Jackson which I have just quoted to a similar passage from fellow physician Charles Mercier (1851-1919). Smith argues that such metaphors were widespread in neurology and psychology from the time when doctors were describing control or inhibition. He notes that 'German-language physiological and medical psychology shared the belief [with Hughlings Jackson] in the hierarchy of controlling levels in the central nervous system' (Smith, Inhibition, p.171). Smith’s work re-emphasises how Hughlings Jackson saw the lowest levels of the nervous system as primitive and therefore in need of control or inhibition by the more highly refined upper
Having established the fact that both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson understood the nervous system, in Spencerian terms, as an evolved hierarchy, and that both men therefore placed the lowest and most primitive anti-mental part of the nervous system at the centre of their discourse of selfhood, I will now move on to explore this notion of the anti-mental specifically in relation to the concept of the unconscious. So far I have explored the way in which Lawrence celebrated the anti-mental whilst Hughlings Jackson pathologised it, and this strand will continue throughout the remainder of this chapter. The following two sections explore the ways in which both Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence rejected unconscious states of mind. Therefore, within the context of their work, unconsciousness is best understood using the concept of the anti-mental and situated within the evolutionary understanding of the nervous system from which it emerged.

Two Non-Freudians: Rejecting Unconscious States of Mind

Hughlings Jackson did not believe in unconscious states of mind. Hughlings Jackson described 'mental states' such as 'volition, ideation, reasoning, emotion' as 'nervous arrangements, which are in each, I submit, sensori-motor, triply indirectly representative of impressions and movements of parts of the body'.

These so-called 'mental states' were therefore considered by him in physiological rather than psychological terms. Understanding these 'mental states' as re-representations of sensori-motor processes meant that they were only ever the product of the highest nervous centres, associated with the mind (Hughlings Jackson described 'the highest centres [as the] physical basis of mind or consciousness') although they were built out of non-mental processes.

His belief that the conscious mind was a product of the highest levels of the nervous system led him to the following dilemma in 1884:

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levels of the nervous system, analogous to the ruling classes of society (Smith, Inhibition, p.171).

106 Ibid., p. 63.
The next question is as to range of concomitance. How “far down” in the nervous system does consciousness extend? [...] Some, indeed, speak of "unconscious states of mind," as if below consciousness, there were some faint mental states. I am not sure that I state this view with verbal correctness, as I do not understand it. [...] whether the activities of the lower nervous arrangements have attendant states of mind, however faint or not, is disputable.\footnote{Ibid., p. 73.}

In 1884, he found the idea of unconscious states of mind incomprehensible and 'disputable'; by 1887, he had entirely rejected it:

Unconscious states of mind are sometimes spoken of, which seems to me to involve a contradiction. That there may be activities of lower nervous arrangements of the highest centres, which have no attendant psychical states, and which yet lead to next activities of the very highest nervous arrangements of those centres whose activities have attendant psychical states I can easily understand. But those prior activities are states of the nervous system, not any sort of states of mind.\footnote{John Hughlings Jackson, 'Remarks on evolution and dissolution of the nervous system', \textit{Journal of Mental Science}, 33 (1887), 25-48 (p. 40).}

For Hughlings Jackson, consciousness was, by definition, mental, and unconsciousness was, by definition, anti-mental, a state of the nervous system and not state of mind. Hughlings Jackson did not believe that mental states such as ideation could ever be unconscious.

It was Hughlings Jackson's psycho-physical parallelism which he called the doctrine of concomitance, that lay behind this view:

The doctrine I hold is: first, that states of consciousness (or, synonymously, states of mind) are utterly different from nervous states; second that the two things occur together - that for every mental state there is a correlative nervous state; third, that, although the two things occur in parallelism, there is no interference of one with the other. This may be called the doctrine of Concomitance.\footnote{Hughlings Jackson, 'The Evolution and Dissolution of the Nervous System', \textit{Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson: Volume 2}, p. 72.}

Elsewhere, he explained that ‘[d]istinguishing the psychical from the physical, I would say that psychical states are not functions of any centre, but are simply concomitant with functioning of the most complex [...] sensori-motor nervous arrangements'\footnote{Hughlings Jackson, 'On Convulsive Seizures', \textit{Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson: Volume 1}, p. 414.}. Even though he called the brain the 'organ of mind' he was forced into the seemingly contradictory position that although mental and
physical states could occur in parallel, there was no causative relationship between them.

Hughlings Jackson did not assert the absolute truth of the doctrine of concomitance. Instead, he felt that it was practically useful for his medical practice as a neurologist rather than being true in any absolute sense. He wrote that '[i]t seems to me that the doctrine of concomitance is, at any rate, convenient in the study of nervous diseases'. This doctrine enabled Hughlings Jackson to treat patients without philosophical issues interfering with his medical practice. Nevertheless, despite the fact it was never stated as an absolute truth, Hughlings Jackson's doctrine of concomitance had huge implications for the practice of medicine as it fed into the separation of the mind and the body in medical practice. York and Steinberg explain that 'the Doctrine of Concomitance further separated the disciplines of neurology and psychiatry conceptually and institutionally [...] the Doctrine of Concomitance distanced neurology from psychiatry, and echoes of this separation persist today'.

Hughlings Jackson argued that psychic states (which occurred during certain conditions he was involved in treating, such as epilepsy) were not the concern of neurologists and thus they became the concern of others, such as psychiatrists and psychologists. Hughlings Jackson explained that 'the physical process in these and all other kinds of fits is our proper concern as medical men'. Therefore, '[a]vailing ourselves of abnormal affections of consciousness as signs of states of the central nervous system, we next, so to speak, put them on one side in order to study the process in fits in a purely materialistic manner'. Therefore for neurologists, ('medical men' as Hughlings Jackson called them) 'no difficulty can arise, if it be understood that insanity or "disease of the mind" is, with medical men, disease of the highest nervous centres, revealing itself in a

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114 Ibid., p. 418.
series of mental phenomena'. Therefore, he 'hope[d] later to show that explanation of materialistic states by psychical states are invalid'.

The understanding that ideas could produce physical states ('explanation of materialistic states by psychical states') was central to Freud's understanding of hysteria. Hughlings Jackson, on the other hand, wrote that

Those who accept the doctrine of concomitance do not believe that volitions, ideas, and emotions produce movements or any other physical states. They would not say that an hysterical woman did not do this or that because she lacked will [...] On the contrary they would give, or try to find, materialistic explanations of physical inabilities.

However, he added, 'I do not try to show what is the nature of the relation between mental and nervous states', acknowledging that there was a connection between these states which extended beyond what his doctrine of concomitance would allow. Showing the nature of this relation was beyond the genius, scientific exactitude and philosophical rigour of even Hughlings Jackson. It was also beyond the genius, scientific exactitude and philosophical rigour of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) who, like Hughlings Jackson, was writing neurological works in the 1870s-1890s. After Freud the neurologist had developed psychoanalysis he was forced to break with his early neurological influences, such as Hughlings Jackson, who had been an important early influence for Freud.

In 1891 Freud wrote his monograph On Aphasia. James Strachey has written that 'Freud's earlier views on the relation between the mind and the nervous system was greatly influenced by Hughlings-Jackson. This is particularly shown [...in] his monograph on aphasia'. In his book on aphasia, Freud described Hughlings Jackson's notion of psycho-physical parallelism or concomitance. Freud wrote that '[i]t is probable that the chain of physiological events in the nervous system does not stand in a causal connection with the

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116 Ibid., p. 52.
117 Ibid., p. 72.
118 Ibid.
psychical events' and even used Hughlings Jackson's term 'a dependent concomitant' in English in the original to describe how the psychical process is parallel to the physiological.¹²⁰ In On Aphasia, Freud also gave a 'most emphatic warning against confusions of this kind between the physical and the psychical in the process of speech'.¹²¹ He gave this warning by quoting directly from Hughlings Jackson:

> In all our studies of diseases of the nervous system we must be on our guard against the fallacy that what are physical states in lower centres fine away into psychical states in higher centres; that, for example, vibrations of sensory nerves become sensations, or that somehow or another an idea produces a movement.¹²²

James Strachey explains that 'the neurological method of describing psychopathological phenomena was accordingly the one which Freud began adopting' early in his career and this guided what Freud called his 'Psychology for Neurologists' which eventually became the Project for a Scientific Psychology (1895).¹²³ However, this project remained unfinished. James Strachey believed that 'the whole line of thought behind it was before long abandoned [...] the principal reason was that Freud the neurologist was being overtaken and displaced by Freud the psychologist'.¹²⁴ Strachey argues that

> in The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), a strange transformation had occurred: not only had the neurological account of psychology completely disappeared, but much of what Freud had written in the 'Project' in terms of the nervous system now turned out to be valid and far more intelligible when translated into mental terms. The unconscious was established once and for all.¹²⁵

Strachey connects Freud's explanatory shift from the terms of the nervous system to 'mental terms' as the moment in which the unconscious was established. He wrote this in his editorial preface to Freud's 'The Unconscious' (1915), an essay in which Freud distances himself from his previously held views

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¹²¹ Ibid.
¹²² Hughlings Jackson (1878), quoted by Freud (1891), reprinted as 'Appendix B' to 'The Unconscious', Standard Edition: Volume 14, pp. 207-8.
¹²⁴ Strachey, 'Editor's Note' for 'The Unconscious', Standard Edition: Volume 14, p. 163.
¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 164.
in which he had allied himself with Hughlings Jackson, and establishes his own psychoanalytic conception of the unconscious. By 1915, Freud had broken with the psycho-physical parallelism of Hughlings Jackson. According to Strachey, this is because '[t]he concept of there being unconscious mental processes is of course one that is fundamental to psycho-analytic theory. Freud was never tired of insisting upon the arguments in support of it and combating the objections to it.'\textsuperscript{126} However, Freud himself insisted in 1915 that his understanding of the unconscious was 'a practical one' which he developed in order to be able to adequately describe his patients.\textsuperscript{127} Furthermore, Freud wrote that '[o]ur psychical topography has for the present nothing to do with anatomy' perhaps suggesting that he had not totally abandoned the idea of a neurological basis of the psyche, as Strachey suggests, but rather felt that at present he did not have the means through which to establish it.\textsuperscript{128}

Nevertheless, in 'The Unconscious' Freud confidently asserted '[o]ur right to assume the existence of something mental that is unconscious and [...] that our assumption is necessary and legitimate, and that we possess numerous proofs of its existence'.\textsuperscript{129} Freud 'assume[s] the existence of something mental that is unconscious', but he does not claim that this really exists. His account remains practical and ambiguous despite the fact that he writes that 'the conventional equation of the psychical with the conscious is totally inexpedient'.\textsuperscript{130} This is because

all the categories which we employ to describe conscious mental acts, such as ideas, purposes, resolutions and so on, can be applied to them [unconscious states]. Indeed we are obliged to say of some of these latent states that the only respect in which they differ from conscious ones is precisely in the absence of consciousness.\textsuperscript{131}

Therefore, '[i]n psycho-analysis there is no choice for us but to assert that mental processes are in themselves unconscious'.\textsuperscript{132} Freud describes how 'a psychical act' such as 'an idea' can be 'transported from the system Ucs. into the system Cs. (or Pcs.)' meaning that psychical acts (such as ideas) are aspects of the

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., pp. 161-2.
\textsuperscript{127} Freud, 'The Unconscious, Standard Edition: Volume 14, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p. 175.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., p. 166.
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., p. 167.
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., p. 168.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., p. 171.
unconscious. Hughlings Jackson, although he died before 1915, would have rejected this notion as he remained firmly committed to his rejection of unconscious states of mind and unconscious ideas.

The notion of unconsciousness which Lawrence developed in his psychology books was distinctly anti-Freudian (or at least anti-Freudian to the extent that Lawrence understood Freudianism). He wrote that '[t]he Freudian unconscious is the cellar in which the mind keeps its own bastard spawn. The true unconscious is the well-head, the fountain of real motivity' (Psychoanalysis, 207). Lawrence's unconscious was not, like Freud's, understood in relation to the mind. Instead, like Hughlings Jackson's unconscious, it was explicitly anti-mental and was something which had preceded the existence of the mind in developmental terms rather than comprising repressed elements of the conscious mind, as Freud described the unconscious. Therefore, Hughlings Jackson's pre-Freudian theory of unconsciousness (and, in fact, Freud's own pre-psychoanalytic version of the unconscious) provides a better context than Freud through which to understand Lawrence's model of the unconscious.

In Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious, the first of the two psychology essays, Lawrence argued against the Freudian unconscious (so far as he understood it) in favour of what he called 'the true, pristine unconscious, in which all our genuine impulse arises' (Psychoanalysis, 207). He argued that Freud's unconscious is 'that which recoils from consciousness' (Psychoanalysis, 209) whereas 'the true unconscious [...] is innocent of any mental alteration' (Psychoanalysis, 212). Lawrence's main issue with the Freudian unconscious was that he understood it as being too much invested in mentality, as a sort of spin-off from the mind, whereas he felt that the true unconscious had nothing to do with (and preceded) mentality. This is unsurprising from a writer who spent most of his working life explaining, in one way or another, that 'mentality [...] is definitely limited' (Psychoanalysis, 214). Like Hughlings Jackson's, Lawrence's unconscious is different to the Freudian unconscious of 1915 because it is always anti-mental. As Lawrence had not actually read Freud, his description of his ideas

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133 Ibid., p. 174.
134 Although Lawrence didn't actually read Freud, Lawrence's version of anti-Freudianism has also been taken up by more recent anti-Freudians. For example in Anti-Oedipus, Deleuze and Guattari use Lawrence as an exemplary anti-Freudian throughout their text, writing 'Let us keep D. H. Lawrence's reaction to psychoanalysis in mind, and never forget it' (Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia (1984), trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 53.)
is never entirely accurate. Nevertheless, in his reaction against what he saw as the implicit *mentality* of the Freudian unconscious and his explicitly anti-mental understanding of unconsciousness he is strangely allied with the pre-Freudian Hughlings Jackson.

Critics have not picked up on this similarity between Lawrence's writing on the nerves and conception of the unconscious and writing on the nerves and conception of the unconscious of neurologists such as Hughlings Jackson. For example, Fiona Becket, writing on 'Lawrence and Psychoanalysis' tells us that ‘one of Lawrence’s principal aims in his writing of [...] the psychology books] was to re-locate unconscious functioning, or feeling, in the *body* challenging the psychoanalytic emphasis on *mind*. We might locate this focus on the body rather than the mind in the context of existing criticism which describes how the physical reality of the body was a central preoccupation for modernists (as outlined in the introduction). However, it is also possible to be more specific than that. Becket talks of Lawrence’s ‘bizarre language of the body’s centres of feeling in both *Psychoanalysis* and *Fantasia*; this is the language which refers pseudo-scientifically to the functions of the "plexuses" and "ganglia," nerve centres located between the chest and base of the spine’. She does not, however, acknowledge the connection of this ‘bizarre language’ to neurology and/or neuroscience which were areas which certainly fed into if they did not create the new modernist preoccupation with the body. Furthermore, neurology was (thanks to Hughlings Jackson in particular) a discipline which (at least ostensibly) dealt with the body rather than the mind and it was a discipline from which Lawrence had directly lifted his vocabulary after having read the neurological textbook from Edith Eder

It is possible that Lawrence might have seen ideas drawing on or relating to Hughlings Jackson's conception of the unconscious in the neurological textbook which Edith Eder gave to him in 1918. However, despite having seen a neurological textbook, Lawrence's treatment of the nervous system is still able to be famously described by James C. Cowan as 'anatomical nonsense' if taken literally. Cowan encourages us to take Lawrence's theory seriously as metaphor

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136 Ibid.
but not as literal physical fact: 'Whatever may be said for Lawrence's metaphors, his theory, if taken as literally as he sometimes states it, makes it anatomical nonsense'.\textsuperscript{138} However, as David Ellis has pointed out, 'the difficulty with Lawrence lies in adjusting to his use of science as both metaphor and fact'.\textsuperscript{139} Lawrence did mean what he said in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense, perhaps the difficulty is in the disjuncture between the Freudian and the Lawrentian unconscious, a disjuncture that Hughlings Jackson can perhaps help to navigate.

David Ellis believes that Lawrence would have encountered (and created) less difficulty if he had used the term 'biological psyche' instead of the unconscious. The 'Biological Psyche', Ellis writes, 'characterises his concerns much more satisfactorily than the unconscious'.\textsuperscript{140} Is this because the unconscious has come to be associated with repressed aspects of the mind, as Freud described it in 1915? Lawrence's bodily and non-mental account of what he called the unconscious in the psychology essays is certainly at odds with the unconscious as Freud came to describe it. The term 'biological psyche' associates Lawrence with the physical materiality of the biological body. As psychoanalysis moved further away from the neurology which had spawned it, a chasm grew between the discourses of biology and the psyche to extent that the phrase 'biological psyche' perhaps seems contradictory or unusual. However, a 'biological psyche' could also be a description of what Hughlings Jackson was concerned with when he wrote of the unconscious; that is, the so-called psyche understood in biological (and therefore, for him, anti-ment al) terms.

Having established the way in which both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson rejected the possibility of unconscious states of mind and therefore both advocated a specifically anti-mental unconscious, I will now explore this anti-mental unconscious as it manifests itself in relation to shaking and blankness in Lawrence's \textit{The Rainbow} and in Hughlings Jackson's work on epilepsy. For both, shaking becomes a crucial way in which the anti-mental aspects of the self and/or the nervous system became visible, making it a central means through which the Lawrentian or Jacksonian anti-mental unconscious manifests itself in their texts.

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid., pp. 19-20.
\textsuperscript{139} Ellis, 'Lawrence and the Biological Psyche', \textit{D. H. Lawrence Centenary Essays}, p. 95.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 90.
Shaking, 'Blankness' and 'Dreamy' or 'Voluminous' (Anti-) Mental States

Towards the end of Sense and Sensibility (1811) Elinor delivers the emotional news to her sister Marianne that Mr Willoughby had loved her all along and only rejected her because he had needed to marry for money. When she hears the news, Marianne 'trembled [...] and tears covered her cheeks.' 141 Marianne's trembling here is, like her tears, the direct result of the emotions which the news she has just received caused her to feel. In Jane Eyre (1847) Mr Rochester, we are told, 'experienced, too, a sort of strong convulsive quiver [...which was a] spasmodic movement of fury or despair.' 142 The reason Mr Rochester experiences such a movement is that he has just discovered that his hidden wife Bertha's brother is present as a witness who can prove that she is still, in fact, alive. This makes Mr Rochester (who is trying to prove that Bertha is dead) desperately angry, upset and frustrated. This is the cause of his 'strong convulsive quiver'. In both of these nineteenth-century and pre-Jacksonian examples, characters shake because they are experiencing an extreme emotion which is consciously known and can therefore be articulated as a coherent cause of their shaking, be it trembling or quivering.

In Lawrence's The Rainbow (1915) there are also bodily shakes or spasms which occur as a direct result of a knowable emotion such as when Tom Brangwen experiences a 'shiver of irritation' when struggling to deal with his wife's daughter Anna. 143 However, in The Rainbow there are also anti-mental shakes, bodily quivers or convulsions which occur through or alongside 'blankness', an absence of mind, or strong feelings which cannot be articulated, known or experienced consciously. Bodily activity caused by unconscious ideas was Freud's explanation of hysteria. What we find in The Rainbow seems to be the work of an unconscious of some sort, although, as we know, Lawrence was fiercely opposed to what he understood as the Freudian unconscious because of what he saw as its mentality. In The Rainbow we witness shakes which occur during explicitly anti-mental states. In Jacksonian terms, these shakes associated with an absence of conscious activity would be said to be the result of lower level

143 D. H. Lawrence, The Rainbow, ed. Mark Kinkead-Weekes (London: Penguin, 2007), p. 73. All quotations are from this edition and will hereafter be listed in the text in parenthesis with the page number.
(because not emotional, ideational or consciously experienced) nervous processes.

*The Rainbow* has been described by Roger Ebbatson as a Spencerian account of social evolution in which the 'evolutionary principle' of developing from simple to complex can be applied to 'to an entire society'. James Wood has described it as 'a mythical-historical account of the development of modern consciousness.' As society and consciousness develop in *The Rainbow*, each generation gets sex more into their head (in Lawrence’s terms), and this was not a good thing as far as Lawrence was concerned. In *Fantasia of the Unconscious* he wrote that '[t]he passions or desires which are thought-born are deadly [. . .]. We have been expelled from paradise] Not because we sinned, but because we got our sex into our head' (*Fantasia*, p. 85). This is because he felt that ‘[s]ex is our deepest form of consciousness. It is utterly non-ideal, non-mental. It is pure blood-consciousness' (*Fantasia*, 173). Taylor Stoehr has argued that Lawrence ‘advocated’ a ‘short-circuiting of the head’ as ‘an ideal of sexuality’. Therefore, for the modern self who has got sex into the head, Lawrence thought that evolution demanded, paradoxically, ‘the disintegration of “identity”’, a process which Gerald cannot accept in his will-driven move towards extinction in *Women in Love*.

*The Rainbow* portrays three generations of the Brangwen family getting sex successively into their heads. In each generation, mentality becomes a stronger and more destructive force in their lives. The first generation are Tom and Lydia Brangwen. Lydia's daughter Anna (whom Tom takes on as his own daughter) then marries Will Brangwen (Tom’s nephew). Will and Anna are the parents of Gudrun and Ursula and the final section of the novel follows Ursula as she embarks into her adult life and first love affairs which precede the action of *Women in Love*. Representing non-ideal and non-mental states in *The Rainbow* was of the utmost importance. One way in which Lawrence could achieve the representation of such unutterable states was through showing their manifestations in the bodies of his characters. These manifestations frequently took the form of such typically Lawrentian movements as quivering and

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144 Ebbatson, *The Evolutionary Self*, p. 78.
147 Ebbatson, *The Evolutionary Self*, p. 78.
trembling, although the causation of many of these trembles and quivers set Lawrence apart from his novelistic predecessors such as Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë.

When we first encounter Tom Brangwen we read that

He could not learn deliberately. His mind simply did not work. In feeling he was developed, sensitive to the atmosphere around him, brutal perhaps, but at the same time delicate, very delicate. So he had a low opinion of himself. He knew his own limitation. He knew that his brain was a slow hopeless good-for-nothing. So he was humble.

But at the same time his feelings were more discriminating than most of the boys, and he was confused. He was more sensuously developed, more refined in instinct than they (Rainbow, 17).

Tom Brangwen, whose 'mind simply did not work' is more developed in feeling, instinct and sensuality than others. Therefore feeling, instinct and sensuality are set up as non-mental faculties by Lawrence, and they are shown to be central to The Rainbow's first generation. Tom also seems to lack what Lawrence (and Hughlings Jackson) considered a late evolutionary development, volition: 'He could not voluntarily control his attention' (Rainbow, 18). After sleeping with a prostitute Tom becomes 'tormented now with sex desire' (Rainbow, 21) and this causes a 'hot, accumulated consciousness [...] in his chest, [and] his wrists felt swelled and quivering' (Rainbow, 28). Tom's desire causes a bodily consciousness which is not experienced through the conscious mind but rather through a hot and non-ideational consciousness in the chest and quivering in his wrists.

When Tom first sees Lydia Lensky, who he will marry, he experiences his desire for her in a similarly anti-mental way: 'He felt the fine flame running under his skin, as if all his veins had caught fire on the surface. And he went on walking without knowledge' (Rainbow, 32). This is not the conscious made unconscious through repression, but a type of knowledge that exists independently of consciousness. This anti-mental moment is also connected to the 'lower' levels of the body such as the bowels:

He could not think of anything. He felt that he had made some invisible connection with the strange woman. A daze had come over his mind, he had another centre of consciousness. In his breast, or in his bowels, somewhere in his body, there had started another activity. It was as if a strong light were burning there, and he was blind within it, unable to know anything, except that this transfiguration burned between him and her, connecting them, like a secret power (Rainbow, 38).
When Tom walks past Lydia he creates a similar non-ideational bodily experience for her: ‘she had felt Brangwen go by almost as if he had brushed her. She had tingled in her body as she had gone on up the road [...] Soon, she wanted him’ (Rainbow, 54). Tom wants to marry Lydia immediately, she has some reservations but eventually concedes. Once married, ‘[t]hey did not take much notice of each other, consciously’ (Rainbow, 58) and Lydia decides ‘what did it matter who they were, whether they knew each other or not’ (Rainbow, 60). Tom and Lydia, the first generation of the Brangwen family we encounter, are also the most anti-mental. It is their relationship, in which it doesn’t matter who they are, which resembles the ideal which Ursula will eventually return to with Birkin in Women in Love.

When Lydia becomes pregnant, Tom begins to feel distanced from her: ‘During the last months of her pregnancy, he went about in a surcharged imminent state that did not exhaust itself’ (Rainbow, 63). Connected to this ‘surcharged imminent state’, there are localised bodily convulsions. Whilst Tom feels this way, ‘his wrists trembled and seemed mad, and seemed as if they would burst’ (Rainbow, 62). This surcharged imminent state is not consciously known and cannot be labelled with any specific idea or emotion. Even though it is experienced by Tom, its characteristic trait seems to be that it does not involve mentality or consciousness. His trembling wrists are somehow associated with this state.

Shortly afterwards, Tom lets the young Anna into the pen of some geese she had wanted to go in and see: ‘She marched valiantly a few steps in. Her little body started convulsively at the sudden, derisive Can-cank-ank of the geese. A blankness spread over her’ (Rainbow, 66). A moment earlier Anna’s eyes had been full of ‘tears and vexation’ (Rainbow, 66) but when she is confronted with these birds with which she cannot have any kind of conscious or ideational communication her body convulses and ‘a blankness spread over her’. Blankness, an absence of mind, seems to be associated in some way with nature and animals and Anna’s daughter Ursula has a similar reaction to animals at the end of the novel. Just before her prophetic vision of dissolution, inspired by a rainbow, in which she feels that humans ‘would cast of their horny covering [...] and] clean naked bodies would issue to a new germination, to a new growth, rising to the light and the wind and the clean rain of heaven’ (Rainbow, 459), Ursula has been
with some horses. "The horses stirred their flanks in a knot against her. She trembled forward as if in a trance" (Rainbow, 453). Ursula's reaction to the horses mimics her mother Anna's reaction to the geese many years earlier. Both encounters with animals produce shaking (for Anna a convulsion and for Ursula a tremble) and a trance-like blankness which is anti-mental. These states can be understood as positive and desirable for Lawrence as The Rainbow is a novel which celebrates such communion with nature, as Ursula's vision at the end of the book demonstrates.

The Rainbow also celebrates mindlessness in relation to sexuality, as we have seen in relation to the coming together of Tom and Lydia. However, as I have mentioned, sex is seen as getting increasingly 'into the head' with each successive generation. When Lydia's daughter Anna is having sex with Tom's nephew Will, Will feels that 'she was a flame that consumed him. The flame flowed up his limbs, flowed through him, till he was consumed, till he existed only as an unconscious, dark transit of flame, deriving from her' (Rainbow, 121). Elsewhere, '[h]is body trembled as he held her. [...] He did not understand, he had yielded, given way. There was no understanding' (Rainbow, 145). Will trembles as he holds his wife in the process of yielding to the lack of understanding inherent in their sexual relationship: 'He was not interested in the thought of himself or of her' (Rainbow, 147). However, this loss of interest in thought no longer operates as simply as it did for Lydia and Tom as it troubles Anna: 'oh, and how that irritated her!' (Rainbow, 147). The mind gets between them:

She, almost against herself, clung to the worship of the human knowledge [...] She believed in the omnipotence of the human mind. He, on the other hand, blind as a subterranean thing, just ignored the human mind and ran after his own dark-souled desires, following his own tunnelling nose. She often felt she must suffocate. And she fought him off (Rainbow, 161).

Anna worships knowledge and believes in the mind almost against herself, but not quite. Later in the novel Ursula thinks that '[t]o limit, as her mother did, everything to the ring of physical considerations, and complacently to reject the reality of anything else, was horrible' (Rainbow, 328). This comment shows that Ursula has not fully understood her mother who we have been told believed in 'the omnipotence of the human mind' and did not limit herself to physical
considerations as Ursula believes she did. Nevertheless, this is crucially the way in which Ursula differentiates herself from the previous generation.

However, unconsciousness during sex is not totally unattainable for Ursula during her love affair with the soldier Anton Skerebensky. Their love-making, we are told, 'was bliss,' (Rainbow, 414) after which 'the light of consciousness [was] gone' (Rainbow, 414) and 'the darkness reigned' (Rainbow, 414). However, such unconscious bliss does not lead to their marriage as it did for Ursula's grandparents as thought gets in the way: "I don't think I want to be married," says Ursula' (Rainbow, 432). When Ursula feels something which resembles 'the surcharged imminent state' with associated shaking of her grandfather in relation to Skerebenksy it is caused not by his physical presence but by the highly intellectual act of writing him a letter:

Trembling, she asked the librarian, who was her friend, if he would give her an envelope. She sealed it and addressed her letter, and went out, bare-headed, to post it. When it was dropped into the pillar box, the world became a very still, pale place, without confines (Rainbow, 407).

'The world became a very still, pale place, without confines', somehow expanded and more voluminous, but not based in a specific feeling or idea. However, this state does not induce shaking or convulsing in Ursula here (she only trembles when speaking to the librarian) as it will do when she is with the horse, perhaps indicating some degree of conscious or mental control over her own body during her interactions with Skrebensky, and particularly when her love is mediated through writing, as it is here. Ursula will have to wait until she meets Birkin in Women in Love to achieve the dissolution of her selfhood required, Lawrence thought, by the modern self in order to have some sort of successful intimate relationship.

These voluminous, blank, imminent, non-mental states, often with associated shaking, happen to all members of the Brangwen family. Although these events manifest themselves in subtly different ways in each situation and for each character, such states transcend the generations and show the particular way in which Lawrence sought to portray what he understood as non-mental unconsciousness in The Rainbow. Such voluminous, blank, imminent, non-mental states are also associated with shaking in Hughlings Jackson's work on epilepsy. Both Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson connected a lack of consciously
experienced emotion or ideation and shaking in a way which is distinctly different from the shaking portrayed in the nineteenth-century novels quoted at the start of this section. It also sits apart from the account of bodily disturbance given in Freud’s descriptions of hysteric. The difference is that the unconscious states which are associated with bodily states such as shaking in The Rainbow and Hughlings Jackson’s writings are connected in a manner which does not necessarily involve the mind or its products (such as ideas).

Hughlings Jackson believed that ‘Convulsions and other paroxysms are owing to (1) sudden, (2) excessive and (3) temporary nervous discharges’. 148 He was sceptical of the idea that there was ’some entity of which epilepsy is the proper name’. 149 Instead, he believed that ‘[a] convolution is but a symptom, and implies only that there is an occasional, an excessive, and a disorderly discharge of nerve tissue on muscles’. 150 Furthermore, he understood pathological convulsions as being 'an exaggeration of normal function' because even 'the most brutal-looking convolution is only the sign of a departure by a vast excess and by a caricature from normal nervous discharges'. 151 He illustrates this by imagining the existence of a buttoning centre (which he acknowledges as an absurd proposition but useful as a heuristic tool). 152 If there was an excessive discharge in the buttoning centre, then all the actions of buttoning which were normally carried out in a voluntary and orderly manner would instead occur automatically and all at once. There would be a chaos of movement based upon the normal movements undertaken when buttoning (sewing a button onto an item of clothing).

Hughlings Jackson’s understanding of convulsions was also informed by his evolutionary understanding of the nervous system, and he believed that ‘[c]onvulsions, or I will say, fits, differ in kind, according as centres [...]make up different evolutionary levels of the central nervous system’; ‘There are, I submit,
three kinds of fits corresponding to the three evolutionary levels'. As the highest centres, although 'they are sensori-motor as certainly as the lumbar enlargement is' are also 'the "organ of mind," or anatomical substrata of consciousness', therefore lesions or instability in the highest centres cause types of fits which affect consciousness:

It is necessary now to speak of abnormal affections of consciousness with regard to kinds of fits. I presume that there is loss of it in severe fits of all kinds. Consciousness is not a function of the highest cerebral centres; it is simply concomitant with their functioning. There is no physiology of the mind any more than there is psychology of the nervous system. On the basis of mere concomitance, mental symptoms (synonymously abnormal states of consciousness) are, strictly speaking, only signs to physicians of what is not going on or of what is going on wrongly in part of a patient’s arterial organisation [...] Thus cessation of consciousness at, or close upon, the onset of an epileptic fit is of value to physicians as a sign that the correlative physical process, the excessive discharge, begins in some part of the “organ of mind,” or equivalently, highest centres of the cerebral system; the physical process in these and all other kinds of fits is our proper concern as medical men.

As far as Hughlings Jackson was concerned, these affectations of consciousness were associated with the nervous system, but they were not a suitable object of study for a neurologist: ‘Availing ourselves of abnormal affections of consciousness as signs of states of the central nervous system, we next, so to speak, put them on one side in order to study the process in fits in a purely materialistic manner’. Despite, this he did in fact write quite a lot about these abnormal states of consciousness (perhaps better thought of as absences of consciousness) which he saw as epileptic fits in themselves. For example, he wrote about them in the paper ‘On a Particular Variety of Epilepsy (“Intellectual Aura”) One Case with Symptoms of Organic Brain Disease’ which appeared in Brain in 1888. Here, Hughlings Jackson refers to a type of epilepsy which features ‘a very elaborate or “voluminous” mental state' which is reminiscent of some of the states I have considered in The Rainbow. Through drawing this comparison I’m not suggesting that we might read epilepsy into The Rainbow or

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153 Ibid., pp. 413, 414.
154 Ibid., p. 414.
155 Ibid., p. 417.
156 Ibid., p. 418.
158 Ibid., p. 385.
try and diagnose the characters. Rather, I simply wish to draw attention to the strikingly similar ways in which Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence associate shaking and such voluminous states of blankness and to the fact that Hughlings Jackson pathologised such states whilst Lawrence celebrated them.

Hughlings Jackson explains that the "voluminous" state has previously been referred to as 'the so-called "intellectual aura"' although he prefers the term "dreamy state" because he doesn't see it as an aura of epilepsy but a small fit or petit-mal in itself.\textsuperscript{159} Also, he explains that he finds the term dreamy to be a 'less question-begging adjective' than intellectual.\textsuperscript{160} The "dreamy state" is a defect of consciousness which involves both a loss and a gain of it; in the "dreamy state" 'there is not always loss, but there is, I believe, always at least defect, of consciousness co-existing with the over-consciousness ("dreamy state").\textsuperscript{161} This usually seems to mean that a high level activity, such as an emotion, feeling or idea, is experienced but without any emotional or ideational content. This often manifests itself in a state of what Hughlings Jackson called "reminiscence" in which the patient would not be able to recall what it is that is being remembered. Instead there is just a strong sense that reminiscence (of nothing) is taking place. This is commonly referred to as Déjà Vu and, as Hughlings Jackson says, 'this peculiar feeling occasionally occurs in many people who are supposed to be healthy'.\textsuperscript{162}

Hughlings Jackson describes a number of his patients who had experienced this condition and connects it to the onset of later, more severe, convulsive seizures which they often developed. For example, 'a striking illustration of slight epileptic seizures with the "dreamy state," before severe fits'.\textsuperscript{163}

A man, H., aged 29, who consulted me, March 1882, began to be ill in 1873 or 1874 (he could not be more precise). He had "curious sensations," "a sort of transplantation to another world, lasting a second or so." He otherwise described them by saying that whatever he was doing at the time he (now I use his words) "imagined I have done this before, imagined I was in exactly the same position years ago".\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid., p. 389.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., p. 386.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., p. 388.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., p. 369.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
In this account, such curious sensations, sense of Déjà Vu and fantastical fantasy experience of having visited another world are all understood to be 'signs of states of the central nervous system'. Hughlings Jackson believed that during these fits his patient was 'not quite unconscious in them; he had defect of consciousness only'.

Another patient of Hughlings Jackson's, ‘A woman, M.W., 42’ consulted him in 1881. ‘Since the age of 13 or 14 she had been subject to the frequent occurrence of slight “nervous attacks”; with each of them was “reminiscence.” She also called them “flashes of unconsciousness”; the two descriptions showing that the mental state was duplex, of two opposite elements’. Such petit-mal seizures, as Hughlings Jackson understood them, were, he explained, signs of the beginning of the onset of a more severe form of epilepsy which, if left untreated, would also lead to bodily convulsions. This was the case for M.W., as with many of the other patients he describes. He warned against misdiagnosis of these cases as hysteria believing them to have a physiological (anti-mental) rather than a psychological (mental) basis.

Yet another patient, 'a man (W.)' is quoted by Hughlings Jackson to describe the "dreamy state". W. described it as "get[ting] an idea in my head different from what I am thinking of." Speaking of W., Hughlings Jackson explained that

In the attacks the patient would become "vacant," and would sometimes lose consciousness altogether for a short time. But besides negative affection of consciousness (that is, when consciousness was only defective), there was at the same time the diametrically opposite, the super-positive state, “increase of consciousness,” that is, there was the so-called “intellectual aura,” what I call the “dreamy state”.

The "increase in consciousness" or "dreamy state" would be described by Hughlings Jackson as a paroxysm of consciousness. However, the patient is, at the same time, "vacant" or unconscious, and this means that there is no mental

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165 Ibid., p. 389.
166 Ibid., p. 398.
167 Ibid.
168 Ibid., p. 390.
169 Ibid.
170 Ibid., p. 393.
content to their increase in consciousness. Hughlings Jackson's dreamy states are strangely anti-mental; they have no mental content and they are not understood in mental, but in physical, terms, and are also associated with bodily shaking.

In both *The Rainbow* and Hughlings Jackson's work on epilepsy, states which seem to be psychic, are shown to be anti-mental through their physiological/physical associations with lower nervous centres and lack of conscious or ideational content. As with anti-mentality in general, they are celebrated and sought out by Lawrence and pathologised and sought to be medically treated by Hughlings Jackson.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I have shown that both Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence were influenced by Herbert Spencer, and that they both understood the nervous system as an evolved hierarchy in which the anti-mental was the original, and therefore most fundamental, part of it. This placed the primitive at the centre of the discourse of both men. Based upon this, I have also established a type of non-mental, non-Freudian, 'unconscious' which is found in the work of Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence. This physicalised understanding of the unconscious, understood as the anti-mental, will be central throughout the rest of the thesis, as will its associations with the primitive.

For Lawrence the anti-mental and all it was associated with was an aspect of humanity which he sought and celebrated, whereas for Hughlings Jackson it was the foundation of his account of neurological disease and was therefore pathologised. However, although Hughlings Jackson pathologised the anti-mental he also made it the foundation of healthy selfhood, and therefore this led to a spectrum of health and disease in which the distinctions between both health and disease as well as the mind and the anti-mental were no longer clear cut.

My reading of Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence alongside one another has, I hope, demonstrated the intellectual affinities between them, and has established neurology as a discipline of crucial importance for understanding Lawrence's work. Lawrence refers to neurological terms directly in the psychology books, which he wrote after reading a neurological textbook in 1918, and this was a crucial influence for Lawrence alongside the more established influences of psychoanalysis, anthropology and theosophy. However, Lawrence's affinities with
neurology, and with Hughlings Jackson in particular, also extend beyond his reading of this textbook, as I hope I have shown through my readings of The Rainbow and Women in Love, both of which were drafted before Lawrence read the textbook.

Aspects of human functionality which were not based in or directed by the mind were central aspects of Lawrence's work and philosophy. As neurology established itself as a so-called discourse of the body, as opposed to psychology and psychiatry which were discourses of the mind (a divide which Hughlings Jackson's work and his Doctrine of Concomitance was central in establishing) then it too became an area in which aspects of human functionality which were not the mind were also central, and paradoxically became central to the understanding of the mind or psyche.

Having established the many intellectual affinities between Lawrence and Hughlings Jackson I hope to have furthered the aim of Jeff Wallace in establishing the many important connections which Lawrence had with scientific thought, despite his reputation for being a 'hater of scientific knowing'. However, this statement of Huxley's has not been proven entirely untrue as we have seen that Lawrence celebrated and sought that which medical professionals such as Hughlings Jackson pathologised. After all, when Lawrence read the neurological textbook he was specifically angered by the diagnoses which could be considered as a hallmark of the medical profession operating under the auspices of 'scientific knowing'. Therefore, Lawrence does, to some extent, remain a hater of scientific knowing despite also having numerous intellectual affinities and connections with important scientific figures within the positivist tradition, such as Hughlings Jackson.

In Fantasia of the Unconscious Lawrence wrote that '[w]hat we want to do is to trace the creative or religious motive to its source in the human being, keeping in mind always the near relationship between the religious motive and the sexual' (Fantasia, 18). In the following chapter I will explore the religious and the sexual - perhaps two quintessentially anti-mental aspects of human experience - in the works of sexologist Havelock Ellis and writer H.D. (who was friends with Lawrence), extending the account of the anti-mental and its implications which has so far been given here.
2. H.D. and Havelock Ellis: Physicality, Spirituality and the Sea

The new centrality which neurologists such as John Hughlings Jackson gave to the lower, non-mental, parts of the nervous system in explaining human existence gave these aspects of experience a newfound importance for early twentieth-century accounts of the self. The work of these neurologists meant that the mind and the emotions (including religious ones) were understood to be products of the materiality of the body rather than the result of any metaphysical agent, be that the Cartesian mind or God. According to Anne Stiles, '[b]y suggesting that certain parts of the brain controlled specific emotions and behaviours, [late nineteenth-century] localizationists contradicted the popular belief in a unified soul or mind governing human action, thus narrowing possibilities for human agency'. If agency was diminished, this meant that 'non-agency' came to assume a more fundamental part in human existence than it had previously done. Therefore anti-mental and non-volitional processes had to be newly embraced as central aspects of selfhood.

This neurological anti-mental challenged notions of God. Stiles continues:

In 1846, French physiologist Jean Pierre Marie Flourens argued that pinpointing the cerebral origin or movements and thoughts apparently "undermined the unity of the soul, human immortality, free will and the very existence of God." [...] He was frankly distressed by the idea that seemingly "purposive" mental actions might be attributed to "nothing else than a physical mechanism".

But while Flourens was, according to Stiles, 'distressed' at the idea of the human being "nothing else than a physical mechanism," others - such as H.D. and Ellis - took a different approach. The newly physical basis given to the notion of the soul, free will and religiosity need not diminish their spiritual power. Instead, it might mean that the physical was newly sacred; the physical, rather than the metaphysical, could (and must) be understood as the site and cause of religiosity and spirituality.

1 Anne Stiles, Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 10.
2 Ibid., pp. 10-11.
In this chapter I argue that even though the anti-mental was neurologically grounded and associated with the primitive and the low, this does not mean that it was antithetical to notions of spirituality. The commonly held notion is that the rise of positivist science within modernity dethroned religion - which it did - but the story is also more complicated than that. Evolution challenged three main aspects of Christian theology: the argument from design, the creation story, and the metaphysical soul. Materialism in a more general sense also debunked the latter. However, although evolution and materialism destroyed many aspects of orthodox theology and the institution of the church, it didn’t - and couldn’t - touch the reality of religious experiences or spiritual feelings. However, it did leave these experiences requiring a new home - one which could be grounded in the material body and the new evolutionary narrative of human becoming. In a way it was the rise of materialism and evolution which enabled mystical or spiritual experiences to split off from the church and religion and find their way into discourses beyond the church or traditional religion, such as those considered here.

In this chapter I introduce the concept of the oceanic as one which brings together spirituality and the biological reality of the sea, as I will explore this spirituality-sea nexus in the works of writer H.D. (1886-1961) and sexologist Havelock Ellis (1859-1939). Both H.D. and Ellis associate apparently religious experiences with a loss of mind - connecting spirituality and anti-mentality - whilst simultaneously connecting such spiritual experiences with what they considered to be the evolutionary primitiveness or lowness of the sea and what might be considered as its more ‘anti-mental’ creatures, such as jellyfish. They both also specifically associate religious emotions with physiology, specifically the lower centres of the nervous system.

In exploring the ways in which both H.D. and Ellis blended their understandings of spirituality and the sea I will argue that they understood the physical as the spiritual, rather than abandoning the spiritual when faced with the newly materialised self which had emerged from the conclusions of the late nineteenth-century neurologists. The sea and its creatures were particularly

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3 The connections between the ocean, evolution and spirituality have also been explored - in a very different context - in the work of contemporary theologian Catherine Keller who explores metaphors of the sea and religious discourse, and asks questions such as ‘would we call the ocean “God”? (Catherine Keller, Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 213).
associated with 'lowness' (in evolutionary terms) or primitivism, and both H.D. and Ellis focus on these aspects of the sea and its animals. Yet, simultaneously, they both also associate the biological, primitive marine life and environment in all its physicality with the higher, and supposedly non-physical spiritual aspects of life. 'Implicitly or explicitly,' Stiles argues, 'neurological research [...] put pressure upon the boundaries between human and divine, human and animal, human and machine'. H.D. and Ellis both explored these boundaries, and in doing so broke them down.

**Science and Religion: Critical Approaches**

Although the rise of science and Darwin's legacy in the late nineteenth century are usually and conventionally understood to undermine and be incompatible with religion, there is a growing body of work which challenges this view, most significantly the work of historians such as John Hedley Brooke, Thomas Dixon, Geoffrey Cantor, and Stephen Pumfrey. Building on this body of work, I argue that writers inclined towards both positivist neurology and spirituality embraced and made central remarkably similar aspects of human experience. This challenges the notion that biological determinism within late-nineteenth-century neurology was necessarily antagonistic towards and incompatible with notions of spirituality and religiosity. Thus, the apparent 'secularization' of literary representation is challenged, as it has already been by Pericles Lewis in his book *Religious Experience and the Modernist Novel* (2010) in which he argues that "'[s]ecularization,' [...] is a misleading word for what happened to art's relation to the sacred in the twentieth century'.

Sexology and sexuality played a particularly central role in this merging of science and spirit, as H. G. Cocks emphasises in his article on 'Religion and Spirituality' in the context of the history of sexuality:

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4 Stiles, *Popular Fiction and Brain Science in the Late Nineteenth Century*, p. 9.
Histories of sexuality have tended to recapitulate existing stories of modernity, one of which is the apparently increasing secularization of the world. [...] The history of sexuality appears to run from sin to crime to sickness: from the religious to therapeutic. Traditionally, historians posited a decisive break between these modes of knowledge, but in many ways they are more analogous than separate.7

He goes on to prove his point using examples from the work of Ellis which connect 'higher' psychic-religious states with 'scientifically' explained homosexuality.

Suzanne Hobson has also challenged 'modernism's much discussed hostility to traditional religious pieties' in her book Angels of Modernism (2011) using both Ellis and H.D. as specific examples of figures who brought religious symbols into modernism.8 For example, Hobson explores 'the analogy between the angel and the third sex' in the work of both Ellis and H.D.9 Lara Vetter also 'contends that the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries saw the emergence of a discursive nexus of religion and science', challenging the assumption that science and religion were necessarily antagonistic during this period.10 In a sentence dedicated to explaining that 'the notion of an interrelationship between science, religion, and art' was endorsed by many figures, she refers to five people specifically: P. D. Ouspensky, Albert Einstein, James Jeans, H.D. and Havelock Ellis.11 Elsewhere, in a chapter which argues that 'the roots of H.D.'s sexual symbols' are in Darwin, Ellis and Freud, Deirdre Anne Pettipiece writes that 'blending spirituality with evolutionary science is a persistent element of H.D.'s works'.12 Moreover, leading H.D. critic Susan Stanford Freidman also notes the manner in which H.D. combined science and religion, stating that 'H.D.'s interactions with psychoanalysis and esoteric religion [...] are]a particularly clear instance of a larger debate in modern thought between

9 Ibid., p. 132.
11 Ibid., pp. 248-9.
scientific and artistic modes of creating meanings'. ¹³ Freidman's book *Psyche Reborn* (1981) examines H.D.'s analysis with Freud and her study of esoteric religion as the roots for the poetry she wrote in the 1940s and 50s.

These critics show that Ellis and H.D. were central figures in the merging of the spiritual and the scientific, yet their work has not specifically addressed the way in which H.D. and Ellis connect the sea with religiosity, nor the relation this has to their integration of ideas from late-nineteenth-century neurology. Both H.D. and Ellis were extremely concerned with the sea and its creatures, as well as the nervous system. For both writers, the ocean and the spiritual became sites of the anti-mental in both a literal and metaphorical sense. They both explored the interface between spirituality and the ocean, often using experiences which were dictated by forces understood to be other than the mind in order to do so.

**The Oceanic**

The Oceanic as a concept blends spirituality with the sea. Freud famously dismissed what his friend Romain Rolland had called the 'oceanic feeling' in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930). Rolland was a writer who had won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1915 and he corresponded with Freud between 1923 and 1936. When Rolland read Freud's *The Future of an Illusion* (1927) in which Freud expresses his view that religion is a necessary illusion created by society in order to enable people to overcome the hardships of life, and is therefore nothing but an oppressive mechanism of society, he wrote to Freud to express his disagreement. According to Freud:

> I had sent him [Rolland] my small book which treats religion as an illusion, and he answered that he entirely agreed with my judgement upon religion, but that he was sorry I had not properly appreciated the true source of religious sentiments. This, he says, consists in a peculiar feeling, which he himself is never without, which he finds confirmed by many others, and which he may suppose is present in millions of people. It is a feeling which he would like to call a sensation of "eternity", a feeling as of something limitless, unbounded - as it were "oceanic". ¹⁴


Freud continues to explain that Rolland distances this feeling from institutionalised religion (which he was also against), instead describing this feeling as 'a purely subjective fact, not an article of faith' ('Civilization', 64).

Rolland’s comments caused Freud 'no small difficulty' ('Civilization', 65), but nevertheless he was determined to diminish and dismiss the oceanic feeling, explaining it away using psychoanalytic language.\textsuperscript{15} To do so he referred to the process whereby, during each person’s development, ‘the ego detaches itself from the external world’ ('Civilization', 68):

\begin{quote}
If we may assume that there are many people in whose mental life this primary ego-feeling has persisted to a greater or less degree […] In that case, the ideational contents appropriate to it would be precisely those of limitlessness and of a bond with the universe - the same ideas with which my friend elucidated the "oceanic" feeling ('Civilization', 68).
\end{quote}

The claim that such a feeling is 'to be regarded as the source of religious needs' Freud 'does not [...] find compelling' ('Civilization', 72). Freud’s views here were by no means universal within early-twentieth-century psychology. Rather, they are precisely what William James had criticised in the first of his Gifford Lectures of 1901, 'Religion and Neurology', which was later published in The Varieties of Religious Experience (1902). Here James takes issue with those who seek to reduce religious psychic experience by explaining it away using physiological / scientifically psychological language which he calls 'medical materialism':

\begin{quote}
Medical materialism finishes up Saint Paul by calling his vision on the road to Damascus a discharging lesion of the occipital cortex, he being an epileptic. It snuffs out Saint Teresa as an hysteric, Saint Francis of Assisi as an hereditary degenerate. […] And medical materialism then thinks that the spiritual authority of all such personages is successfully undermined.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

Freud uses the exact model which James takes issue with. For James, the value of religious experience comes from that experience itself; its physiological or

\textsuperscript{15} For accounts of Freud’s rejection of the oceanic, see: Caroline Rooney, ‘What is the Oceanic?’, Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities, 12 (2007), 19-32; Marianna Torgovnick, Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Marianna Torgovnick, Primitive Passions: Men, Women and the Quest for Ecstasy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997). Torgovnick also gives an excellent account of the connections between the oceanic and primitivism within modernism.

psychological explanation does not make the experience itself any less sacred as the medical materialists, such as Freud, argued. James tells his audience that they 'must all be ready now to judge the religious life by its results exclusively, and I shall assume that the bugaboo of morbid origin will scandalize your piety no more'.

The fact that James would have taken the oceanic on its own terms, whilst Freud sought to explain it away and diminish its spiritual significance using his own theories, suggests that perhaps the oceanic and the Freudian unconscious are simply incompatible, as Caroline Rooney has argued in her article 'What is the Oceanic?' (2007). She writes, speculatively, that the oceanic 'may indeed be beyond the scope of the psychoanalytic unconscious, at least as conventionally conceived' and 'the oceanic and the (Freudian) unconscious are possibly mutually exclusive'. Therefore, it would seem, we need another, non-Freudian model of the unconscious to take it into account. Rooney describes 'the mystical oceanic experience [...] as "a-rational," anything but cerebral'. Perhaps this a-rational, non-cerebral notion of the oceanic, like the non-Freudian versions of the unconscious which I explored in chapter one, can, like the Jacksonian or Lawrentian unconscious, be helpfully explored using the notion of the anti-mental.

Freud also associated the religious feeling with 'lower' aspects of human development. In dismissing the oceanic, Freud associates it, through analogy, with lower (i.e. less evolved) animals and the primitive. In arguing that an earlier stage of mental development may linger on and be responsible for the oceanic feeling he asserts that

[in the animal kingdom we hold to the view that the most highly developed species have proceeded from the lowest; and yet we find all the simple forms still in existence today [...] In the realm of the mind, [...] what is primitive is so commonly preserved alongside of the transformed version which has arisen from it that it is unnecessary to give instances as evidence ('Civilization', 68).]

In this analogy the oceanic becomes the primitive waiting to be transformed into the civilized, or one of the 'lowest' animals waiting to evolve into something more developed. Freud was not the only psychoanalyst to use phylogenetic analogies

17 James, 'Religion and Neurology', The Varieties of Religious Experience, p. 21.
19 Ibid. p. 27.
to explain ontogenetic development. In *Thalassa* (1924), Freud's associate Sandor Ferenczi argues that all life strives towards a return to the womb. He connects birth with the phylogenetic transition of animal life from water to land, and thus links penetrative sexual intercourse to the desire to return to the water of the womb/sea. He calls this the "thalassal regressive trend", the striving towards the aquatic mode of existence abandoned in primeval times and uses this to explain the 'force of attraction' in 'the sphere of genitility' (from a very male-centred point of view). 

Ferenczi's account brings us to the more obvious analogy which the concept of the oceanic as religion embodies: that of the ocean itself. Through analogy or metaphor, the oceanic is not only associated with what is low and primitive, but also, obviously, with the seas which Freud and Ferenczi believed housed humanity's primitive ancestors. In Rooney's article on 'What is the Oceanic?', after having discussed Freud and Rolland, she devotes half of the space to a reading of *Moby Dick* (1851), a novel which is mostly set at sea and focuses on a sea-creature. Despite this fact, Rooney does not devote extensive space to a consideration of the way in which the concept of the oceanic explicitly brings together the sea and religiosity.

The concept of the oceanic unites religion and the sea. Such an interface is also a frequent trope in the writings of H.D. and Ellis that are concerned with anti-mental states. These texts will be the focus of this chapter.

**Ellis's Anti-Mental Unconscious**

Havelock Ellis is mostly remembered as the pioneering British sexologist of the Victorian and modernist eras and as the author of the multi-volume landmark sexological text, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. Heike Bauer explains that late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century sexologists 'sought to reproduce in textual form what they perceived to be the "truth of sex" and that Ellis was "the central figure in the scientific institution of sexology in Britain". 

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to make the science of sexuality his life's work shows an inclination towards the anti-mental. Sexuality seems to be an element of life in which humans had always already existed beyond their rational, intellectual, conscious, volitional minds, even before late-nineteenth-century neurology had dethroned this type of mind from its Enlightenment pedestal. Ellis wanted to bring the passions within the realm of supposedly rational scientific thought, thus attempting to blur the boundaries between rational science and the irrational passions. There are many excellent studies of Ellis - in his own right and particularly in relation to literature and culture - but these have tended to focus on his writings on homosexuality and sexual inversion. Here I intend to focus not on inversion but on non-mental processes, exploring Ellis’s study of 'Undinism' (1928) alongside his account of the unconscious in Man and Woman (1894, revised 1929).

Ellis put forward a specifically non-Freudian version of the unconscious in Man and Woman. This book was originally intended to clear the ground, and so act as an introduction, for the seven volumes of Studies in the Psychology of Sex. But, as Ellis explains in the preface to the eighth edition, the book has now (by 1929) been largely re-written so that it is more up to date and has a wider popular appeal. The purpose of the book is to give a supposedly physiologically and psychologically grounded account of what Ellis saw as the differences between the sexes. The book features a chapter on 'The Unconscious' in which Ellis's basic argument is that women are more susceptible to the unconscious than men. Firstly, however, he sets out what exactly he means by the unconscious:

In here using the term "unconscious" we are to understand the various psychic manifestations which are not in direct or immediate contact with our ordinary consciousness. [...] It should be added that we are not here concerned with any of the theories put forward by Freud to explain the "unconscious". [...] We are dealing with all those groups of psychic phenomena which are characterised by a decreased control of the higher nervous centres, and increased activity of the

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23 Havelock Ellis, Man and Woman: A Study of Secondary and Tertiary Sexual Characters, 8th edn. (London: William Heinemann, 1934), p. iii. All quotations are from this edition and will be listed in the text in parenthesis as Man and Woman with page number.
lower or deeper centres. These groups of phenomena are closely related, and are all marked by diminished normal consciousness of the subject, or diminished power of control, or both. Taken altogether they constitute the phenomena which have often been called "superhuman," but which, as Chambers long ago remarked, may quite as truly be called "sub-human." The best known of such phenomena is that which we have all experienced during ordinary sleep, perhaps the most primitive and fundamental form of consciousness (Man and Woman, 290-1).

For Ellis, who is explicit in disregarding his rival ('we are not here concerned with any of the theories put forward by Freud to explain the "unconscious"') the unconscious is psychic, but it is other than 'ordinary consciousness' as it is 'consciousness upon other than normal planes' (Man and Woman, 290). The analogy used is that of 'psychic manifestations analogous to those exhibited during sleep' (Man and Woman, 290) to explain that '[w]e are dealing with all those groups of psychic phenomena which are characterised by a decreased control of the higher nervous centres, and increased activity of the lower or deeper centres' (Man and Woman, 291). Sleep-walking is described as an unconscious state as it is an act in which 'the motor centres are awake and respond to ordinary stimuli while the higher centres are asleep and fail to control the responses of the more automatic centres' (Man and Woman, 291). Ellis’s account of the unconscious, which describes a state in which the lower, non-mental nervous centres are active whilst the higher, mental centres are not, is remarkably similar to that given by his neurological contemporary, John Hughlings Jackson.

Ellis may have been familiar with Hughlings Jackson's work through his medical training. When Ellis was sixteen 'he made an unusual resolve: he determined to make his life's work the exposure, the explanation, and the understanding off sex in all its manifestations'.


25 Ibid., p. 4.
and because his real interests lay elsewhere'.

Ellis graduated 'in 1889 with the Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries, the lowest possible medical diploma. His earlier education was dominated by the study of languages and literature [...] An edition of the prose works of Heinrich Heine was Ellis' first book, published in 1887'.

Ellis 'never practised as a doctor and remained a private scholar throughout his life'.

Although Ellis was a highly literary scientist, as Bauer and Schaffner suggest, he still gained a medical degree, albeit of an inferior kind, and therefore can be understood to have imbibed the relevant medical and scientific knowledge for such a qualification. Ellis's medical background and his familiarity with the medical ideas of the day is evident in his account of the unconscious which draws heavily upon the evolutionary understanding of the nervous system which was put forward in the years during which Ellis was training as a doctor by neurologists such as John Hughlings Jackson. However, unlike Hughlings Jackson, who explained the presence of the anti-mental 'unconscious' in lower nervous centres using entirely physical terms, Ellis, on the other hand, used a psychic context to explore this type of anti-mental unconscious, and even went so far as to associate it with religion.

Ellis associates his notion of the unconscious with hypnotic phenomena, and infers that women can be hypnotised more easily than men. 'All the phenomena which of old were termed "magical" come under the group here termed "hypnotic," and they have always been regarded as especially connected with women' (Man and Woman, 293). He continues to quote appreciatively from L. R. Farnell who 'holds that women are always more fitted psychologically for religion' (Man and Woman, 296) and states his own belief that '[t]here can be no doubt whatever that women are greater dreamers than men' (Man and Woman, 301). With every type of unconscious, or anti-mental hypnotic phenomenon, which Ellis describes ('Hallucinations in the Sane', 'The Action of Anaesthetics', 'Meteorologic Sensibility', 'Hysteria and Other Nervous Troubles' and 'Religious Phenomena') women are apparently more susceptible than men, and this argument is repeated over and over throughout his chapter on the unconscious.

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26 Ibid., p. 55.
27 Bauer, English Literary Sexology, p. 67. Henry Head was also fascinated by the work of Heine and translated some of it into English.
28 Schaffner, Modernism and Perversion, pp. 91-2.
The reason Ellis gives for women's greater susceptibility to unconscious phenomena and to religiosity is explicitly connected to the lower nervous centres. Ellis explains that women are more inclined to anti-mental states (including religion) because 'the lower nervous centres in women are more rebellious to control than those of men, and more readily brought into action' (*Man and Woman*, 308). Furthermore, as Ellis notes that '[t]here is an intimate connection between the phenomena we are here concerned with and the phenomena of religion' (*Man and Woman*, 320), he specifically associates the activities of the lowest, anti-mental, nervous centres with the phenomena of religion and religious feelings: 'the connection between spiritual exaltation and organic conditions [is today] plain' (*Man and Woman*, 327). For Ellis, unlike Freud, the unconscious and the religious or oceanic feeling are deeply connected with one another because he was able, like William James, to accept an account of religion and spirituality which placed it directly within the physical body, and specifically in the lower nervous centres. Religion became a function of the nervous system.

H.D., Ellis, and Freud

H.D. critics have paid much attention to H.D.'s interaction with Freud, on both a biographical and a textual level. This is no doubt partly because H.D. was analysed by Freud and she herself gave her relationship with him extensive focus in 'Writing on the Wall' (written retrospectively during 1944, looking back on the analysis) and 'Advent' (taken directly from H.D.'s 1933 notebooks during the time of her analysis with Freud) published together as *Tribute to Freud* (1970) which offers an incredible account of her analysis with Freud during 1933.

Here I will not focus on H.D.'s relationship with Freud, but on her relationship with Ellis who looms large in *Tribute to Freud*. In 'Writing on the Wall', H.D. expressed her gratitude to Ellis for his role in her therapy and her decision to write about her experiences with Freud. Ellis's influence on H.D. is evident throughout her work, particularly in her use of the oceanic feeling as a metaphor for the unconscious. This connection was a departure from Freud's ideas, which H.D. found too focused on the private and individual experience of the patient.
Wall’, we read that as H.D. waits in Freud’s waiting room she looks up at ‘the usual framed photographs; among them, Dr. Havelock Ellis [...] greeted me from the wall’. And again, later in the text we are told that from his photo on the wall, ‘Dr. Havelock Ellis [...] gaze[s] at me, familiar but a little distorted in [...] his frame [...] under the reflecting glass’ (‘Writing’, 96). Ellis only appears as a framed and distorted image of himself in the 1944 text ‘Writing on the Wall’. However, during ‘Advent’, which was written during the 1933 analysis, Ellis features much more prominently in the text. As H.D. begins her analysis with Freud, she tells how I dodged the actual details of my desolation and told the Professor [Freud] how kind Havelock Ellis had been to me when I saw him in his flat in Brixton, those few times before the birth of my child. [...] I made the trip from Prince’s Risborough to London, I went to see this Titan. He served China tea, with a plate of salted pecans and peanuts. There was an unexpected charm and authenticity in his artist décor. He wore a brown velvet smoking-jacket and showed me some of his treasures, a Buddha that his father, a sea captain, had brought back from China, a copy of a famous bust of himself done by - I forget who. [...] There were Russian cigarettes and Dr. Ellis served lemon, in the Russian or American manner, with the tea. I went on talking to the Professor of the effect Dr. Ellis had on me; I had expected to meet the rather remote, detached, and much-abused scientist, I found the artist.

She also dreamt of Ellis during her analysis with Freud, and wrote about this in her notebook, where she recounts a dream in which Ellis is associated with both Freud and H.D.’s own father (‘Advent’, 138-9).

H.D.’s and Ellis’s personal relationship and friendship mostly took place during 1919-20. After the initial visit which H.D. made to Ellis in 1919 when she was pregnant, desolate, and in need of help (described above) she subsequently also sent her partner Bryher (1894 - 1983) to go and see him. H.D.’s biographer, Barbara Guest, writes that H.D. was in an extremely disturbed state at this stage and ‘needed a psychiatrist...She may well have had a sexual problem at this time and who better to counsel her than Ellis?’ Ellis apparently helped both H.D. and Bryher with various aspects of their sexual problems and identities. He became fundamentally important to H.D. during the writing of Notes on Thought and Vision during 1919 which I will explore in greater depth shortly. Both H.D. and

31 H.D., ‘The Writing on the Wall’, Tribute to Freud, pp. 3-111 (p. 61). All quotations refer to this edition and will be listed in the text in parenthesis as ‘Writing’ with the page number.
32 H.D., ‘Advent’, Tribute to Freud, pp. 115-187 (p. 129). All quotations refer to this edition and will be listed in the text in parenthesis as ‘Advent’ with the page number.
33 Barbara Guest, Herself Defined: The Poet H.D. and her World (Glasgow: Collins, 1984), p. 120.
Bryher were enamoured with Ellis and invited him to join them on a trip to Greece during 1920. Ellis's partner at the time, Françoise, 'had to muster forbearance' and 'fought down jealous feelings' when she learnt about this trip and Ellis's close relationship with H.D.  

However, perhaps influenced by Françoise's jealously, Ellis decided to cut the trip short and returned to London earlier than originally planned leaving H.D. and Bryher to continue the trip alone. He wrote to Françoise, saying that '"[t]hey are both very peculiar," [...] especially Hilda, who, in spite of some good points, was "selfish, weak and excitable"'. These remarks have led Ellis's biographer Phyllis Grosskurth to conclude that at this point '[t]he friendship had begun to sour a bit'. However, it seems possible that Ellis was deliberately trying to paint a negative picture of H.D. and his trip with her in his letters to Françoise in order to ease her jealousy. He also feared the onset of mental breakdown in H.D., knowing her to be emotionally unstable at this time. Grosskurth writes that 'later he was relieved that he had decided to journey back alone, for apparently Hilda went "right out of her mind" at Corfu'. This refers to the vision of the writing on the wall which H.D. later placed at the centre of her visionary aesthetics in 'The Writing on the Wall'. The H.D.-Ellis friendship lost its initial intensity after the Greek voyage in 1920, but they continued to write to one another for many years and it is clear that H.D.'s time with Ellis was hugely beneficial to her. In 1933 she wrote to him saying, 'I want you to realise how deeply I am indebted to you, not only for my life but for my reason. If you had not been kind those days or if you had shut your door on me, I might very easily simply have lost the will to live (it was a struggle)'.

Although Ellis featured as an important figure in H.D.'s texts, as he also did in her life, and there are many ways in which their works are intellectually relevant to one another, there is relatively little criticism beyond a handful of chapters and articles which deals with the intellectual or textual affinities

34 Grosskurth, Havelock Ellis, p. 296.
35 Havelock Ellis, letter to Françoise Cyon (28 February 1920), Mugar Library Papers, quoted in Grosskurth, Havelock Ellis, p. 297.
36 Grosskurth, Havelock Ellis, p. 297.
37 Grosskurth, Havelock Ellis, p. 297. 'right out of her mind' is from Havelock Ellis, letter to Françoise Cyon (July 1920), Mugar Library Papers, quoted in Grosskurth, Havelock Ellis, p. 297.
38 H.D., letter to Havelock Ellis (January 1933) quoted in Guest, Herself Defined, p. 214.
between H.D. and Ellis in any depth. Unlike their relatively unexplored textual and intellectual resonances, the biographical interactions between H.D. and Ellis are more well known and feature (often in passing) in a large number of, if not most, critical accounts of both H.D. and Ellis. This is largely due to the irresistibly strange, licentious and fascinating nature of a particular incident which took place between them - 'A Revelation' - which has often been described but rarely analysed. I recount (and analyse) it here because of its spiritual-watery nature.

**Havelock Ellis and Undinism**

Shortly before H.D. went to see Freud, he wrote to her saying, 'I have not heard from H. Ellis - I owned already the book in honour of his seventieth birthday [which H.D. had sent to Freud] and have taken note of who is meant by the lofty person of the revelation'. The revelation Freud refers to here is what Ellis 'considered his finest prose, "A Revelation" which describes an incident involving H.D. and Ellis which 'had taken place in 1919 before they left on the voyage to Greece'. Ellis wrote this account in March 1921, but didn't publish it until 1924 when it appeared in his volume *Impressions and Comments* which also contained essays on topics such as Ritualism, Cornwall, Man’s Contest With Nature, The Number Three, Biography, The Pastoral, Morality and Genius, Giving and Receiving, Waves and Spray, The Dance of the Sea and The Great War. When he wanted to publish this text Ellis wrote to H.D. asking her permission which at first she denied, but eventually she gave into Ellis’s request, providing that she remain anonymous and unrecognisable in the text (although Freud was not fooled).

In short, 'A Revelation' describes H.D. urinating either on or near to Ellis, and Ellis having a sort of religious experience meets sexual awakening in response to the sight:

Like Arethusa or some immortal Nymph of the ice and the water, this mysterious Person appeared to me [...] There came before me the symbolically significant

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vision, the physical or the spiritual vision, in which this profound reality was made manifest and this lofty Person was revealed under an aspect which seemed the incarnation of the living and profuse. [...] Nature which is neither high nor low. The tall form languidly arose and stood erect, taut, and massive it seemed now with the length of those straight adolescent legs still more ravishing in their unyielding pride, and the form before me seemed to become some adorable Olympian vase, and a large stream gushed afar in the glistening liquid arch, endlessly, it seemed to my wondering eyes, as I contemplated with enthralled gaze this prototypal statue of the Fountain of Life [...] Yet there is no language for mortals to whom are vouchsafed brief moments of intuition into the reality of a world which for all the daily purposes of life is merely a dull show fittingly expressed in dull words [...] Before the inner eye of those who are drowning, they say, there pass in procession the significant visions of all their lives. As I lie here floating back to life, there pass before my inner eye from among the pictures of those rare and lovely persons that here and there it has been given me as my supreme grace in the world to discern and to know, not those that are from long ago mine, closest and most tender, but this mysterious revealing Person, surrounded with a halo of silence and parted by half the world's space. 

The language here is highly religious. Phrases such as 'immortal Nymph,' 'mysterious,' 'symbolically significant vision, the physical or the spiritual vision,' 'this profound reality was made manifest,' 'this lofty Person was revealed,' 'there is no language for mortals to whom are vouchsafed brief moments of intuition into the reality of a world which for all the daily purposes of life is merely a dull show fittingly expressed in dull words', 'supreme grace' and 'this mysterious revealing Person, surrounded with a halo of silence' all point to the spiritual nature of this experience, as does the title which Ellis chose to give to his description of it. In her urination H.D. becomes a prophet, a force of revelation. There are also many watery images in this passage. Ellis describes H.D. as Arethusa, which means 'the waterer' who was a nymph who turned into a fountain in Greek mythology. She is also an 'immortal Nymph of the ice and the water' who causes Ellis to feel as if his being were being taken over by water, his mind engulfed by it. The experience is described as 'drowning', and its termination as resurfacing, 'floating back to life'. H.D.'s urination seemed to transport Ellis beyond his own mind, causing him to sink into a non-mental, underwater dimension of mysterious spirituality and liquidity.

Four years after the publication of 'A Revelation' Ellis added another volume to his magnum opus, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. He had previously published what he intended to be the final volume in 1910, but in 1928 the seventh volume of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex, Eonism and Other*.

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Supplementary Studies (1928) was published. This book contains a study on 'Undinism' which was the scientific name which Ellis gave to urination in connection with sexual pleasure. It is named after the mythological water-nymph Undine. Ellis's biographer Phyllis Grosskurth has written that '[i]t is my own belief that Ellis added a seventh volume principally because it gave him an opportunity to defend an inclination of his own which he had not discussed in the earlier volumes' and many critics who mention this work have felt similarly. However, I have yet to encounter a study of Ellis which pays any attention to the ideas and mechanisms through which Ellis attempted to give his study of Undinism scientific credibility, rather than simply dismissing it as an apologia for his own sexual inclinations.

In Ellis's chapter on Undinism he explains his belief that humans are aroused by urination because they have evolved from sea-creatures:

The remote ancestors of Man, we cannot doubt, were salt-water animals. Their deepest experience of life was inextricably mingled with the contact and movement of salt water [...] The first animal cellules were of marine origin; the original marine environment remains the vital environment of the cells, even in vertebrates, even in Man. Therefore, '[t]here can be no doubt that this fundamental organic significance of salt water has had a profound result on psychic disposition' ('Undinism', 377) and this is what accounts for people's love of being in or near to water. In turn, Ellis associates this human attraction to water with the sexual attraction which some people attach to urination. He argues that due to the centrality the marine environment retains for consciousness, all sexual interest emerges from urinary interest:

The immediate emotional potency of water, it cannot be doubted, is powerfully supported by the fact that even in the highest vertebrates a perpetually renewed fountain of salt water continues to bear witness to the marine environment which once surrounded our remote ancestors and is still needed to bathe and vitalize the cells in our own bodies. The periodic eruption of the urinary stream, manifesting itself in childhood with more or less involuntary force, is one of the most impressive facts of infantile life, the more so as at that age the volume of the stream, the energy of its expulsion, and the extent to which vesical

43 Grosskurth, Havelock Ellis, p. 361.
44 Havelock Ellis, 'Undinism', Studies in the Psychology of Sex: Volume 2 (New York: Random House, 1937), pp. 376-476 (p. 376). All quotations are from this edition and references will be listed in the text in parenthesis as 'Undinism' and the page number.
contraction fills the psychic field are relatively far greater than in later life. As puberty approaches, while the infantile urgency and impressiveness of the phenomenon may diminish, on the other hand it acquires a new interest and significance through the recognition of its intimate local association with the sexual life, and the facility with which it symbolises, both physiologically and psychically, the sexual functions ('Undinism', 379).

Here, the argument is as follows: humans are fascinated by salt-water as they evolved from sea-creatures, urination is a process which continues to connect humans to their original marine environment, therefore children are fascinated by urination, which, as they reach adolescence, also becomes associated with sexual arousal. 'Pure water and urine, both alike derivatives from the ancient salt ocean which was the remote cradle of our primitive organic life, have reciprocally heightened each other's qualities' ('Undinism', 382).

Having associated Undinism with sea-creatures, the sea and human evolution, Ellis moves on to associate it with the soul, writing that '[t]he bladder has in modern times been called "the mirror of the soul,"' while Elie Reclus mentions that the Eskimo Inuit regard it as a chief seat of the soul ('Undinism', 381, citing E. Reclus, Primitive Folk, p. 18). Ellis also writes that '[w]e can understand how it seemed reasonable to Stanley Hall, many years ago, to suppose that the influence of a life "that has been lived aquatically, since its dawn should make itself felt on the soul," and leave occasional faint traces ('Undinism', 383, referring to Stanley Hall, 'A Study of Fears,' Am. Jour. Psych., 1897, p. 169). While Ferenczi used the evolution of life from marine to land-based human to account for standard genital sexuality, Ellis used it to account for a particular sexual proclivity which he termed Undinism and also for certain spiritual or religious traits (oceanic feelings) that some people have.

Ellis thought that women and ecclesiastics were the people who were most likely to be aroused by urination: 'The special liability of women to experience interest in this matter may be associated with a similar liability among men of the Church' ('Undinism', 422). This is reminiscent of his previous argument in Man and Woman which suggested that women were more susceptible to anti-mental unconscious forces than men, and that they were also more partial, psychologically, to religion and religiosity because their lower nervous centres were more active. Religion itself was described as a product of the anti-mental, lower nervous centres. In his chapter on 'Undinism', the sea and sea-creatures are believed to hold greater power over the people who have more activity in the
lower, less evolved, centres of their nervous systems which Ellis also associated with a religious inclination. In this way he brought together the sea and religiosity.

We see a similar association of the sea and the spiritual - and the related association of both with the anti-mental - in the works of H.D.. Here I will focus on two texts by H.D. which she wrote in the years during and immediately after her friendship with Ellis: *Notes on Thought and Vision* (written 1919, first published 1988), and *Asphodel* (written 1921-2, first published 1992). These are both private texts (neither were submitted for publication by H.D. during her lifetime, and the only remaining manuscript of Asphodel has 'DESTROY' written on it in H.D.'s handwriting), and they are both autobiographical texts which directly describe H.D.'s own life experiences in highly aestheticised forms.

**Notes on Thought and Vision**

Soon after H.D. and Bryher had met in 1919, Bryher took her new friend to her beloved Scilly Isles, one of which she had named herself after (Bryher's original name was Annie Winifred Ellerman but she changed it to Bryher, which is also the name of one of the Scilly Isles). Shortly before making this trip, H.D. had given birth to her daughter Perdita. Whilst on one of these Cornish islands, surrounded by water, H.D. experienced a vision of a jellyfish which she connected with what she called the over-mind. This experience inspired H.D. to write her first major prose work, *Notes on Thought and Vision* (Notes). It marks the beginning of a visionary aesthetic which was to define H.D.'s writing throughout her career.\(^\text{45}\) It also demonstrates the beginnings of the connection between sea-creatures and unconsciousness which was to form part of H.D. and Bryher’s relationship. H.D. and Bryher often used code in their letters and they came to use the term 'Fish' to

\(^{45}\) Numerous H.D. critics have remarked on the centrality of vision for H.D.'s aesthetics as it is such a dominant trope in her work. For example, Helen Sword has described H.D. as a ‘visionary writer’ (Helen Sword, *Engendering Inspiration: Visionary Strategies in Rilke, Lawrence and H.D.* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 19). Elsewhere, Adalaide Morris has argued that 'projection' is one of the key concepts in H.D.'s work due to her focus on visions which were projected out of herself. Morris and others have connected this with H.D.'s fascination with the emergent medium of cinema. (H.D. and Bryher founded the cinematic journal *Close-Up*). Explaining the writer’s focus on vision, Morris writes that 'The word projection appears throughout H.D.’s work' (Adalaide Morris, *How to Live/What to Do?: H.D.’s Cultural Poetics* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), p. 95).
refer to what Susan Stanford Freidman calls '[p]sychic/occult forces or vision located in unconscious'.

When H.D. wrote Notes she had just had a baby. After Perdita had been born, H.D. seemed to replace her presence within her body with an imagined jellyfish which she described as being located in both her brain and her 'love-region', therefore connecting these body parts. H.D. envisioned the top of the jellyfish within both her head and her genitals, and its tentacles were felt to extend either upwards or downwards through her body accordingly, distributing its over-mind force throughout her body. H.D.'s focus on the 'love-region' and sexuality in Notes owed much to Ellis, whose works she had been reading. Barbara Guest notes that the text is another expression of 'Havelock Ellis's plea for the acceptance of sexual relations' and Adalaide Morris that, 'like Ellis, H.D. begins her exposition with sexuality', whilst Helen Sword writes that Notes strongly emphasises 'that visionary insight depends upon the energising force of erotic desire'.

H.D. used her jellyfish vision as a metaphor for what she called her over-mind. The aim of Notes was to describe H.D.'s theory of this over-mind, envisioned and embodied as a jellyfish. H.D. wrote that there are ‘[t]hree states or manifestations of life: body, mind and over-mind’. She states that the 'a]im of men and women of highest development is equilibrium, balance, growth of the three at once; brain without physical strength is a manifestation of weakness [...] over-mind without the balance of the other two is madness' (Notes, 17). When H.D. refers to the 'over-mind' she is speaking of spiritual, creative and visionary faculties which tap into something transcendent. She felt that artists needed the over-mind in order to gain a higher state of reflection. She explains that 'Leonardo da Vinci's "The Madonna of the Rocks" is not a picture. It is a window. We look through a window into the world of pure over-mind' (Notes, 18). H.D. believes that the over-mind allows those who have accessed it to commune with, create, and understand art in a privileged and hyper-real way. She describes the

47 Guest, Herself Defined, p. 120; Morris, How to Live/What to Do, p. 100; Sword, Engendering Inspiration, p. 137.
48 H.D. Notes on Thought and Vision (1919) [and The Wise Sappho] (London: Peter Owen, 1982), p. 17. All quotations are from this edition and references will be listed in the text in parenthesis as Notes with the page number.
over-mind as a 'receiving centre' (Notes, 26) for the messages sent forth by certain objects or art works. Her own over-mind picks up the signals from a statue of a Delphic Charioteer. Tuning into the over-mind allows access to 'the world of vision' (Notes, 40). For H.D. this over-mind and the world of vision which it allows access to is envisioned as a jellyfish, and the jellyfish provides the metaphorical foundation for its description.

H.D.'s descriptions of the over-mind also involved using the metaphors of 'high' and 'low' which dominated conceptions of the psyche during this period. In describing the over-mind, H.D. mentions that

I have been talking with a young man, a scholar and philosopher. He says my term over-mind is not good, because in his case at least, the mental state I describe lies below the sub-conscious mind. That is, I visualise my three states of consciousness in a row,

1. Over-conscious mind.
2. Conscious mind.
3. Sub-conscious mind.

He on the other hand visualises his three states,

1. Conscious mind.
2. Sub-conscious mind.
3. Universal mind.

He means by universal mind exactly what I mean by over-mind (Notes, 46).

Both H.D. and the 'young man' she spoke with use metaphorical vertical hierarchies to describe the structure of the mind. H.D. takes what her friend considered the 'lowest' aspect of experience and makes it into the 'highest'. This merging of the apparently high and the apparently low also manifests itself in Notes as a supposedly primitive or 'low' sea-creature - a jellyfish - becomes the central image for H.D.'s spiritual-visionary experiences of the over-mind. This connection will be explored in more depth shortly.

H.D. wrote Notes 'with Ellis in mind'. Whilst having her jellyfish vision, H.D. wrote some years later, 'all the time I was thinking that this would be an interesting bit of psychological data for Havelock Ellis' ('Advent', 130). Part of the reason that 'Dr. Ellis was in my fantasies when I went, July 1919, with Bryher to

the Scilly Isles' ('Advent', 129) was that '[h]e knew Cornwall and had lived there off and on, for many years in "retreat" [...] working on his famous volumes' ('Advent', 129). Here she refers to Ellis's writing retreat by the Cornish coast. Both Ellis and H.D. wrote with the Cornish ocean in sight. However, despite this, and despite the thoughts of Ellis which H.D. had whilst writing Notes, he did not seem to care about the book. She explains that '[w]hen I returned to London, I sent my Notes to Dr. Ellis. I thought he would be so interested. But he appeared unsympathetic, or else he did not understand or else he may have thought it was a danger signal' ('Advent', 130). During analysis with Freud, she tells that

I had spoken of my disappointment in Havelock Ellis. He had not been interested in my experience in the Scilly Isles when Bryher took me there, July 1919. It had really been a great shock to me as I had visualised Dr. Ellis, during the time of writing my Notes on Thought and Vision, as a saint as well as a savant ('Advent', 147-8).

Despite Ellis's rejection of this text, which deeply saddened H.D., it resonates with many of the ideas from his later texts connecting spirituality and the sea, which I have just explored.

It also seems strange that Ellis rejected this text when this reaction is considered alongside his book The World of Dreams (1911) in which he endorses the reality of such hallucinatory experiences. Here he specifically states that 'I do not wish it to be understood that I question the existence of telepathic and other abnormal dream experiences.'

Dreams, for Ellis, are involuntary, automatic and anti-mental: 'The attention we exercise in dreams is mainly of this fundamental, automatic, involuntary character, [...] and for the most part escaping all the efforts of our voluntary attention'. Furthermore, drawing on the works of Leroy, Ellis argues that 'a similar state of involuntary automatic attention, with concomitant diminution or disturbance of voluntary attention, is a necessary condition for the appearance of the visual and auditory hallucinations abnormally experienced in the waking state.'

H.D.'s Scilly Isles vision was a visual hallucination of this kind, connected by Ellis with automaticity and involuntariness, states which he had associated with the lower nervous centres in Man and Woman. Ellis describes visual hallucination as 'a mixed phenomenon,

52 Ibid.
partly retinal and partly central. That is to say that the eye supplies entopic glimmerings to the brain, acting on the suggestions thus received, superposes mental pictures to those glimmerings. Ellis understood visual hallucinations such as H.D.’s to have a physiological, neurological basis. H.D. also connects her over-mind to the nervous system through her jellyfish metaphor. Despite his dismissal of her book, Ellis had written about states such as the one which H.D. describes, suggesting that his rejection of it may have had other, non-intellectual motives.

I will return to Ellis’s dismissal of Notes later in this chapter. In the following two sections I will explore the significance of H.D.’s choice of a jellyfish as her key metaphor in Notes, as well as the spirituality of the over-mind.

1. Over-Mind as Sub-Aqueous, Brainless, Jellyfish

There is a growing body of work on the animal within modernism which is challenged by H.D.’s jellyfish in Notes. In Stalking the Subject, Carrie Rohman argues that the ‘[m]ost threatening [thing] about the modernist evolutionary view of the primitive is not simply that the civilized might be connected to the primitive, but that the civilized are organically linked to the animal’. She states that ‘Darwin provides the explanatory mechanism in scientific terms that forces our understanding of the natural world well beyond religious explanations’. However, when H.D. describes her consciousness as a creature from the animal world - a jellyfish - it is a consciousness of the most highly religious kind. Philip Armstrong, in What Animals Mean in the Fiction of Modernity, draws upon critics from animal studies who have focused on animal agency to challenge ‘the assumption that agency - the capacity to effect change - necessarily requires a combination of rational thought and conscious intention [and] depends in the first place upon an Enlightenment humanist paradigm within which these traits came to define the human as such’. However, using a jellyfish, (which at the time that H.D. was writing, as I will show, were not thought to have either rational

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51 Ibid., p. 31.
53 Ibid., p. 2.
thought or conscious intention) to describe a certain type of human
consciousness, challenges these assumptions from the outset. The jellyfish is the
key to Notes, it is the text’s central image. Despite this, I have not encountered
any H.D. criticism which deals with Notes that pays particular attention to this
jellyfish metaphor and its significance.

Writing Notes in 1919, H.D. wrote that the 'over-mind appears a cap, like
water, transparent, fluid yet with definite body, contained in a definite space. It is
like a closed sea-plant, jelly-fish or anemone' (Notes, 18-19). The over-mind was
specifically defined as sub-aqueous: 'Sometimes when I am in that state of
consciousness [associated with the over-mind], things about me appear slightly
blurred as if seen under water' (Notes, 18). As well as making her feel that she is
under water, the over-mind is described as being itself 'like water, transparent,
fluid yet with definite body, contained in a definite space. It is like a closed sea-
plant, jelly-fish or anemone. Into that over-mind, thoughts pass and are visible
like fish swimming under clear water' (Notes, 18-19). Here the over-mind is a
watery jellyfish-like object into which 'thoughts pass and are visible'
demonstrating that the over-mind itself is, although a 'state of consciousness', not
itself thought, but a liquid container for fish-like thoughts.

In 1933, fourteen years after Notes was written, H.D. reflected on the
experience which she had depicted in the text during her analysis with Freud. H.D.
pondered:

Are we psychic coral-polyps? Do we build one upon another? Did I (sub-aqueous)
in the Scilly Isles, put out a feeler? Did I die in my polyp manifestation and will I
leave a polyp skeleton of coral to blend with this entire myriad-minded coral
chaplet or entire coral island? My psychic experiences were sub-aqueous
('Advent', 133).

Like Ellis's description of himself in 'A Revelation', H.D.'s Scilly Isles psychic
experiences were felt to be 'sub-aqueous', and her description of coral life here
reveals knowledge of marine biology. H.D. wrote that surrounding her, during the
''jelly-fish'' experience [...] there were palm-trees, coral-plants, mesambeanthum,
opened like water-lilies the length of the grey walls; the sort of fibrous under-
water leaf and these open sea-flowers [which] gave one the impression of being
submerged' ('Advent', 130).
In 1933, H.D. imagined herself as coral because her psychic experiences were perceived to be sub-aqueous and therefore belonged to the coral’s natural habitat, under the sea. These coral images resonate with the dominant metaphor used in the 1919 text, a jellyfish. Both coral and jellyfish are cnidaria, a phylum which contains over 10,000 animals such as jellyfish, box jellies, anemones and corals which mostly live in marine habitats. Jellyfish are referred to by zoologists and scientists as medusae. Medusae do not have brains. Their nervous systems comprise nerve nets and nerve rings which are totally different to the human or mammalian nervous system. With this decidedly non-human nervous system which lacks a brain, perhaps they might be thought of as anti-mental beings within a neurological system which locates the mind in the brain, and are at the very least striking symbols of a brainless and therefore (if the brain is the organ of mind, as Hughlings Jackson and others declared) mindless existence.

Jellyfish were understood as primitive and mindless in 1919. Responding to the request of the International Scientific Series in 1885 to write a book on 'Primitive Nervous Systems', G. J. Romanes supplied them with an account of the nervous systems of the 'low animals' jellyfish, star-fish and sea-urchins. According to Romanes these creatures were anything but mental: 'the animals in question are so low in the scale of life, that to suppose them capable of conscious suffering would be in the highest degree unreasonable.' Defending himself against charges of vivisection, he argues that jellyfish are unable to feel pain because they do not have brains and therefore do not have a consciousness:

In order to feel there must be consciousness, and, so far as our evidence goes, it appears that consciousness only arises when a nerve-centre attains to some such degree of complexity and elaboration as are to be met with in the brain. Whether or not there is a dawning of consciousness in any nerve-centres considerably lower in the scale of nervous evolution, is a question which we cannot answer; but we may be quite certain that, if such is the case, the consciousness which is present must be of a commensurably dim and unsuffering kind. Consequently, even on this positive aspect of the question, we may be quite sure that by the time we come to the jelly-fish - where the object of the experiments in the first instance was to obtain evidence of the very existence of nerve-tissue - all question of pain must have vanished.

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59 Ibid., p. 6.
60 Ibid., p. 8.
Using a distinctly Jacksonian vocabulary of the nervous system, he argues that jellyfish do not have consciousness or minds and cannot feel pain because they are so low in the evolutionary scale.

Romanes continues to investigate the 'Structure of the Medusæ' (chapter 1), grappling with 'the question of whether any nervous tissue is present in the Medusæ'.\footnote{Ibid., p. 13.} This is an important question because 'nerve-tissue had been clearly shown to occur in all animals higher in the zoological scale than the Medusæ, so that it was of much importance to ascertain whether or not the first occurrence of this tissue was to be met with in this class'.\footnote{Ibid.} However,

up to the time when my own researches began there had been so little agreement in the results obtained by the numerous investigators, that Professor Huxley - himself one of the greatest authorities upon the group - thus defined the position of the matter in his "Classification of Animals": "No nervous system has yet been discovered in any of these animals".\footnote{Ibid.}

Despite enthusiastically quoting Huxley’s proclamation on the subject, Romanes then goes on to devote pages to descriptions of 'the nervous elements' of jellyfish.\footnote{Ibid., p. 14.} He mentions nerve-rings of two types (upper and lower) as well as the many nervous plexuses and ganglia of the jellyfish, but seemingly understood these as other than a 'nervous system'. Elsewhere, physiologist William Benjamin Carpenter (1813–1885), who maintained that 'the Brain [...] may be assumed to be the instrument of the Will' had, in 1859, described brainless jellyfish as lacking a will: 'They are formed to float freely in the water; but they do not in general possess any means of actively propelling themselves through it'.\footnote{Ibid.}

By 1911, when the eleventh edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica was published (an edition which was still current in 1919, when H.D. was writing about her jellyfish), medusa (now with a slightly different spelling) or jellyfish were described as having 'a distinct nervous system, [...] comprising] either [...] concentrations of nervous matter in the vicinity of each sense-organ, or, when a velum is present, [...] two continuous rings running round the margin of the

Although the jellyfish is now granted a nervous system, this entry draws on research entirely from the nineteenth century, citing sources from 1879, 1882, 1893, 1897 and 1871-2 demonstrating the duration of the views of those in Romanes’ and Carpenter’s period. In an entry on Ctenophora, a particular type of jellyfish ‘Professor T. H. Huxley in 1875’ is specifically cited as an authority, showing that the late-nineteenth-century notion of the jellyfish, as expressed by Romanes who had described the creature as mindless and low, still had intellectual currency when H.D. was writing.

The jellyfishes’ lack of a brain or centralised nervous system, and their perceived mindlessness makes them an extremely ambivalent metaphor for non-mental consciousness which is also directly associated with the brain and human nervous system which was beginning to be understood as the physical basis of the mind. With its large, round, swelling at the top of its form, from which tentacles descend, the jellyfish, in appearance, is reminiscent of the human brain and nervous system, despite being a creature which was understood to lack a brain and nervous system. Jellyfish were also understood as mindless creatures. Therefore, through associating the over-mind with a jellyfish, H.D. makes its mentality highly questionable. However, at the same time, the over-mind was also described as a type of consciousness, and through the jellyfish’s resemblance to the brain and nervous system, she suggests that an anti-mental type of ‘consciousness’ may exist within this brain and nervous system.

The symbolic resonance between the jellyfish and the human nervous system is one which H.D. herself observed. H.D. ‘continue[s] this jelly-fish metaphor’ in describing her over-mind explaining ‘that long feelers reached down and through the body, that these stood in the same relation to the nervous system as the over-mind to the brain or intellect’ (Notes, 19), specifically connecting ‘the jelly-fish metaphor [...] to the nervous system’ (Notes, 19). The over-mind is specifically the tentacles or feelers of the jellyfish which, if the analogy with the human nervous system is continued (as H.D. invites it to be), means that the over-mind is located in the nerves, and not the brain.


However, this analogy can only be taken so far because H.D. also writes that 'I first realised this state of consciousness in my head. I visualise it just as well, now, centred in the love-region of the body or placed like a foetus in the body' (Notes, 19) and believes that the over-mind is located in 'either the brain or the love-region of the body' (Notes, 20). Nevertheless, through making the sexual organs - the apparent centre of the supposedly physical and irrational passions - a centre of consciousness which was equal or equivalent to the brain, she distorts the volitional, rational intentionality which had historically been located in the brain. She continues, asking

[are] these jelly-fish states of consciousness interchangeable? Should we be able to think with the womb and feel with the brain? May this consciousness be centred entirely in the brain or entirely in the womb or corresponding love-region of a man's body? (Notes, 20).

Perhaps she was suggesting, as William Benjamin Carpenter (who also wrote about jellyfish as lacking a will) had done in the 1840s, that the brain 'was [like the "lower" levels of the nervous system from which it had evolved] likely to carry out non-conscious reflex functions'.

The fact that H.D.'s ideas evoke Carpenter's is highly suggestive in this context as his life and career, like Ellis's and H.D.'s, blended spirituality, the sea, and the anti-mental. Carpenter's early work focused on marine invertebrates and his 1839 MD thesis on 'The Physiological Inferences to be deduced from the Structure of the Nervous System of Invertebrated Animals' led to his first two books on Principles of General and Comparative Physiology (1839) and Animal Physiology (1843). Carpenter's 'credentials as an empirical researcher were established with his microscopical studies of the Foraminifera, minute shelled creatures found in surface waters and oceanic (and geological) deposits' and he also put forward 'theories about the form of temperature gradients and the ocean circulation'. Alongside his work on marine life and invertebrate zoology, Carpenter also 'popularize[d] the idea of "unconscious cerebration"', which made

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68 Salisbury and Shai, 'Introduction' to Neurology and Modernity, p. 21.
familiar the role of unconscious activity in ordinary life'. 70 These notions, mainly put forward in The Principles of Mental Physiology (1874) 'brought together new experimental knowledge—especially on reflex action—and a stress on the moral will'. 71 In attempting to fuse ideas surrounding neurological reflex action with those concerned with the moral will, Carpenter seemed to be allowing for the possibility that the will was not the entirely mental or volitional force it had once been assumed to be. In addition to all of this, Carpenter's 'religious concern ran through all his commitments, and in the 1860s and 1870s he was a notable contributor to debates about science and religion [...] He was very much a transitional figure in the development of a modern scientific culture in Christian terms'. 72

As well as evoking Carpenter, H.D.'s connection of the love-region and the brain also resonates with Ellis's 1913 study, 'Analysis of the Sexual Impulse'. Here, Ellis deals with what he describes as 'the whole of the neuropsychic phenomena of reproduction which man shares with the lower animals'. 73 Ellis maintained that 'the nervous circuit [involved in the sexual instinct] tends to involve a cerebral element, which may sometimes be of dominant importance'. 74 However, he adds that 'at present...all that we can do is to assume the existence of cerebral as well as spinal sexual centres; a cerebral sexual centre, in the strictest sense, remains purely hypothetical'. 75 Despite the absence, at this stage, of scientific proof, Ellis is convinced that there must be cerebral, as well as spinal, sexual centres. This demonstrates that he believed sexuality, like H.D.'s spiritual-sexual jellyfish overmind, was based in the higher as well as the lower centres of the nervous system, thus fusing and complicating the relationship between the two, as H.D. also does in Notes.

Continuing her analogy between the love-region and the brain, which evoked the ideas of Carpenter and Ellis, H.D. concludes that

[v]ision is of two kinds - vision of the womb and vision of the brain. In vision of the brain, the region of consciousness is above and about the head; when the centre of consciousness shifts and the jelly-fish is in the body, (I visualise it in my

70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
74 Ibid., p. 15.
75 Ibid., p. 15.
case lying on the left side with the streamers or feelers floating up toward the brain) we have vision of the womb or love vision (Notes, 20).

In allowing the jellyfish to either ascend or descend through the human torso when producing over-mind vision, H.D. suggests that the rounded top of the jellyfish (which in the nervous system analogy is associated with the brain) may be located at either the head or the love-region of the body. This disrupts the vertical hierarchies which underpin the classification of certain nervous centres as higher and lower. Just as H.D. takes her friend's 'universal mind', which he had classified as the lowest type of consciousness and makes it into her own over-mind, which she classifies as the highest type of consciousness, she metaphorically flips the nervous system on its head by placing the top of the jellyfish, an image of the brain, at the love-region of the body as well as in the head. Therefore she suggests that the love-region and brain may be interchangeable.

Through its association with the jellyfish and the 'love-brain', over-mind consciousness becomes highly physical and highly mental all at once, disrupting the perceived boundaries between mental and physical. According to Helen Sword, 'H.D. notes that such heightened vision can manifest itself physically as well as mentally'. The physicalisation of the mind is a central aspect of the over-mind: 'When a creative scientist, artist or philosopher has been for some hours or days intent on his work, his mind often takes an almost physical character. That is, his mind becomes his real body. His over-mind becomes his brain' (Notes, 18). Even though 'there is no way of arriving at the over-mind, except through the intellect' (Notes, 21) this is only a step on the route which ends when consciousness shifts from the brain, relocating itself throughout the body:

Once a man becomes conscious of this jelly-fish above his head, this pearl within his skull, this seed cast into the ground, his chief concern automatically becomes the body. Once we become concretely aware of this pearl, this seed, our centre of consciousness shifts. Our concern is with the body (Notes, 50).

The over-mind is both physical and mental, and it distributes both mental and non-mental consciousness throughout the body, dismantling the supremacy of the mind-in-the-brain, suggesting that the nerves (rather than the brain) might

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76 Sword, Engendering Inspiration, p. 136.
be sites of mentality whilst simultaneously undermining this possibility. This is reminiscent of developments from late-nineteenth-century neurology (as the work of Carpenter has already demonstrated) which, according to Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail, meant that '[t]hinking was [...] consistently represented as a visceral event'. 

Previously, the brain had been understood as the seat of the mind, but within nineteenth-century neurology, the centrality of the brain was being diminished because 'for mid-nineteenth-century neurology the nervous system was a form of consciousness', albeit an anti-mental one.

Salisbury and Shail locate this shift, wherein the nervous system itself was seen as a 'form of consciousness', in 1832, when 'Marshall Hall had begun to publish discoveries of the nature of the "reflex arc" which revolutionised understandings of nervous communication. The reflex arc was, he argued, a property of the spinal marrow which turned sensation directly into action without that sensation needed to pass via the brain'. This theory was taken up by various nineteenth-century neurologists, and 'by the time of the publication of George Henry Lewes’s Physiology and Common Life (1869-70), nerves were perceived as so conscious of the world that it was necessary to distinguish between "consciousness" and "consciousness of one's consciousness"'.

However, this begs the question of whether consciousness which one is not conscious of can actually be considered as consciousness at all? Is consciousness not dependent on mental awareness? Salisbury and Shail suggest, convincingly and intriguingly, that the discoveries of Hall, Lewes and others meant that

Nerves no longer insulated the mind from the body; instead, nerves now comprised governing systems in need, if anything, of insulation from the mind. Neurology indeed distributed consciousness throughout the nervous system, suggesting, as in the case of Lewes's distinction between "consciousness" and "consciousness of consciousness", the "invention" of an unconscious mind long before the appearance of psychoanalytic accounts describing a functional entity called "the unconscious."
If nerves came to be conceived of as needing 'insulation from the mind', then to what extent can their non-mental form of 'consciousness' - which one is not conscious of - be considered as an 'unconscious mind' (my italics)? The unconscious of the nerves seems to be one which is anti-mental, an unconscious consisting of something other than the mind. The non-conscious consciousness of the nerves is an anti-mental unconscious. This corresponds with H.D.'s over-mind which is described as a non-mental jellyfish within her body.

2. Over-Mind as Spiritual

H.D. used a metaphor of a low sea creature, which evoked the works of neurologists writing about reflex action in the brain, the lower nervous centres and primitive nervous systems, in order to describe the over-mind. She also described the over-mind in spiritual terms. Through bringing together spirituality and these lower nervous elements, the over-mind resonates with Ellis's belief that women were more susceptible to religion than men because their lower (more primitive) nervous centres were more active, and his related belief that ecclesiastics and women were more likely to be aroused by urination due to their greater affinity with humanity's primitive marine ancestors. Like Ellis, H.D. herself also directly connected her divine over-mind state to the physical body:

Today I saw for myself that the jelly-fish over my head had become concentrated. I saw that the state of mind I had before symbolised as a jelly-fish was just as well symbolised differently. That is, all the spiritual energy seemed concentrated in itself as the light of a pearl would be. So I understood exactly what the Galilean meant by the kingdom of heaven (Notes, 51).

Here, she reveals that the physicalised over-mind which she has described as a jellyfish, could equally well be described using Christian language as 'the kingdom of heaven'.

The over-mind is further connected to religious language through its association with the Emersonian notion of the over-soul. H.D.'s concept of the over-mind is reminiscent of the American Transcendentalist poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson’s 1841 essay entitled ‘The Over-Soul’. Emerson writes that ‘man is a stream whose source is hidden. Our being is descending into us from we know not whence. [...] I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher
origin for events than the will I call mine.’ Emerson describes his being as descending into him from on high, from divine sources. H.D. describes a similar state as the mind rather than the soul, and instead of flowing into the self from the heavens, it projects outwards from within the depths of the body. The shift from ‘soul’ to ‘mind’ reflects a shift from a transcendental to a psychologically embodied model of selfhood. However, although H.D. transforms ‘soul’ into ‘mind’ and locates this mind within the body, her over-mind is just as spiritual as Emerson’s over-soul, and its prefix over- suggests its transcendental nature even though it is not strictly metaphysical like the over-soul. The over-mind's physicality does not reduce its spiritual currency.

*Notes* ends with a description of the mind's limitations and a plea for a more physically based existence:

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No man by thought can add an inch to his stature, no initiate by the strength and power of his intellect can force his spirit to grow [...] No man by thought can make the grain sprout or the acorn break its shell. No man by intellectual striving can make his spirit expand. But every man can till the field, can clear weeds from about the stems of flowers. Every man can water his own little plot, can strive to quiet down the overwrought tension of his body (Notes, 52).
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Immediately after this call for a non-intellectual, natural, physical existence, H.D. turns to Christ as she brings *Notes* to a close:

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Christ was the grapes that hung against the sun-lit walls of that mountain garden, Nazareth. He was the white hyacinth of Sparta and the narcissus of the islands. He was the conch shell and the purple-fish left by the lake tide [...] He was the gulls screaming at low tide and tearing the small crabs from among the knotted weeds (Notes, 52-3).
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These are the final words of *Notes*. They describe Christ as a fruit, a flower, a shell, a fish and a bird, he is a force which inhabits non-animal and non-mammalian aspects of nature. Christ becomes a conch shell or purple-fish, inhabiting the depths of the ocean along with H.D.'s over-mind jellyfish. He also becomes a bird, extending his reach into the heights of the sky. However, in describing Christ as a seagull H.D. inextricably connects the lows of the deep sea with the height of the sky. As Christ the gull ascends he does so with a lowly, sea-

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82 Ralph Waldo Emerson, ‘The Over-Soul’ (1841), http://www.rwe.org/works/Essays-1st_Series_09_The_Over-Soul.htm (accessed 06/04/11).
based, crab in his beak and therefore becomes a symbol of the way in which the spiritual and the physical are fused in Notes.

Having established the network of connections between the physical or physiological understanding of the body, religious spirituality and low sea-creatures in Notes, I will now further explore this nexus (and its resonances with the work of Ellis as well as other physiologists) in an autobiographical novel which H.D. wrote two years after Notes: Asphodel. Asphodel was written in 1921-2 and documents events which took place between 1911 and 1919. The narrative of Asphodel covers the events which immediately preceded H.D.'s 1919 trip to the Scilly Isles and Asphodel's narrative ends at the point when this trip and its jellyfish vision is about to take place. Therefore Asphodel and Notes are importantly connected texts with a complex relationship. Although Asphodel was written two years after Notes it describes events which took place immediately before the vision which Notes documents. Notes is an essay with straightforwardly autobiographical content. Asphodel is an autobiographical novel in which life events are fictionalised

Asphodel

Along with HERmione (Her), Paint it Today and Bid me to Live (Madrigal), Asphodel forms part of H.D.'s 'Madrigal Cycle', a set of autobiographical novels which all present differing and overlapping fictionalised versions of H.D.'s life between 1911 and 1919. H.D. eventually rejected Asphodel as she came to view it as an earlier draft of Bid me to Live, which, as Susan Stanford Freidman has argued, H.D. chose as the publicly available version of the story.83 Bid me to Live is the only novel from the Madrigal Cycle which was published during H.D.'s lifetime. H.D. didn't want Asphodel to survive, and she asked Bryher to destroy the manuscript in her possession in 1949.84 However, although H.D. had written 'DESTROY' on the front of the only remaining manuscript, she did not go as far as achieving the certainty of this request's completion by destroying it herself.

The years documented by the Madrigal Cycle were tumultuous times for H.D.. They saw her breaking off her engagement with her fiancé Ezra Pound and then travelling to Europe from her home country, America, with her lover Frances Gregg in 1911. After Gregg and H.D. had a painful disentanglement (which Pound had some involvement with, coaxing H.D. away from Gregg) H.D. and Gregg both married, H.D. to the poet Richard Aldington. However, Aldington was sent to fight in the war shortly after their marriage and in the process underwent a ‘transformation [from] the sensitive poet/lover into the brutal Tommie soldier’. H.D. became pregnant with Aldington's baby but she miscarried during an air raid in 1915, and after Aldington returned from war H.D. found him changed and subsequently they both embarked on affairs. H.D. went to Cornwall with the composer Cecil Gray and whilst there she became pregnant with his child. Their relationship did not last long and H.D. was left alone and desolate. Her father and brother had also both died during this period. It was at this point in 1919, whilst pregnant with Gray's child, that H.D. met Bryher, a young and very wealthy woman who was in love with her. H.D. asked Bryher to help her look after the baby, which was born in 1919 and named Perdita. Bryher would become H.D.’s lifelong partner and later adopted Perdita.

Asphodel deals with these events, covering the time from H.D.’s arrival in Europe with Frances Gregg in 1911 to her pregnancy and the early stages of her relationship with Bryher in 1919. It is split into two parts, part one covers 1911-1912, and part two, 1915-1919. It is an experimental work which plays with language and distorts time, narrative and voice. Robert Spoo has described it as a ‘dramatization of the perceiving mind’ and as a work of ‘high modernism’. It is a highly aestheticised autobiography in which all the people mentioned in the brief history above are given fictionalised names which are assonant with their own: Jerrold Darrington is Richard Aldington; Hermione Gart is H.D.; George Lowndes is Ezra Pound; Faybe Rabb is Frances Gregg; Beryl de Rothfeld is Bryher and Cyril Vane is Cecil Gray.

The sections of Asphodel which I am going to focus on are all taken from the part of the text which describe the time during which Hermione is pregnant. In Asphodel, pregnancy engenders a unique state of being which is associated with marine life, gods, anti-intellectualism, witches and spirits (all forces or

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85 Freidman, Penelope’s Web, p. 139.
86 Spoo, 'Introduction' to Asphodel, pp. ix, xiii.
symbols of the anti-mental). H.D. also associates pregnancy with ultra-femininity in *Asphodel*, suggesting that it allows her access to a level of anti-mentality unavailable to men. This resonates with Ellis’s argument from *Man and Woman* where he suggests that women are better able to access anti-mental unconscious states than men because their lower nervous centres are more active.

Ellis had also written about pregnancy. In 1906 he wrote a study called ‘The Psychic State in Pregnancy’ which formed part of his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. Ellis wrote that ‘[b]oth physically and psychically the occurrence of pregnancy is […] a distinct event. It marks the beginning of a continuous physical process, which cannot fail to manifest psychic reactions.’  

Like H.D., he felt that the pregnant woman was transported to another - transcendent - level of existence: ‘The pregnant woman has been lifted above the level of ordinary humanity to become the casket of an inestimable jewel’. This corresponds with H.D.’s description of Hermione in *Asphodel*. For Ellis, as with his account of the unconscious, the psychic state in pregnancy was firmly physiologically grounded: ‘It is on the basis of the increased vascular and glandular activity and the heightened nervous tension that the special psychic phenomena of pregnancy develop.’ H.D.’s account also suggests this connection between body and mind, although she is not specific about biological details (‘the increased vascular and glandular activity and the heightened nervous tension’) as Ellis is. Although Ellis had read and rejected *Notes*, and H.D. had read Ellis’s *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, there is no evidence to suggest that he read *Asphodel*. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that he did, as H.D. kept the manuscript private, and the text was not published until 1992.

1. Vane and the Foetus

In *Asphodel*, George Lowndes refers affectionately to Hermione using a variety of mythological names, predominantly Dryad and Undine. A Dryad is a tree nymph and an Undine is a water nymph which gave Ellis’s ‘Undinism’ its name. Undines appear in European folklore and are fairy-like water spirits. Lowndes ‘being

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88 Ibid., p. 206.
tender, thoughtful suddenly [asks]. "Getting enough to eat, Undine?" "O lots. Yes.". 90 Previously Darrington has asked Hermione, "'What does old Lowndes call you?' "O Undine sometimes" (Asphodel, 61). Through her association with Undine, Hermione is, from the outset, associated with water and spirits. In Paint it Today, (written 1921, first published 1992), which covers some of the same events as Asphodel, H.D. described herself and Frances Gregg (called Josepha, Gregg's middle name, in Paint it Today) as 'wee witches' when they were together. In Asphodel, Lowndes tells Hermione that if she and Fayne Rabb had existed in another time and place they "would have been burned in Salem for witches"(Asphodel, 50).

Later in Asphodel, H.D. begins to associate herself with another watery witch. This is no 'wee witch' however, but Morgan le Fay, a highly powerful sorceress and magician from Arthurian legend. Morgan le Fay is thought to have her origins in Welsh mythology, and her name could have come from Morgens which are Welsh and Breton water spirits. Morgan le Fay becomes a dominant, oft mentioned, image and figure in the text at the exact point when Hermione herself departs from London and finds herself at the Cornish coast with Cyril Vane and becomes pregnant with his child. During the pregnancy she becomes increasingly associated with Morgan le Fay: 'Morgan le Fay. I am witch. I have made this thing' (Asphodel, 158).

Hermione seems to become pregnant not long after arriving in Cornwall, although the events in this section of Asphodel are not presented in a clear or strictly linear way, so it is hard to pinpoint the exact moment at which this has happened or the exact moment at which Hermione realises that it has happened. The pregnancy is announced in the text when Hermione realises that 'she must remember Vane. After all, it was his child' (Asphodel, 154). However, in the passages which precede this textual announcement of 'the child', Hermione finds herself in a state which is religious and aqueous all at once. The reader becomes aware that a transformation of some sort is occurring as Hermione seems to enter another dimension. She has

the realization of some sphere which is for all time, eternal, flowing as water, colourless, transparent which falling imbues the very common chair you sit in the

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90 H.D., Asphodel (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), p. 71. All quotations are from this edition and will be listed in the text in parentheses.
very ordinary book you lift and open with some quality that is one with the Revelation of Saint John the Divine or the orders of Sappho. Colour there is in this sphere world, colour of the red anemone, colour as seen under clear water, colour as sea-coral seen through crystal (Asphodel, 152-3).

The new sphere of pregnancy evokes images of 'the Revelation of Saint John the Divine' along with anemones and sea-coral. These religious and marine images mean that the Cornish trip and pregnancy transforms her mind into water on which strange, new objects float: 'Swimming on the surface of her mind was something other, different, of some other category than sheer crass experience' (Asphodel, 154). The foetus growing inside Hermione connects her to 'Morgan le Fay, Undine, and the Madonna alike [...] Mystery had stooped, embraced, had welcomed her. Vane did not understand' (Asphodel, 155).

The growing foetus also offers an animalistic redemption which saves her from what she sees as the aggressively thought-driven world of men and war: 'Men could do nothing to her for a butterfly, a frog, a soft and luminous moth larva was keeping her safe. She was stronger than men, men, men - she was stronger than guns, guns, guns. The luminous body within her smote her' (Asphodel, 162). Giving light to the darkness, the luminous worm-like foetus in Hermione's womb full of liquid, is associated with God and salvation:

It was soft and luminous and the colour of the gold sunlight that fell over her. The body within her was a mysterious globe of softly glowing pollen-light. It would give light in the darkness, she was certain, it would give light in the darkness, would, she was certain, glow pollen-wise in the darkness if the rest of her should be darkness, mysterious glow-worm within her would give light, show her the straight path...and many there be that go in threat. Straight is the road. Narrow is the path. God is. God is...mysterious light that would show her, straight and narrow the road to her redemption. She was stronger than men, men, men, guns (Asphodel, 162-3).

The foetus is described as a glow-worm, a light-giving animal which is associated with the 'mysterious light' of 'God' which would lead her towards 'redemption'.

Being pregnant becomes a sort-of religious experience, a revelation similar to that she created for Ellis during urination. Through this spiritual experience of being pregnant, Hermione also comes to associate herself with specifically water-based or reptilian animals, and it is the animal force which being pregnant creates within her that drives her to reject the support which Vane offers her:
The thing within her made her one with frogs, with eels. She was animal, reptile. Animal, reptile, she still held to the letter of convention. "Will you look after it?" "Look after it? I only want your wishes in the matter." This is not what lizard-Hermione wanted. This is not what eel-Hermione, what alligator-Hermione, what sea-gull Hermione was after. She wanted what an animal wants, what an eel wants, what even a bird must have. She didn’t want the letter of the covenant. Vane offered that (Asphodel, 158).

With her light-giving baby within her, Hermione becomes an eel, a sea-gull, an alligator. Wanting 'what an animal wants', she rejects 'the letter of the covenant' offered to her in the form of a stable relationship with Vane, the baby’s father.

As with her jellyfish vision in Notes, and Ellis’s descriptions of the unconscious and Undinism, the depiction of H.D.’s pregnancy in Asphodel fuses physicality, spirituality and the sea. Through H.D.’s depiction of Hermione's encounter with Beryl, this state is also specifically connected with a desire to disregard the mind. It becomes an anti-mental state.

2. Beryl

Hermione leaves Vane and returns from Cornwall to London, pregnant and with nowhere to go. Her friend Marion Drake arranges a house for Hermione to stay in outside of London and asks that while she is there she meet with a young girl who is the daughter of the neighbours and is desperate to meet a real poet and talk about Greek writing. Hermione is reluctant, but eventually agrees to meet Beryl.

Eel-Hermione, alligator-Hermione, sea-gull Hermione sees meeting Beryl as an imposition. She is still in the submerged, spiritual state which she had entered into in Cornwall and wants to be left alone. In describing this wish, Hermione specifically associates her state with religion again, but now she also specifically connects it with a renouncing of the intellect:

What is the matter with me? Why can’t I get away from people? I am in several pieces, it’s true, but I gave up the stark glory of the intellect, I chose finally this thing. [...] Unless you become as a little child, unless you become one with a little child, I have it and I am it and I don't see why I can’t be let alone anyhow (Asphodel, 170).

Having given up on 'the stark glory of the intellect' by choosing 'this thing', her child, she does not wish to discuss Greek poetry. In this passage, her pregnancy is
associated with the Bible as Hermione states that 'unless you become as a little child, unless you become one with child,' echoing Jesus, who apparently had said that ‘unless you become as little children you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven’ (Matthew 18:3). Perhaps Hermione’s 'I have it and I am it' refers to the kingdom of heaven which she specifically relates to becoming 'one with a little child' and giving up the intellect's stark glory.

The passage continues, and as it does, Hermione's state also continues to be associated with Morgan le Fay and the sea, which are used as further bolsters to her chosen isolation in anti-mental, anti-intellectual 'enchantment':

Cornwall was some ledge of enchantment and Morgan le Fay fell under a druid altar and a god watching the sun rise, [...] I know that God makes me one, one with trees, with the sea, [...] I am Morgan le Fay am I? and [...] I have every right to my security in this little hut with its delicious cold and its delicious isolation and I don't want to be disturbed, worried by the pedantic wretched child [Beryl] (Asphodel, 170-1).

Enchanted and Morgan le Fay-like, Hermione wishes that Beryl would leave her alone. However, Beryl begs her and insists. She says she is lonely and has never met anyone who knew the Greek anthology before. She says she wants someone to talk with, and even threatens to kill herself if Hermione will not meet with her again.

Faced with this scenario, Hermione is unable to refuse. However, feeling that 'she wanted to escape the mind and all it stood for' (Asphodel, 177), Hermione is highly opposed to Beryl's intellectualism and mind-focused existence. Hermione therefore advises the earnest, cerebral young Beryl that, "There are other haunts, not of the intellect" (Asphodel, 176). Hermione is angry with Beryl's presence, 'she didn't want this mad child vampiring her' (Asphodel, 177) because '[s]he couldn't stand perils of the intellect. She wanted to escape the mind and all it stood for' (Asphodel, 177). This desire to escape the mind and all it stood for, again, directly connected to the state of being pregnant. As Ellis had written of the pregnant woman in 'The Psychic State in Pregnancy', Hermione feels that she has been 'lifted above the level of ordinary humanity' and therefore wishes to transcend the intellect.91

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Hermione was a cocoon, a blur of gold and gilt, a gauze net that had trapped a butterfly, that had trapped a thing that would soon be a butterfly. Hermione must stay a net of gauze, not be beguiled by eyes into some open rock-hewn wind blown spaces of the intellect. You see the intellect is Greek and if you are having a le Fay, a small le Fay, you must not be Greek. Let the intellect sink like a great white god, Pallas, or Helios, God, intellect into the ripples of self. What is self? Self is a great stone, a mill-stone, the intellect sunk and self is the ripples of sub-conscious or super-conscious gold over and over and over (Asphodel, 179).

With 'a small le Fay' within her, her intellect sinks, it is engulfed by water, a state which is reminiscent of the underwater-spiritual world which Ellis describes in 'A Revelation'. All that remains are 'ripples of sub-conscious or super-conscious gold', again (as in Notes), fusing lowest and highest states of consciousness and describing both as other than the intellectual mind.

However, it is eventually Beryl's insistence on the intellect which saves Hermione and causes her to emerge from the depths she has been inhabiting:

But blue eyes, evil eyes, were calling her out of that nebulous world into which she had so softly fallen, blue eyes were dragging her ashore as one drags the mercifully almost dead to land, blue eyes were working their horrible first aid and were calling, calling to something in Hermione that was lost, that was forgotten, that had slid away, been taken away just as the guns, helmets, bombs, gas masks (what not) had been taken from odd smoke blue soldiers on a bench. Hermione was defenceless and blue eyes called her back to war, to fight, to resist, to appeal. "What do you think of Middleton" (Asphodel, 183).

Beryl rescues Hermione, but this rescue is not immediately desired or embraced by Hermione. Metaphorically speaking, Beryl has to drag her to shore, saving her despite the fact that Hermione, who is described as being 'mercifully almost dead,' does not, as this phrase implies, want to have her life saved. Back on dry land, all Beryl can offer is 'horrible first aid' by immediately asking her an intellectual question about Middleton. Having previously wanted to escape the mind and all it stood for, along with and Beryl's intellectualism, Hermione now has no option but to concede that 'it was like that and Beryl with voracious eyes and brilliant intellect was talking of Middleton' (Asphodel, 184). Beryl's question means that 'Hermione [...] must answer, find an answer...Middleton? Who was Middleton? "Oh yes. I think his horse play is legitimate - Aristophanic-"' (Asphodel, 184). Beryl's question forces Hermione to reconnect with her abandoned intellect despite the fact that this return to the mind is not exactly joyful, as Hermione bemoans the fact that '[t]here always was an answer. Intellect would never let her go, never would let go' (Asphodel, 179).
However, despite her return to the intellect, Hermione's mind continues to operate on a sort-of autopilot. Her brain is described as a site of automaticity rather than volition. Like Notes, this section of Asphodel echoes the ideas of mid-nineteenth-century physiologists such as William Benjamin Carpenter who suggested that the brain, like the lower levels of the nervous system, could carry out non-conscious reflex actions, as I have already suggested. In the process the seeming mentality of the mind is undermined. Hermione feels that, although she has engaged with Beryl and answered her questions, her mind had not been involved in this apparent act of intellectualism:

So she had said the right thing by accident, her brain seemed to work that way, automatically. [...] Brain went on (she had tested it) on a rail all by itself though brain was (she had tested it) a white marble statue, a bronze heavy thing that had sunk, had sunk irrevocably like the precious cargoes of Corinthian plunder that had sunk (Asphodel, 184).

Despite partaking in Beryl's intellectualism her mind is still not really present and her mental will is not engaged with the operations of her brain which seems to run of its own accord, set on a rail without mind or intention involving themselves. Because her brain has sunk and is stuck 'irrevocably' under water, it has become a site of the anti-mental rather than being described as a site of the volitional mind. Despite her intellectualism and focus on the mind, Beryl produces an anti-mental state in Hermione even as she drags her from the metaphorical waters of her other-worldly state. Could it be that Beryl is not as straightforwardly of the mind as Hermione immediately assumes her to be, and that Beryl also longs to partake in Hermione's oceanic religious-marine state? Beryl has evoked marine imagery from her first appearance in the text; despite dragging Hermione ashore, she too has been associated with the sea. When Hermione had first met Beryl, she went to her family home which is described as a hybrid country manor / marine environment:

Stark colour broke across an old room, gone dim with light fallen to gold-grey, fallen to grey with the hint of gold that under clouds at sun-set throw over grey water, gone to grey water...the room was filled with grey water from which knobs and handles and the flank of a candle-stick emerged, streaked in the water-grey like metallic gilt sun-fish, flicking here and there fin or under-belly, flicking colour [...] In the room against the sheer north grey and the more obvious
erratic Chinese, tropical glint of fish-fin that was the candle stick and knob of something that was the crystal glass knob of something that was the crystal substance of some delicate jelly-fish, more obvious European, classic colour obtruded (Asphodel, 174).

Like Hermione, Beryl too had emerged from the ocean, lived amongst jellyfish and seen the light glint off a fish's fin. Hermione's description transforms Beryl's staid aristocratic home into a glistening ocean, associating Beryl with the oceanic state which pregnancy evokes in Hermione.

Beryl's full transformation takes place at the end of Asphodel, after Hermione's daughter has been born. With the baby in her arms, she says to Beryl, "I want you to promise me to grow up and take care of the little girl." (Asphodel, 206). Beryl responds and is lost for words as she is transformed from someone 'cold with wisdom' to 'an attendant angel on an altar':

"Do you mean - do you mean-" A light is shining at the far end of long, long tunnel. The glazed eyes of Beryl, the wicked eyes of some child Darius, the eyes that prodded prongs into the eyes, the eyes of intellect turned glazed with knowledge, cold with wisdom, were a wide child's eyes, were the eyes of an eagle in a trigo triptych, were eyes of an attendant angel on the altar (Asphodel, 206).

Through making Beryl into a mother, Hermione transports her from the world of the mind to the world of the spirit, and in connecting both with physicality, fuses these worlds.

Asphodel ends at the point when H.D. was about to write Notes. Asphodel describes Beryl/Bryher's entry into H.D.'s sphere of liquid spirituality which she associated with her pregnancy and therefore sets the scene for the jellyfish vision which H.D. would experience on the Scilly Isles in Bryher's presence just after she had given birth.

Ellis, Notes and Asphodel

Notes and Asphodel both resonate with Ellis's ideas. In the years during which they were written, H.D. and Bryher 'poured over the massive volumes of his [Ellis's] Studies in the Psychology of Sex'. 92 Notes in particular was written with

92 Freidman, 'Prologue' to Analyzing Freud, p. 3.
Ellis in mind and drew on his ideas concerning the importance of sexuality in human experience. Ellis had written about and vindicated hallucinatory experiences such as that which Notes documents, in *The World of Dreams*. H.D. also expresses ideas in *Notes* which correspond with Ellis’s arguments about the existence of both cerebral and spinal sexual centres. Both writers were concerned with placing non-mental consciousness within the body, and specifically within the nerves. Why then did Ellis respond so negatively to *Notes* when H.D. showed it to him in 1919? An answer to this question cannot take a form other than conjecture, but it seems likely to me that Ellis's reaction was born out of the same wariness which drove him to return early from Greece in 1920. When Ellis and H.D. met in 1919, H.D. was on the verge of mental breakdown. In 1933 H.D. wrote to Ellis saying 'if you had not been kind those days or if you had shut your door on me, I might very easily simply have lost the will to live (it was a struggle).’ 93 Perhaps Ellis felt burdened by the weight of responsibility given to him in asking for a response to this text in which he accepted his role as muse. He cannot have wanted to be responsible for H.D.’s sanity and so he responded to the text she wrote for him with indifference. He may also have been wary as his romantic involvements lay elsewhere, his partner Françoise was jealous of his friendship with H.D., and as 'A Revelation' shows, H.D. was a powerfully erotic force for Ellis during this period. His rejection may have been an act of disguised altruism combined with self-preservation.

*Asphodel* (written 1921-2), describes the period during which H.D. was pregnant and gave birth. In describing her pregnancy she evokes Ellis’s ideas in *The Psychic State in Pregnancy* as well as the connection he made between women and anti-mentality in *Man and Woman*, 'Undinism' and elsewhere. Despite these resonances, and despite the fact that *Asphodel* covers the period in which H.D. met Ellis, he does not (like most other people she knew during that period) feature in the text. Perhaps H.D. wanted to forget about (and at least not write about) the time when she urinated in front of the greatest sexologist of the age during a period of mental instability. In her letters H.D. tried to erase this experience and Susan Stanford Friedman, in her editorial gloss on the letters, suggests that a 'half line cut out, [is] probably a reference to Havelock Ellis's

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urolagnia'. H.D. and Ellis continued to write to one another into the 1930s. In 1933 H.D. wrote to Ellis stating 'Now why I ask him [Freud] and you, do you and he not both get that dammmmmned [sic] old Nobel Prize???' She also wrote 'I am thinking much of you' and 'I do hope to see you sometime'. Despite the importance which Ellis and H.D. had for the other in life, and the very many resonances and affinities between their texts and ideas, H.D. and Ellis both repressed and rejected (either consciously or unconsciously) the influence and fascination which they seemed to have on and for one another.

Conclusion

Like Hughlings Jackson and Lawrence, H.D. and Ellis both placed the anti-mental at the centre of their accounts of the self and of human functionality. Through associating anti-mental states with religion and spirituality as well as with the ocean and 'low' sea-creatures, they create texts in which the material, physicalised self can be portrayed as something highly spiritual. Flourens had panicked in 1846 because he felt that placing the previously metaphysical self within the brain would undermine notions of the soul and of God. H.D. and Ellis on the other hand, like many other neurologists from the late-nineteenth century, located the self not just in the brain but throughout the nervous system, meaning that the non-conscious, non-mental states associated with these non-cerebral parts of the nervous system became central aspects of selfhood.

Through their emphasis on the self that is a product of anti-mental, supposedly 'lower' levels of the nervous system, H.D. and Ellis portray a material self which, like its analogously primitive anti-mental sea-creatures, they associated with transcendental spiritual states which had always been understood to be forces beyond the control of the rational, conscious mind. Although some felt that the rise of science and the material self which neurology presented threatened religious experiences, H.D. and Ellis show that even if religious feelings and spirituality are physical and primitive, rather than metaphysical and divine, this does not make them any less sacred. The anti-

94 Freidman, editorial gloss in Analyzing Freud, p. 68.  
95 H.D., letter to Havelock Ellis (5 May 1933), Analysing Freud, p. 246  
96 H.D., letters to Havelock Ellis (July 13 1933; August 30 1933), Analysing Freud, pp. 362, 377.
mental nerves become oceanic fibres. Like the sea, they are conceived of as both primitive and spiritual.
3. Modernist Sensory Self-Observation in the *Diaries* of Virginia Woolf and Henry Head's and W. H. R. Rivers's 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division'

Virginia Woolf was taken to see Dr. Henry Head as a patient on 9th September 1913. Their medical encounter was fleeting and dramatic; Woolf only saw Head once and later that day she tried to kill herself by taking an overdose of veronal.¹ Head also attended her after the suicide attempt, helping to save her life, but he did not treat her again, even though it has been suggested that Head would have been Woolf's ideal doctor. Hermione Lee has written that '[a]t this time of maximum danger and stress [...] By far their best bet - but not, unfortunately, a major figure in Leonard's consultations - was the distinguished neuropsychologist Henry Head' and Stephen Trombley has suggested that '[g]iven the enlightened views of Head, the fact that their meeting bore no fruit and was never repeated may be seen as a tragic event in the life of Virginia Woolf'.² While this may be true, (although other commentators, such as Roger Poole, have portrayed the encounter in a much more negative light than Lee and Trombley), it is precisely this kind of speculative and biographical conclusion I wish to avoid in this account of Woolf and Head.³ For this reason, the meeting between Woolf and Head will not be the focus of this account as it has largely been for the only others who have written about Woolf and Head alongside one another.

Head also enjoyed Woolf's novels many years after this medical encounter. After 1926 Head retired from public intellectual life and from professional medicine and moved to the country with his wife Ruth who read Woolf's novels aloud to her husband. Head's biographer L. S. Jacyna says that in

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³ The only existing accounts of Woolf and Head together are predominantly biographical, although Stephen Trombley does provide some excellent analysis of Head's works and ideas. See Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf*; Roger Poole, *The Unknown Virginia Woolf* (1978), 3rd edn. (London: Humanities Press International, 1990); Stephen Trombley, *All that Summer She was Mad* for accounts of Woolf and Head's encounter.
his retirement Head 'developed a special interest in Virginia Woolf'. Head had developed Parkinson's disease by this stage which meant that he was no longer able to write, but Ruth wrote letters on his behalf. She wrote to Siegfried Sassoon declaring that she and Henry thought '[t]he Lighthouse more perfect than Mrs Dalloway and are so glad to have our opinion reinforced by Lytton Strachey. It is the most wonderful book and we talked of little else all the time I was reading it aloud'. Head's interest in Woolf's novels will not be a focus here either, although it does point to Head's affinities with modernism, which will be a central concern of this chapter. Instead of concentrating on these biographical connections, I will focus on the under explored intellectual affinities between Woolf and Head, investigating their texts rather than their lives (albeit texts about their lives), and pointing to shared methods of examining and reporting their own sensations in Woolf's Diaries from 1915-1930 and Head's 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division' from 1908 which was co-authored with W. H. R. Rivers (1864-1922).

I will argue that a similar, and particularly modernist, approach to sensory self-observation emerges in both Woolf's Diaries and Head's and Rivers's experiment. An account of modernism as a set of concerns which manifested themselves in neurological as well as literary contexts enables a more intellectually and textually focused history of Woolf's relationship with her one-time doctor. Therefore, this account of the Woolf-Head relationship, which considers them both as modernists, avoids becoming like the account given by Trombley or Poole, which reduces Woolf to a patient and Head to a medic. My approach opens the way for additional work which considers textual rather than biographical or medical affinities between Woolf and the important medical figures of her day such as Head, who may have been involved in treating her, and who were interested in and influenced by, but remained professionally and intellectually distinct from psychoanalysis. Although (or perhaps because) Woolf was never a patient of a psychoanalyst, there have been many studies which have documented her intellectual relationships with psychoanalysis. However, there

5 Letter of Ruth Head to Siegfried Sassoon (24 May 1927), quoted in Jacyna, Medicine and Modernism, p 274.
are very few studies which have considered Woolf's relationship with neurology. When we consider that Head, who was briefly Woolf's doctor, was one of the most important neurologists of his time (he was knighted in 1927 and editor of Britain's foremost neurological journal *Brain* from 1901–1921) as well as the fact that many of Woolf's ideas about the self have affinities with certain neurological notions from the same period, then this seems like an area which demands further enquiry. However, Woolf's connections with neurology have not gone totally uncharted. Patricia Waugh has written an excellent account of Woolf's understanding of the soul, the brain and the mind in which she argues that although Woolf went against the localisationist neurologists of her time, the ideas contained in her writings have much in common with the neuroscientific ideas of today which posit the idea of a distributed mind. However, Waugh's argument does not take account of neurologists who were contemporaries of Woolf's, such as Head, who did not subscribe to these localisationist theories. Waugh focuses on the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century trend for localisation within neurology which, in fact, Head explicitly and vehemently argued against. Waugh argues that Woolf:

plays amusingly with fashionable metaphors of brain "localisation": the idea that particular functions of mind can be located in specific places in the material brain, an idea introduced in the nineteenth century with the neurological investigations of Paul Broca and Carl Wernicke. Woolf intuits that neurological reduction of the mind to a brain is simply an inverted Cartesianism that saves the Cartesian soul as bounded, integral and private, by substituting for it the material brain now opened up by the tools of the neurologist rather than those of the metaphysician.

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9 Waugh, "'Did I not banish the soul?' Thinking Otherwise, Woolf-wise', *Contradictory Woolf*, p. 28.
However, the localisationist neurology of Broca and Wernicke was not the only approach taken within late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century neurology. There were also holist neurologists, and central among these holist neurologists in England were John Hughlings Jackson and Henry Head. In *Lost Words* (2000) Jacyna explains that 'Head is generally included in what has been called the holist movement in early-twentieth-century neurology. He maintained that the notion of circumscribed "centres" on the cortex in which discrete functions were located was misguided'.¹⁰ Head specifically argued against localisation as posited by Broca and Wernicke at length in his book *Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech* (1926).¹¹ Like Woolf, Head was suspicious of reducing the mind to the brain. Here we see that Woolf has much in common with neurological ideas from her own time as well as with those from today as Waugh compellingly argues.

Furthermore, the focus on an extended mind which is present throughout the entire nervous system rather than just in the brain is connected to the anti-m mentality which Head and Woolf both enacted as they observed their own sensations, as I will demonstrate.

Elsewhere, Craig Gordon has argued that Woolf engaged with the neuroscience of her day only in order to react against it. He argues that she is involved in 'countering the neuroscientific body' as she depicts, in *The Waves*, 'a body that resolutely refuses to be assimilated by the language and procedures of bioscience'.¹² However, even though Woolf did wish to portray a body which could not be wholly assimilated by bioscience this does not mean that she did not also share certain ideas and approaches with some contemporary neuroscientific figures. Even though Woolf often refuted psychoanalysis she also had much in common with its practices intellectually; this is a well rehearsed argument. I believe that a similar argument can and should be made in relation to neurology,

¹¹ Head’s study of language disorders led him to critique what he called the neurological ‘diagram makers’ along with the associated concept of cerebral localisation, as conventionally understood. He wrote that ‘[w]e have already seen that the usual conceptions of localisation of function are not adequate to explain the phenomena of aphasia and kindred disorders of speech. The so-called “centres” in the cortex are not conglomerations of cells and fibres where some particular and more or less exclusive function is initiated, to be abolished by their removal. They are points where the progress of some mode of action can be reinforced, deviated or inhibited; in fact they are foci of integration.’ (Head, *Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech: Volume 1*, p. 498.)
and in particular in relation to Head, one of the most prominent neurologists of Woolf's day who had also once been her doctor. And despite the fact that, as Lisa Appignanesi has written, 'Virginia had little time for mind doctors in general', the intellectual affinities she has with Head adds a certain nuance to this conclusion.  

In what follows I will offer an introduction to Woolf's *Diaries* followed by an account of Head's physiology of sensation, before moving on to describe the centrality of both sensation and attention to discourses of modernity and modernism. Following this I will explore the anti-mental techniques of sensory self-observation carried out by both Woolf and Head, focusing on their methods of observing and recording their sensations during illness or after injury. Finally I will explore the reasons why both Woolf and Head sought out a specifically non-urban setting for their practices of sensory self-observation, and situate this within understandings of modernism and modernist primitivism or anti-mentality.

**Woolf's Diaries**

Despite the appearance of a number of recent books which focus on Woolf in relation to topics such as 'daily time and everyday life', 'the patterns of ordinary experience' and 'the ordinary', Woolf's most quotidian texts, her *Diaries*, have received very little mention in these works, or attention in general as primary texts. As Joanne Campbell Tidwell has written, '[m]ost scholars have used the diary for information about Woolf's life, her attitudes toward writing, and her development as a writer. I want to look at the diary as a primary text, rather than as a corollary to her fiction and essays'. This is the approach which I will also adopt. In focusing on Woolf's *Diaries*, the techniques through which she observed

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herself and recorded her own sensations come to the fore. Part of the emphasis here will be on how Woolf's diary, like Head's and Rivers's experiment, was an autobiographical text of self-recording.

Woolf started writing diaries as a teenager in 1897 and continued the habit on and off throughout her life. She didn't write during her worst breakdowns but from 1917 until her death in 1941 she wrote a diary reasonably regularly. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Diaries from 1915-1941 were published in their entirety in five volumes. Here I will focus on Woolf's Diaries from 1915-1930 in the published volumes 1-3. I have chosen to focus on these years for two main reasons. Firstly because they show the emergence of Woolf as a modernist writer and diarist and secondly because these are the Diaries written by Woolf (excluding her early diaries) which correspond with years during which Head was also developing ideas in published works. In particular I will be focusing on the Diaries which Woolf wrote at Monk's House between 1919 and 1930. When written in London, Woolf's Diaries nearly always focused on the external world, documenting political and social events. Woolf's pre-1919 country diaries also focused mainly on the external world, documenting the weather and nature.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{16} Woolf's early journals, spanning the years 1897-1909 (beginning when she was almost 15), do not attempt to portray her emotions or inner world. Instead, these early diaries chiefly comprise notes about what their author had been writing and reading, the weather, family events, daily household life, dinner guests, trips to galleries etc. There is little reflection or emotional content framed through inner experience. See: Virginia Woolf, \textit{A Passionate Apprentice: The Early Journals}, ed. Mitchell A. Leaska (London: Hogarth Press, 1992). After 1909 Woolf did not write a diary again until January 1915. However, this attempt was short lived and lasted only until February of the same year. After this date she was not well enough to write her diary again and did not do so until August 1917 whilst recuperating at the house she and Leonard had at Asheham in Sussex. The Asheham diary marked the transition back into diary-writing for Woolf. After beginning the Asheham diary Woolf continued to keep regular diaries for the rest of her life. The Asheham diaries from autumn 1917 mostly consist of short entries which give observations of nature and the weather; as with her childhood diaries, her inner world does not feature. Here are some typical entries from September 1917, to give an idea of the character of the Asheham diary: 'Thursday 20 September - Another grey day, though not so much rain. Brilliant sun & blue sky for about 10 minutes in the afternoon. L. had to get whiskey in Rodmell. Picked apples, he on the table. Then to get milk at cottage, & round into hollow, where we found 3 mushrooms; & the spine & red legs of a bird, just devoured by a hawk – either pigeon or partridge. Very windy, but a starry night [...] Saturday 22 September - Another fine day, though well in autumn now. The rooks settling on the trees, & making a great noise in the early morning. A few walnuts ripe. Dahlia fully out in the bed. Trees now so thin that I can see the postman through them at the top of the hill. Clover in field opposite has been cut, & lies on the field. Still some corn standing across on the downs. Sat on the terrace after lunch: L. did garden. D. went to Glynde after tea; we sat over fire [...] Sunday 23 September - Fine day. Picked apples in the afternoon, & stole straw & laid them on straw in the attics. Strolled out after tea. It becomes
However, in 1919 the Woolfs moved their Sussex country residence from Asheham to the nearby Monk’s House in Rodmell. This move marked a turning point in Woolf’s diary-writing. Only after 1919, and only when at Monk’s House, Woolf began to portray her inner world and psychically experienced sensations in her diary alongside her perceptions of the world she saw around her.

Woolf wrote no diaries from 1909-1915 meaning that when she saw Head in 1913 she was not currently writing a diary. In fact there is only one mention of Head in Woolf’s *Diaries*. This was written in 1928 (fifteen years after they had met in person) and reveals Head’s popularity amongst the Bloomsbury group and a myth which seemed to be circulating about him, but nothing of Woolf’s own encounter with this doctor who had once attended her both before and after a suicide attempt. The only mention of Head in Woolf’s *Diaries* is when she reports a conversation between Leonard, herself and E. M. Forster about homosexuality: 'Morgan [E.M. Forster] said that Dr Head can convert the sodomites. "Would you like to be converted?" Leonard asked. "No" said Morgan, quite definitely'.

Some critics might say that the fact this is the only reference to a doctor who was consulted immediately before a suicide attempt as well as being involved in saving her life after this attempt is typical of Woolf’s diaries which have frequently been described in terms of repression. For example, Judy Simons has argued that Woolf ‘never told the truth about herself’ in her diaries and that she 'saw it [writing her diary] as a purely professional enterprise, not an opportunity for psychological scrutiny'. This seems a remarkable assertion about texts which contain so much psychological scrutiny. Simons argues that Woolf’s diary is a prolonged exercise in repression of her psychological troubles, and this is an argument also put forward by Roger Poole who argues that the diary presents ‘a kind of artificially contrived black hole, a refusal, a denial’ and that ‘the repression in the Diary is massive’. Poole found it surprising and shocking that suddenly very cold. A more wintry sunset - very highly coloured. Too cold to stay out late. Desmond’s story after dinner’ (*Virginia Woolf, The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Volume One: 1915-1919*, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), p. 52.)
there is apparently 'nothing' about her mental disturbances in the diary:
'Whatever it was she slid into, "madness" or otherwise, there is nothing in the
diary to enlighten us about it'. 20 However, it is exactly this view of Woolf's diary
that I would like to challenge as it seems an inadequate and inaccurate
description of these texts which contain many rich descriptions of Woolf's
psychological reality and illnesses. Poole expressed outrage that 'all' of Woolf's
life is not in her diary and was particularly outraged that aspects which may have
supported his argument about her 'madness' (made before the diaries were
published) are not present. Alexandra Harris's words may have been useful for
Poole:

There is surprisingly little about the boredoms, humiliations, and terrors of illness
[in the diary]. As usual, she bothered to think through the reasons for this: "I
want to appear a success even to myself." The diary feels so full and expansive
that it is tempting to imagine that all her life is here. It is not, but here is the
version of life she wanted to remember. 21

I agree with Harris in her assessment of the diary as a version of life that Woolf
wanted herself and others to remember rather than a full account of her life.
However, I disagree with her statement that there is 'little' about illness in the
diary. In this chapter I will focus almost entirely on entries which Woolf wrote
during illness, and which sought to portray the reality of Woolf's sensory
experiences during these illnesses. Although Woolf's Diaries have been described
as an exercise in repression or denial, they can also be considered (as Tidwell has
described Woolf's diary-writing) as her attempt 'to put reality into writing'. 22 Even
if the reality they portray is a fallacy or incomplete, this attempt to convert reality
into writing, including the realities of illness, remains the fundamental textual
concern of the Diaries.

This attempt to capture the immediate world required a hasty style of
writing and therefore Woolf often berated herself for what she saw as the
slovenly nature of her writing in her diaries. This led to her proclamation that her
diary did not count as 'real writing' due to its rapid composition method which
she describes as anti-mental, or as involving an absence of thought. In January
1919 she wrote:

20 Ibid., p. 301.
22 Tidwell, Politics and Aesthetics in The Diary of Virginia Woolf, p. 29.
I note however that this diary writing does not count as writing, since I have just reread my years [sic] diary & am struck by the rapid haphazard gallop at which it swings along, sometimes indeed jerking almost intolerably over the cobbles. Still if it were not written rather faster than the fastest typewriting, if I stopped and took thought, it would never be written at all (D1, 233-4).

Here Woolf introduces the idea that her diary is written without thought, indeed that the very introduction of thought would impede its composition. However, this notion of the diary as an anti-mental form is introduced as Woolf rereads and thinks about her diary, challenging this idea from the moment it is put into words.

Following Woolf, the editor of Woolf's *Diaries*, Anne Olivier Bell, has written that Woolf’s 'diary is a rapid and unedited record of the encounters and events, sights and sensations uppermost in her mind when she sat down to write'. However, other critics have challenged this assertion because even though Woolf did write her diary quickly she also went back over old volumes and made changes and edits as she did this. Occasionally she made a note in the margin which answered a speculative remark with the facts which had since developed. In *Daily Modernism* (2000), which deals with modernist diaries, Elizabeth Podnieks has written that:

> Rereading afforded Woolf the opportunity to edit her diaries. She did so at different stages of writing[...]She saw her diary as a work which could be improved, and which would reflect and satisfy her professional, writerly sensibilities. We must see it as one which forces us to challenge assumptions that the diary is a spontaneous and uncrafted text.  

Woolf proclaimed that her diaries were written without thought, and yet she also went back over old entries in order to think about and edit them. These diaries are highly crafted; they are not automatic writing. Although Woolf denied the presence of the mind in the composition of her diaries, she also inscribed her mind through the constructed nature of her diaries and the psychological self-scrutiny which they contain. This simultaneity of a presence and absence of the mind will also emerge as a crucial aspect of the modes of sensory self-observation which Woolf depicted in her diary during illness at Monk’s house. It is in this sensory self-observation that Woolf turned to techniques and methods which

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resonate with those employed by Henry Head when he was observing his own
sensations whilst carrying out 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division'.

Woolf understood her diary as serving many purposes: it was
concurrently notes for the memoir she planned to write; a record for 'old Virginia'
looking back at her younger self; practice for her 'real' writing in her essays and
novels; a manuscript Leonard may make a book out of after she dies; an activity
done for its sheer pleasure; something done out of a sense of duty ('What a
disgraceful lapse! nothing added to my disquisition, & life allowed to waste like a
tap left running' (D1, 239)); and a form of therapy ('I may as well wreak my
temper, write out my fidgets, in this book'). 25 However, the aspect of Woolf's
Diaries which will be of central interest for me here was also the very
characteristic that she picked out as the most important aspect in the diaries of
her friend Katherine Mansfield. Mansfield's diaries were published four years
after her death in 1923. In Woolf's review of this book, 'A Terribly Sensitive Mind',
she wrote the following: 'It is not the quality of her writing or the degree of fame
that interest us in her diary, but the spectacle of a mind - a terribly sensitive mind
- receiving one after another the haphazard impressions of eight years of life'. 26 In
Woolf's Diaries too, as with Head's work in 'A Human Experiment in Nerve
Division', I will be concerned with the spectacle of a mind receiving haphazard
impressions (for both Woolf's Diaries and Head's experiment were performative
spectacles).

Later in the chapter I will point to the ways in which this focus on Woolf's
Diaries rather than her novels or essays foregrounds the modernist anti-mental.
This is because through considering sensory self-observation in Woolf's Diaries,
impressions, sensations, the self, and a retreat from modernity all become key
concerns, as they also do in the sensory self-observation of another modernist:
Henry Head.

25 Virginia Woolf, The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Volume 2: 1920-1924, eds. Anne Olivier Bell
and Andrew McNellie (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), p. 120. All quotations
are from this edition and will be referenced in parenthesis in the text as D2 with the page
number.
26 Virginia Woolf, 'A Terribly Sensitive Mind', Collected Essays by Virginia Woolf: Volume 1
Henry Head's Modernist Physiology of Sensation

Henry Head was one of the foremost neurologists of the early-twentieth century. He is particularly remembered for his investigations into the physiology of sensation and his studies of aphasia. Head's idea of the body-scheme (which is to do with the way in which the individual perceives their own body) was an important aspect of his work, and it was influential for Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) who refers to Head's work nine times in The Phenomenology of Perception (1945). Head always felt that clinical medicine ought to be underpinned by rigorous scientific practice and his scientific training in physiology started early. After finishing school Head travelled to Halle in Germany on a sort of gap year to study with the renowned Professor of Physiology Julius Bernstein (1839-1917). After this he attended Cambridge where he studied physiology under Walter Holbrook Gaskell (1847-1914). Gaskell's physiology was characterised by the 'evolutionary perspective it brought to its discussion of structure and function'. After Cambridge Head travelled to Prague to continue his studies in physiology under Ewald Hering (1834-1918), and it was this time in Prague which first excited Head's interest in the physiology of sensation. After returning from Prague, Head was drawn to neurology as he felt it was the only remaining place in medicine where the physiologist and the physician could be one and the same person. He worked briefly at the Queen Square neurological hospital in the 1890s (where his colleagues included John Hughlings Jackson and W. H. R. Rivers) but most of his professional life was divided between the London Hospital in Whitechapel and the opposing social atmosphere of private Harley Street consulting rooms where he 'established [...] a reputation as a specialist in "nervous" disorders'.

As these differing medical locations might suggest, Head's clinical practice included both neurological and psychological patients. Despite being mostly

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27 Henry Head's idea of the body-scheme was first outlined as early as his MD thesis: 'Disturbances of Sensation, with Especial Reference to the Pain of Visceral Disease', which was published in Brain, 16 (1893), 1-33; Stephen Trombley notes that Merleau-Ponty refers to Head's notion of the body-scheme nine times in The Phenomenology of Perception in 'All That Summer She Was Mad', pp. 161-2.


29 Ibid., p. 43.

30 Ibid., p. 58.
remembered and referred to as a neurologist, Head’s biographer Jacyna explains that

Head’s practice included a significant number of “functional” patients who manifested psychic, or psychosomatic, symptoms that could be ascribed to no obvious somatic cause. To treat these cases, Head took on the role of a “psychologist” who sought to understand this illness in terms of the personality and life history of the individual concerned. He sought to formalise this dynamic approach in a 1920 paper on “The Elements of the Psycho-Neuroses”. 31

This article appeared in the British Medical Journal and was one of the first articles in which a British neurological practitioner took on Freud’s ideas in published medical writing. However, Freud had clearly been present in Head’s mind for some time as he and Ruth had been analysing their dreams in a Freudian manner in their private letters since 1917. 32 This fusion of the neurological and the psychological (including psychoanalysis) was one of Head’s defining characteristics and is mentioned by practically every commentator on his life and ideas. Macdonald Critchley notes that Head ‘was able to bring to his careful clinical techniques, an attitude of mind which was neurophysiological as well as psychological’ and this sentiment is repeated by Paul Eling who notes that ‘Head represented a movement toward the conception of neurological disorders in psychological terms’. 33

Head’s primary influence in terms of his inclusion of the psychological within neurology was John Hughlings Jackson. Head followed Hughlings Jackson in his evolutionary account of the nervous system and also in his belief that a neurological lesion did not produce positive symptoms but instead allowed for the usually inhibited lower levels of the nervous system to unleash themselves. Head’s appreciation of Hughlings Jackson was brought to the fore by his studies of Aphasia. Head wrote that ‘no one except Jackson recognised that all the phenomena [in aphasia] are primarily psychical and only in the second place susceptible to physiological or anatomical explanation’. 34 Head felt that other than in the writings of Hughlings Jackson (whose work had been sadly neglected, he felt) this psychologically informed holist tradition had been ignored within

31 Ibid., p. 85.
32 Ibid., p. 85-6.
34 Head, Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech: Volume 1, p. 32.
aphasiology. In an attempt to rectify this Head re-published Hughlings Jackson's papers on aphasia in *Brain* in 1915. Head felt that Hughlings Jackson's work was unique for its time in being 'much closer [to the biological and experiential reality of defects of speech] than the glib generalisations founded on the anatomical facts of cortical localisation'.

Head was also 'a doctor fascinated with art and literature'. The penchant he developed in his retirement for Woolf's novels was just one of the many literary affinities in Head's life. He also wrote poetry and in 1919 his collection *Destroyers and Other Verses* was published. Furthermore, he contributed an introduction to an edition of Thomas Hardy's works compiled by his wife Ruth. This was fitting as Head's marriage with Ruth had literary foundations. Throughout their long courtship they maintained a highly intellectual correspondence and also kept what they called 'Ragbooks'. These were diaries/notebooks to which they both contributed their thoughts, feelings and accounts of reading and other cultural and literary endeavours and then swapped them every so often so that they could comment and expand upon what the other had written. Literature and culture were essential parts of Head's life and he felt very strongly about them. Not content to enjoy his own literary wife in peace, Head apparently disowned his sister after she married a man he did not feel had sufficient 'intellectual and artistic interests' or a developed enough taste for 'beauty and refinement'.

Literature also shaped some of his treatment methods. Jacyna writes that Head 'prescribe[d] reading Goethe as a form of therapy to at least one of his neurasthenic patients' and is said to have included 'intense discussions of the psychology of fictional characters, such as Conrad’s *Lord Jim*’ as part of another patient's treatment regime.

Head's affiliations with modernism emerge less from his engagements with literature (his main literary influence was the Romantic poet Heinrich Heine, whose poems he translated into English) and more from his own scientific and medical work. The historian of neurology L. S. Jacyna has recently written a biography of Head which he titled *Medicine and Modernism* (2008), placing

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35 Ibid., p. 31.
36 Laura Salisbury, 'Medicine and Modernism: A Biography of Sir Henry Head (review)', *Modernism/modernity*, 16 (2009), 816-817 (p. 816).
37 The Ragbooks are available in the Wellcome Library's archive: PP/HEA/E.3/1-6 box 9.
39 Ibid, pp. 33, 89. The patient Head discussed *Lord Jim* with was Robert Nichols.
modernism alongside medicine as a centrally important aspect of this doctor’s life. One of Jacyna’s arguments in this book is that we should consider Head as a modernist neurologist, describing his work as ‘the harbinger of a new medical modernity’.\(^{40}\) Jacyna also states that ‘aspects of Head’s work - especially his rewriting of the physiology of sensation - place him as a cognitive modernist’ and declares that he had a ‘modernist sensibility’.\(^{41}\) Although Head’s poetry displays affinities with Romanticism rather than modernism, I believe that we can, as Jacyna suggests, consider Head’s neurological texts as modernist documents due to the emphasis they place on the inner world in constructing what we experience as reality.\(^{42}\) Despite the fact that Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail have described neurology and modernity as mutually constitutive, the idea of a neurologist as a modernist is not commonplace.\(^{43}\) Nevertheless, I agree with Jacyna in believing that we should consider Head as such, and furthermore argue that a focus on the anti-mental was at the heart of Head’s modernism.

Jacyna argues that ‘Head betrayed a modernist sensibility in [...] demanding a complete break with the physiology’s past’.\(^{44}\) The reason that Head demanded a complete break was due to his evolutionary understanding of the nervous system, which he had largely inherited from Hughlings Jackson. Jacyna explains that it was Head’s evolutionary approach to the nervous system which ‘necessitated this revolution’.\(^{45}\) This was because, although previous neurologists and physiologists of sensation had thought that the ‘physical act of sensation [...] passed unaltered to the cortex of the brain’, for Head, sensation was a purely ‘psychical state’ which was distinct from the exclusively physiological and anti-mental processes which underpinned it.\(^{46}\) Due to the evolved account of the nervous system, which meant that non-mental neurological processes formed the foundation of what is experienced as consciousness, Head concluded that


\(^{41}\) Ibid., pp.4, 42.

\(^{42}\) Henry Head, *Destroyers and Other Verses* (London: Oxford University Press, 1919).


\(^{45}\) Ibid., p. 133.

\(^{46}\) Henry Head, ‘Sensation and the Cerebral Cortex,’ *Brain*, 41 (1918), 57-253 (p. 58); H. Head and G. Holmes, ‘Sensory Disturbances from Cerebral Lesions,’ *Brain*, 34 (1911), 102-254 (p. 177).
'complex physiological processes [...] intervened between the stimulation and [...] the generation of a psychical event'. 47 All of this meant that, in Head's neurological framework, sensations, although physiologically created, were purely psychic constructions. Head understood consciousness as a 'a form of integrative vital reaction', meaning that it was a false coherence which arose out of the organism's need for psychic unity. 48 From this he inferred that 'sensations and the like are not constituent parts of mental processes, but are the results of abstract introspective analysis'. 49 Therefore:

Head's revised version of the nervous system [...] had wider implications for understanding man's place in the universe. On this view, the Cartesian notion that the self was a given entity that passively contemplated the universe was a delusion. On the contrary, selfhood was an active construct and man's knowledge of the material universe - the body included - dependent on a complex of physiological processes of which the mind was normally unconscious. 50

Head's neurology not only dismantled Cartesianism, it also emphasised the anti-mental physiological processes which were the foundation of a person's perception of themselves and the world, perceived as their 'mind'.

Head felt that psychically comprehensible sensations were created by introspection: 'sensations and the like are not constituent parts of mental processes, but are the results of abstract introspective analysis'. 51 This sets them apart from physiological sensory experiences which can never be experienced mentally. He explained that 'between the impact of a physical sensation and the act of sensation lay a multitude of physiological transformations which could not be discovered by introspection' and '[b]ehind every conscious act lie many integrations most of which take place on a purely physiological level'. 52 However, although these 'purely physiological' aspects of sensation normally lie outside the field of consciousness - are anti-mental - they may become available to consciousness after a lesion in the higher levels of the nervous system has destroyed the more evolved aspects in sensation which usually mask these lower

47 Jacyna, Medicine and Modernism, p. 134.
48 Head, Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech: Volume 1, p. 536.
49 Ibid., p. 543.
50 Jacyna, Medicine and Modernism, p. 135.
51 Head, Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech: Volume 1, p. 543.
levels from consciousness. Based on this Jacksonian understanding of neurological illness and sensations, Head wrote that:

By analysis of sensibility due to lesions at different levels of the nervous system it is alone possible to unravel the vast mass of dispositions which lie normally outside the field of consciousness [...this] reveal[s] the various integrations required to evoke sensation which is essentially a conscious process. But there are many physiological reactions, which, though not themselves directly associated with consciousness, normally influence the operations of the mind [...] In voluntary acts every process, with the exception of the primary initiation, occurs on non-mental levels.  

In this framework it is only a lesion in the nervous system which can reveal the sensations associated with usually entirely non-mental primitive sensory processes.

These ideas, taken from a 1926 publication on aphasia, were developed during and have their roots in 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division' which took place between 1903 and 1907. During this time Head and Rivers devoted a total of 167 days to their experiment which was first published in the neurological journal Brain in 1908. In order to carry out 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division', surgeons Mr. Dean and Mr. Sherran severed the radial and external cutaneous nerves in Head's left arm and then Head and Rivers together charted the return of sensation in Head's hand as the nerve regenerated over four years. Head had previously attempted to chart the return of sensation after a lesion in the nervous system using similar techniques but with his patients at The London Hospital as subjects. However, he became frustrated by what he saw as the inaccuracy and untrustworthiness of the results. Head felt that for a truly scientific investigation into sensation a 'trained observer' was required. Head stepped forward, voluntarily letting surgeons create a lesion in his own nervous system, mimicking the state of the bodies of his rejected patients and becoming the 'H' - 'nearly 42 years of age and in perfect health' ('Human Experiment', 226) - of the published paper. Rivers performed various tests on Head's hand: he pricked it with pins and pressed it with a pencil; he tickled it with hairs and cotton wool;

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53 Head, Aphasia and Kindred Disorders of Speech: Volume 1, pp. 533-5.
54 W. H. R. Rivers and Henry Head 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division' (1908), Studies in Neurology: Volume 1 (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1920), pp. 225-329. This paper was originally printed in the journal Brain in 1908. All quotations are from Studies in Neurology: Volume 1 and will be included in parenthesis in the text with 'Human Experiment' and the page number.
he placed test tubes full of boiling water and ice on it. All of this took place in
Rivers's Cambridge rooms where he recorded the results based on Head's
responses to the various stimuli. Accurate sensory self-observation on Head's part
was essential to this experiment.

In the paper Head and Rivers identify three types of sensibility which their
experiment dealt with: deep sensibility, protopathic sensibility and epicritic
sensibility. They described deep sensibility as internal sensibility felt within the
hand - for example, in the muscles - rather than through the skin. This was not
affected by the severance of the nerves as soon after they had been cut,
'[p]ressure with the finger, with a pencil, or any blunt object was immediately
appreciated' ('Human Experiment', 227) despite the fact that the skin, when
raised from the hand, had no sensation at all at this stage of the experiment.
Protopathic and epicritic sensibility were categories developed by Head and
Rivers. They described protopathic sensibility as a more primitive type of
sensation from which epicritic sensibility had later evolved. Because it was more
primitive, the protopathic sensibility regenerated more quickly than the epicritic,
allowing Head the rare experience of feeling it in isolation in his hand although
they apparently discovered through their experiments that this 'lower level' of
sensibility was also present, as standard, in the glans penis, raising interesting
questions about the implicit connection between sexuality and primitivity.

Head and Rivers described protopathic sensibility as being of an all or
nothing nature, producing extreme reactions of pain to temperatures which
could, in normal conditions, be tolerated. They also found that protopathic
sensibility was un-localisable to a specific spot on the skin and instead produced a
general and widespread sensation. The more highly evolved epicritic sensibility
was seen to be more refined allowing for greater subtlety of sensation and a
more developed capacity to localise sensation to a specific spot on the skin. They
also found that it allowed Head to feel light touch (produced by stroking the hand
with hair or cotton wool) which they felt was not possible when there is only
protopathic sensibility. From this they concluded that epicritic sensibility had
evolved in order to override protopathic sensibility and the reason they believe
that 'many impulses capable of forming the basis of sensations are prevented
under normal conditions from reaching the highest centres' ('Human Experiment',
327) is because it allowed for greater psychic unity and less pain and therefore a more productive functioning of the organism.

They conclude their paper by writing that '[w]e believe that the essential elements exposed by our analysis owe their origin to the developmental history of the nervous system. They reveal the means by which an imperfect organism has struggled towards improved functions and psychical unity' ('Human Experiment', 329). Due to the lesion in his nervous system, Head was able to experience sensations based on sensory processes which in healthy functionality were understood to exist on a purely anti-mental level. For a person without a lesion in their nervous system, protopathic sensibility remains (other than when experienced via stimulation of the glans penis) one of the 'afferent impulses [which] never reach consciousness at all, but carry out their functions reflexly on the physiological level' ('Human Experiment, 327). Other than in relation to the sexual organs, primitive protopathic sensibility usually remained entirely anti-mental as it was associated with lower levels of the nervous system which were blocked from consciousness by higher levels.

Head's self observation and Rivers's testing on him were based on the emerging methods of experimental psychology (a field in which Rivers played a central role). In keeping with what this suggests, they felt that their experiment could only truly document psychic sensations, and not physiological sensory impulses: 'The sensory processes discussed in this chapter take place on the physiological level. Psychological analysis fails entirely to disclose the struggle of sensory impulses revealed by our experiment' ('Human Experiment', 329). They write that '[s]ensation, the final end of the process, assumes forms simpler than any sensory impulses' ('Human Experiment', 329). This means that although sensation and sensory impulses were understood as parts of the same process, they cannot be studied in the same way. The key scientific method of 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division' was introspection based on a certain type of attention which allowed psychic sensations (but not physiological sensory impulses) to be scientifically recorded.
Attention and Sensation

Attention and sensation were both key aspects of modernity and modernism. Tim Armstrong has written of 'the centrality of sensation to modernism'. This centrality emerges particularly in an account of modernism which places impressionism at its centre, such as that given by Jesse Matz in *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (2001). Here Matz explains that 'the impression summed up early Modernism's aesthetic hopes, [...] gave way to Modernism properly, and determined so many of Modernism's plots and themes'. Drawing on their artistic counterparts, he argues, literary impressionists privileged sensation: 'By the time of the first Impressionist exhibition, "sensation" had already become aesthetic doctrine'. Matz refers to 'critics [who] have called Impressionism a literary phenomenology, attributing to it the advent of modernism'. And, of course, when Woolf wrote that 'on or about December, 1910, human character changed,' part of what she was grounding this change in was the first British Post-Impressionist exhibition which Matz refers to here. Matz argues that sensation was part of the aesthetic doctrine of impressionism and that the impression and impressionism were central for the development of modernism. Part of what became particularly central to Woolf's modernism was the desire 'to catch every new sight and sensation in words', although this is usually explored in relation to Woolf's novels rather than her *Diaries*. For example, in a chapter of Matz's book dedicated to 'Woolf's Phenomenological Impressionism' the focus is on Woolf's novels, stories and essays. The *Diaries* are only referred to briefly as evidence despite the fact that diaries could perhaps be considered as the texts best suited to examining phenomenological impressionism. Diaries seem to fit particularly well into an account of modernist aesthetics which focuses on charting the sensations or impressions.

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57 Ibid., p. 12.
Such a desire to catch sensations in words was also the central concern of 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division', and Head also kept a diary of his sensations as a means of gathering evidence for the experiment. Like Woolf, Head used a diary as a method of recording sensations. Head and Rivers include extracts from Head's diary in their published paper, even noting that '[t]he history of the case may be summed up in the form of the following diary' ('Human Experiment', 240). Woolf's and Head's desire to catch every sensation in words required not only a particularly attentive type of writing, but also a particular type of attention. And although this was only explicitly addressed by Head and Rivers, I will argue that the same mode of attention - an anti-mental one - was also undertaken by Woolf as she strove to observe and record her own sensations. Both Woolf and Head observed their sensations in a particularly anti-mental state, and they both emphasised the advantage which a non-mental state (paradoxically) brought to psychological self-observation. Head and Rivers called this state 'the negative attitude of attention'.

As Jonathan Crary has shown in Suspensions of Perception (2000), attention was a central concern of modernity. Crary documents 'the emergence of attention as a major problem in accounts of subjectivity', demonstrating that 'the contested notion of attention was central to a range of social, philosophical, and aesthetic issues during those years [the 1880s and 1890s] and, indirectly, to subsequent developments in the twentieth century'. 61 His book 'is based on the notion that the ways in which we intently listen to, look at, or concentrate on anything have a deeply historical character'. 62 This is an idea which is supported by the resonances between Woolf's and Head's sensory self-observations.

Alongside the importance of attention emerges the related centrality of distraction. Tim Armstrong describes 'the dialectic of attention and distraction' as being 'central to turn-of-the-century psychology, and to modernity itself'. 63 'Distraction,' he writes, 'is part of a continuum in which the other extreme is 'attention' - that which breaks down as distraction-effects like automaticity

intrude'. When describing attention, William James had written that 'focalization, concentration of consciousness are of its essence', and Armstrong has observed that 'attention emerges as an issue because of a perceived sensory overload [...] In this situation, forms of distracted experience have the potentiality to become the focus for modernist aesthetics'. Crary writes that '[m]uch critical and historical analysis of modern subjectivity during this century has been based on the idea of "reception in a state of distraction," as articulated by Walter Benjamin and others'. The negative attitude of attention, and the sensory self-observation undertaken in Head and Rivers's experiment and in Woolf's *Diaries* both exist somewhere in between attention and distraction, hovering between distracted modernist aesthetics and the attention demanded by modernity and its spectacles. Both Head and Woolf seem to enter into a state which is not distraction, nor is it attention in which consciousness is focused as James described it. Rather, it is attention in which consciousness or the mind is not present, which is why the word 'negative' was attached to it. It was a particularly anti-mental type of attention, a seemingly paradoxical state in which the subject is mentally present and absent all at once.

The redefinition of perception and sensations as both purely subjective and physiological, which I have already traced as being a central aspect of Head's physiology of sensation, was also influential for models of attention involved in sensory observation. Crary writes that '[t]he model of an attentive human observer that dominated the empirical sciences form the 1880s on was also inseparable from a radically transformed notion of what constitutes sensation for a human subject'. Armstrong explains this shift in relation to sensation:

> In eighteenth-century natural philosophy, the body is a relatively transparent mechanism, passing impulses to a reflecting mind. In the nineteenth century this process takes on a new opacity: sensation is a function of a complex physiology involving sensory organs, nervous system, and a processing brain. The person becomes a mechanism for the processing of information.

And Crary further explains:

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The relocation of perception (as well as processes and functions previously assumed to be "mental") in the thickness of the body was a precondition for the instrumentalizing of human vision as a component of machinic arrangements; but it also stands behind the astonishing burst of visual invention and experimentation in European art in the second half of the nineteenth century.\(^{69}\)

Here Crary explicitly addresses the process wherein faculties which had previously been considered mental were transformed into anti-mental processes and functions due to their relocation 'in the thickness of the body'. This led to human vision itself being conceived of as machine-like and it also led to modern art. For Crary, the shift whereby 'the empirical truth of vision was determined to lie in the body' was 'the decisive achievement of psychophysics in the mid-nineteenth century, which, by apparently rendering sensations measurable, embedded human perception in the domain of the quantifiable and the abstract'.\(^{70}\) It was mid-nineteenth-century psychophysics which lay behind the emergence of experimental psychology practiced by the likes of Rivers in the early-twentieth. The anti-mental nature of Head's and Woolf's sensory self-observations will be revisited later in this chapter in relation to recording devices.

This transformation or embodiment of the 'mental' also affected textuality. For Armstrong, 'it is only a conceptualization of writing as a technology of registration that is adequate to this embodied thinking'.\(^{71}\) In this context, the diary as a form specifically becomes a technology of registration, and it was used as such by both Woolf and Head, who each used diaries to record the sensations they had been attentive to in an anti-mental state. Perhaps this stands behind Woolf's description of her diary as a form written without thought, despite the fact that in reality her diary-writing is what transformed her anti-mental states into a highly intellectualised form.

In the following two sections I will focus on the affinities between the methods used for sensory self-observation in the *Diaries* of Virginia Woolf and in 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division'. The focus is on the ways in which both Woolf and Head sought to discard their mental faculties when observing their own sensations whilst simultaneously remaining psychologically self-aware, perched between attention and distraction. I focus on sensory self-observation

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\(^{70}\) Ibid., pp. 13, 12.

\(^{71}\) Armstrong, *Modernism*, p. 96.
during illness in Woolf’s case, and after an intentionally produced neurological lesion in Head’s. I argue that the similarities in the methods and theories of sensory-self observation put forward by Woolf and Head posit both Woolf’s *Diaries* and Head’s experiment, along with the particular methods of sensory self-observation which they describe and depict, as aspects of modernist cultural production.

**Virginia Woolf’s Sensory Self-Observation**

Makiko Minow-Pinkey has argued that Woolf’s feminist aesthetics are an attempt to portray what Julia Kristeva has called the semiotic, a state which might be described as anti-mental. Minow-Pinkey has written that Woolf aimed to 'disperse the transcendent unified subject that underpins male rationality and narrative' and 'to adumbrate the area anterior to the logical, judging, naming subjectivity, to bring in the semiotic'. Woolf’s aesthetic strategies in her novels are not the only aspect of her writing to evoke anti-mental forms and states; she also dealt with anti-mentality in her diaries when documenting her illnesses and observing her sensations.

In a diary entry from August 1922 Woolf explained that while she was at Monk’s House and focusing her attentions she wished to be ‘only a sensibility’ and no longer to be Virginia:

> One must get out of life - yes, thats [sic] why I disliked so much the irruption of Sydney - one must become externalised; very, very concentrated, all at one point, not having to draw upon the scattered parts of one's character, living in the brain. Sydney comes & I'm Virginia; when I write I'm merely a sensibility. Sometimes I like being Virginia, but only when I'm scattered & various & gregarious. Now, so long as we are here [at Monk's House], I'd like to be only a sensibility (D2, 193).

While at Monks House she longs to be 'only a sensibility'. This is contrasted to the social mode which involves 'living in the brain'. Brain is a word which Woolf used reasonably often in her diary, usually to refer the mind in a particularly intellectual or rational sense. Being 'only a sensibility' is opposed to the rational world of the brain/mind. It is an anti-mental state and this anti-mental state

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becomes an increasingly dominant mode in which Woolf focused her attentions on observing her own sensations during illness at Monk's House.

Woolf referred to her brain and nervous system frequently in her diary. Perhaps she had internalised the language of her doctors as Hermione Lee has suggested. She associated mentality with her brain. And although she sometimes longed to be 'only a sensibility' and lose touch with her brain, there were also moments in which she longed for the return of her brain and what she understood as its faculties. For example, between July and September 1926, while writing *To The Lighthouse*, Woolf didn't write dated diary entries as normal but thematic and undated entries under the following headings: Rodmell 1926, Art & Thought, Writing by Living People, My Own Brain, Proportions Changed, Second Rate Art, Wandervögel, Returning Health, Bank Holiday, The Married Relation and A State of Mind. In one of these, 'My Own Brain', she explains how she associates 'nervous breakdown' with a loss of the faculties of the brain (thus subscribing to the Jacksonian model of nervous disease, inherited by Head). She also associates the activities of the brain with the capacity for focused attention on intellectual activities such as reading and writing:

**My Own Brain**

Here is a whole nervous breakdown in miniature. We came [to Monk's House] on Tuesday. Sank into a chair, could scarcely rise; everything insipid; tasteless, colourless. Enormous desire for rest. Wednesday - only wish to be alone in the open air. Air delicious - avoided speech; could not read. Thought of my own power of writing with veneration, as of something incredible, belonging to someone else; never again to be enjoyed by me. Mind a blank. Slept in my chair. Thursday. No pleasure in life whatsoever; but felt perhaps more attuned to existence. Character & idiosyncrasy as Virginia Woolf completely sunk out. Humble & modest. Difficulty in thinking what to say. Read automatically, like a cow chewing cud. Slept in chair. Friday. Sense of physical tiredness; but slight activity of the brain. Beginning to take notice. Making one or two plans. No power of phrase making. Difficulty in writing to Lady Colefax. Saturday (today)
much clearer & lighter. Thought I could write, but resisted, or found it impossible. A desire to read poetry set in on Friday. This brings back a sense of my own individuality. Read some Dante & Bridges, without troubling to understand, but got pleasure from them. Now I begin to wish to write notes, but not yet novel. But today senses quickening. No “making up” power yet; no desire to cast scenes in my book. Curiosity about literature returning: want to read Dante, Havelock Ellis, & Berlioz autobiography; also to make a looking glass with shell frame. These processes have sometimes been spread over several weeks (D3, 103).

In this remarkable description of 'a whole nervous breakdown in miniature' the mental faculties are specifically associated with health: whilst suffering the nervous breakdown Woolf explains that she feels her 'mind [as] a blank' and sees her own mental and intellectual 'power of writing as [...]something incredible, belonging to someone else; never again to be enjoyed by me'. Whereas in the entry from August 1922 (quoted above) Woolf writes that she longed to be merely a sensibility rather than Virginia, during the 1926 'nervous breakdown', however, she feels dismay that her 'character & idiosyncrasy as Virginia Woolf [have] completely sunk out' and she feels distressed at her anti-mental state which involves '[d]ifficulty in thinking what to say' and '[r]ead[ing] automatically, like a cow chewing cud'. Her recovery is marked by the return of the mental faculties associated with the brain: 'Friday [...] slight activity of the brain. Beginning to take notice [...] But today senses quickening [...] Curiosity about literature returning'. As her brain resumes its activity she can once more take notice of not only literature, but also her own senses. However, Woolf's whole description of her anti-mental state of illness where she cannot take notice of her own senses or herself is perhaps challenged by the very diary entry which portrays it. In order to even be able to write about this state, Woolf must have been somehow aware of herself during it. However, Woolf's diaries suggest that her self-awareness and sensory self-observation during illness, or at least some aspects of them, took an anti-mental form, thus corresponding with the state of no-thought in which Woolf proclaimed that she wrote her diary.

During the previous year, on 19 August 1925, the Woolfs had been at Charleston [Woolf's sister Vanessa Bell's house] for a party to celebrate their nephew Quentin Bell's fifteenth birthday. Anne Olivier Bell's editorial comment in the Diaries says that '[d]uring dinner VW fainted and was taken home by car, and remained in a delicate state of health for some time to come' (D3, 38). The next diary entry is not until 5 September when Woolf wrote:
Arrange whatever pieces come your way. Never be unseated by the shying of that undependable brute, life, hag ridden as she is by my own queer difficult nervous system. Even at 43 I don't know its workings, for I was saying to myself, all the summer, "I'm quite adamant now. I can go through a tussle of emotions peaceably that two years ago even, would have raked me raw." (D3, 39).

Here she explicitly explains that unlike her 'Own Brain' she can never know the workings of her 'own queer difficult nervous system' thus cementing the association she made between the brain and mentality and the possibility for conscious awareness. Like Head, Woolf felt that the operations of the non-mental parts of the nervous system were hidden from consciousness.

Despite this acknowledgement that the non-cerebral aspects of the nervous system were anti-mental, Woolf nevertheless acknowledged them as being at both the centre of her being and also a prominent aspect of her perceptions of herself and the world. In 1925 she described her spinal cord as the 'centre of my being':

Today is Thursday 24 September - sad to think a week only left of this partly wrecked summer; however, I don't complain, seeing as how I have dipped my head in health again & feel stabilised once more about the spinal cord, which is always the centre of my being (D3, 43).

Later that month, she wrote that 'I am writing this partly to test my poor bunch of nerves at the back of my neck - will they hold or give again' (D3, 40). Here Woolf acknowledges a 'bunch of nerves' as being responsible for her state of wellness, and acknowledges that the state of these nerves - although not available to introspection - can be somehow comprehended through writing in her diary, demonstrating how writing emerges with embodied selfhood, as Armstrong argues, as an anti-mental technology of registration. However, the diary is also acknowledged as a necessarily deficient means of sensory recording in August 1928, three years later, when Woolf wrote of the centrality which her spine played in her sensory perceptions, and also the manner in which these sensations - perceived by either the spine or the eye - could never be adequately recorded in a diary: 'Saturday 12 August 1928. But what little I can get down with my pen of what is so vivid to my eyes, & not only to my eyes: also to some nervous fibre or fan like membrane in my spine' (D3, 191).
Through her illnesses Woolf developed a means of perception which resonated with her anti-mental states of illness as well as her self-professed anti-mental sensory receptors (her spine) and anti-mental modes of self recording (her diary). Being ‘only a sensibility’ or perceiving herself with ‘some nervous fibre or fan like membrane’ in the spine - becoming anti-mental - became the optimal means through which to observe and attempt to record sensations which seemed to be anti-mental in themselves. The idea that being ill enabled Woolf to become a better observer of her own sensations through enabling anti-mentality is also expressed in Woolf’s essay ‘On Being Ill’ where she argues that being ill is better suited for observing sensations than being well. In ‘On Being Ill’ Woolf writes that illness creates ‘a state of mind which neither words can express nor the reason explain’. She felt that whereas in health ‘[o]ur intelligence domineers over our senses’, illness creates a state in which the senses are free to interpret the world directly without the intelligence or reason getting in their way. Her own diary provides the evidence for this argument. Therefore, for Woolf, illness is a state in which one is perhaps best suited to be an observer and recorder of one’s own sensations and is therefore a state uniquely suited for sensory-self observation, despite its horrors and terrors.

Woolf wrote many diary entries during illness at Monk’s House. For example, on Saturday 11 February 1928:

Hardy & Meredith together sent me torpid to bed with headache. I know the feeling now, when I can’t spin a sentence, & sit mumbling & turning; & nothing flits by my brain which is a blank window. So I shut my studio door, & go to bed, stuffing my ears with rubber, & there I lie a day or two. And what leagues I travel in the time! Such “sensations” spread over my spine & head directly I give them the chance; such an exaggerated tiredness; such anguishes & despairs; & heavenly relief & rest; & then misery again. Never was anyone so tossed up & down by the body as I am, I think (D3, 174).

Woolf’s ‘headache’ forces her into awareness of her own body making her a keen observer and reporter of her own ‘sensations’ whilst her brain is ‘a blank window’ demonstrating that her perception of these strangely psychic sensations is, she believes, dissociated from her brain and its mentality. Woolf’s sensations, she explains, spread over her spine and seem to be perceived by faculties she

75 Ibid.
describes as being other than the brain. Here we see that Woolf’s illness made her more aware of her own sensations and also drove her to record them. In 1930 she described this as a means by which she could discard her mind and at this stage seemed to understand this as one positive feature of illness. On Monday 8 September 1930 Woolf wrote that:

After coming out here [to Rodmell] I had the usual - oh how usual - headache; & lay, like a fibre of tired muscle on my bed in the sitting room, till yesterday [...] So this illness has meant two weeks break - but as I often think, seasons of silence, & brooding, & making up much more than one can use, are fertilising. I was raking my brain too hard (D3, 317).

Here she associates moving away from her brain and mind as having a ‘fertilising’ effect. In becoming 'like a fibre of tired muscle' - purely physiological - Woolf can stop 'raking' her brain and therefore activating her mind. Although Woolf’s illness is associated with physicality and an absence of thought here, Woolf does not, however, say that she became a fibre of tired muscle, instead she uses a simile to say that she was like a fibre of tired muscle. This demonstrates what the very fact she is even writing her diary implies: although this is in some ways an anti-mental state it is also, in another, an intensely mental one. Woolf was never purely or simply an anti-mental, purely physical 'fibre of tired muscle' when she was writing her diary.

Earlier in the same year, on Sunday 16 February 1930, Woolf had written explicitly about the connection between illness and productivity in writing, suggesting that her ‘anti-mental’ state of illness was simultaneously having a beneficial impact on the highly mental activity of writing:

To lie on the sofa for a week [...] But I doubt that I can write to any purpose. A cloud swims in my head. One is too conscious of the body & jolted out of the rut of life to get back to fiction. Once or twice I have felt that odd whirr of wings in the head which comes when I am ill so often [...] If I could stay in bed another fortnight (but there is no chance of that) I believe I should see the whole of The Waves (D3, 286).

She begins this passage by doubting her ability to write during illness due to the cloud that swims in her head, but then changes her mind as she writes concluding that if she could stay in bed ill even longer then she might be able to finish The Waves. She continues in the same entry, concluding that illness makes her mystical and in this state she is most productive:
I believe these illnesses are in my case - how shall I express it? - partly mystical. Something happens in my mind. It refuses to go on registering impressions. It shuts itself up. It becomes chrysalis. I lie quite torpid, often with acute physical pain - as last year, only discomfort this. Then something springs [...] But as I was saying my mind works in idleness. To do nothing is often my most profitable way (D3, 287).

There is a strange contradiction here in that Woolf's anti-mental mysticism fuels the creative workings of her mind. The centrally important thing in this passage is that she becomes most productive in illness and 'idleness' becomes her 'most profitable way' because 'something happens in my mind. It refuses to go on registering impressions' (my italics). The impressions which Woolf had when she was ill, she felt, were registered using faculties which were not the mind, although in order to have any meaning in her writing, these impressions must somehow be converted or filtered through her mind.

Through her illnesses and diary-writing at Monk's House, Woolf learnt that the optimal state for observing and recording her own sensations was to become an anti-mental being and to stop registering impressions and sensations consciously - at least ostensively - and instead to simply experience and then record them in a state of anti-mentality. However, this state is complicated by the fact that at the same time as being anti-mental, Woolf was also observing herself with astute psychological self awareness, and furthermore, she was representing and scrutinising these states in a diary. Although Woolf had described this diary as a text written without thought, in fact, it demanded a great deal of thought in order to be written. Woolf's Diaries portray her as both a highly attentive mental consciousness and an anti-mental sensibility which experienced sensations both via what she described as the non-mental spinal cord as well as the mental brain.

**Henry Head's Sensory Self-Observation**

Like Woolf in her Diaries, Head also attempted to capture and record his own sensations in 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division' in a state which was not exactly illness, but was certainly one which involved substantial physical injury and impairment, and furthermore, one which was intended to mimic the lesions of neurological patients and was specifically intended to allow access to
otherwise anti-mental elements of sensory experience, as I have outlined. The main experimental work of 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division' was Head's own close observations of the sensations he felt whilst Rivers stimulated his hand and arm in various different ways. The method used by Head to observe and record his own sensations - what he called the 'negative attitude of attention' - has a number of resonances with the moments of self-observation during illness in Woolf's Diaries which I have just described and explored.

As Head and Rivers wanted the most accurate record of sensations that was possible, all precautions were taken to stop anything interfering with the interpretation of the result of the physical stimulation in Head's consciousness. Rivers prepared the room before Head's arrival, getting ice, boiled water in test tubes, hairs, cotton wool, pins etc. all ready in advance of his subject's arrival in case he might overhear something that could impede his pure sensory reaction to the stimulants: 'The clinking of ice against the glass, the removal of the kettle from the hob, tended to prejudice his answers and destroyed that negative attitude of attention essential for such experiments' ('Human Experiment', 244). Furthermore, because they felt that mental volition would get in the way of pure sensory experience, '[u]nder no circumstances was H. allowed to know at the time whether his answers were right or wrong [...] For if he was told he had answered wrongly, he was roused to an intense determination to do better, producing thus a mental condition which was found to be unfavourable for the appreciation of sensory stimuli' ('Human Experiment', 243). Head was specifically aiming to avoid a 'mental condition', therefore he entered into an anti-mental state (which mimicked the usual character of the protopathic sensations he was observing) when observing and recording his own sensations in this experiment.

We are also told that

H. always sat with his eyes closed throughout the examination, as he found that this produced in him the condition most favourable for sensory testing. He always answered more correctly to all tests which required no close introspection when he did not attempt to think of what was going on. He would sit with closed eyes, his head resting on the right hand and his attention wandering over internal images. He soon learnt to adopt at will this state of passivity, provided he was undisturbed. But a knock at the door, or the entry of the servant, would rouse him into a state in which he again began to interpret his sensations ('Human Experiment', 243).
Here we learn that the state they believe to be best suited to accurately receiving and reporting sensations was also an anti-mental state in which there is no thought and no introspection or interpretation of sensations, but instead a passive and anti-mental state into which sensations can flow as and when they arrive (very much like Woolf becoming 'only a sensibility'). This is the state which Head and Rivers describe as the 'negative attitude of attention' and it has much in common with Woolf's descriptions of being ill or her method of recording sensations in her diary in that Head attempted to both exist independently of his mental volition whilst at the same time being highly psychologically aware of his own perceptions of his sensations.

Whilst carrying out the experiment, Head also described this state in a letter to his future wife Ruth written on November 27th 1903:

You must know that our method is as follows. I sit with my arm bare and my eyes closed and Rivers carries out all manner of tests of which the general idea has been laid down in consultation and the details are unknown to me. With my eyes closed I sit and let my thoughts flow by like clouds on a windy day. No one thought must occupy attention permanently and I must entirely detach myself from the idea that experiments are in progress. Suddenly in this flowing sea of thoughts there appears a flash of pain a wave of cold or a flicker of heat. It should appear with the suddenness of a porpoise, attract attention and then disappear again leaving the untroubled sea to its onward flows. Such is the most perfect condition for psychological experimentation: This state I can now assume at will.76

Again, the focus is on not interpreting or thinking about the sensations and on not experiencing them via the mind, but rather on simply receiving and then describing them. To be the ideal scientific observer of his own sensations Head felt he must become anti-mental. He is not unconscious - he is deeply aware of what is happening - and yet his perception takes a specifically non-mental form.

Here we have seen how Head's 'most perfect condition for psychological experimentation' had much in common with the experiences of his one-time patient during the illness he had briefly been involved in trying to cure. In 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division', Head volunteered his own nervous system to receive a lesion in lieu of the nerves of his patients who he did not believe had sufficient psychological detachment to achieve the negative attitude of attention necessary for being observers and recorders of their own sensations. Head had

76 Henry Head, letter to Ruth Mayhew (November 27 1903), PP/HEA/D4/16/547, Wellcome Library archives.
based this conclusion on his pre-1903 neurological patients at The London Hospital in Whitechapel which he had classified as being part of the 'ordinary hospital class' (Head also saw wealthier patients in Harley Street but these were usually psychological or functional disorder patients who had no known physical lesion). Head and Rivers write that it 'became obvious that many observed facts would remain inexplicable without experimentation carried out more carefully and for a longer period than was possible with a patient,' ('Human Experiment', 225) and that even if there had been more time available with patients they would be unsuitable anyway as it was 'unwise to demand any but the simplest introspection from patients, to whatever class they may belong [...] Introspection could be made fruitful by the personal experiences of a trained observer only' ('Human Experiment', 226).

These remarks date from the experiment of 1908. L. S. Jacyna has argued that later, after the 1914-1918 war, Head was provided with a new type of neurological patient in the form of officers from the war. Head felt that he could rely on the class and gender of these patients as a guarantor of 'a gentleman's supposed "self-possession" - his capacity to remain a trustworthy witness of the disorderly conduct of some damaged portion of his psyche'. Jacyna notes that 'Head repeatedly insisted that one of the advantages of these officer-patients was that they possessed sufficient intelligence and capacity to understand the nature of the tests being performed upon them, and indeed to participate in the process of inquiry in an active and creative way'. Reading Woolf’s sensory self-observations during illness alongside Head’s experiments complicates this understanding of the capabilities of the ill ‘patients can tell little or nothing of the nature of their sensations’ ('Human Experiment', 225) - which lay behind Head’s move to create a lesion in his own nervous system and to carry out ‘A Human Experiment in Nerve Division’. Furthermore, it suggests that not only might Head have been Woolf’s ideal doctor (as Trombley and Lee have suggested) but furthermore that Woolf, with her upper class background but distinctly un-officer like personality and illness (she did not have a known physical lesion), might have been Head’s ideal patient-subject because of the shared techniques and methods of sensory self-observation recounted here. However, this is mere speculation.

77 Henry Head, quoted in Jacyna, Lost Words, p. 155.
78 Jacyna, Lost Words, p. 155.
79 Ibid., p. 153.
What this textual account of sensory self-observation in Head's experiment with Rivers and Woolf's *Diaries* shows us is that there were important intellectual affinities between modernist writers such as Woolf, and neurologists such as Head.

It also points beyond these affinities, to the unifying quality of a particular aspect of modernism shared by Woolf and Head. In the following, and final, section, I will use a metaphor from elsewhere in Woolf's diary - a weathercock - as a means through which to re-emphasise the particularly anti-mental way in which both Woolf and Head observed and recorded their own sensations, and to situate this practice as an aspect of anti-mental modernism because it demonstrates an attempt to move towards the primitive and away from modernity. The anti-mentality of the sensory self-observations of both Woolf and Head is associated with the anti-mental lower levels of the nervous system. Furthermore, Woolf and Head also both felt that it was necessary to get away from the urban metropolis of modernity in order to carry out sensory self-observation at all, thus also associating more 'primitive' rural locations with the anti-mental as well.

**Anti-mentality: Modernism, Weathercocks and the Countryside**

On 29th June 1926 Virginia Woolf wore a new hat. The next day, she wrote in her diary about the experience she had wearing it. Woolf was sensitive about her appearance and didn't react well to Clive Bell's mocking of her new headpiece:

> This is the last day of June & finds me in black despair because Clive laughed at my new hat [...] we were all sitting round talking [...] and Clive suddenly said, bawled rather, what an astonishing hat you're wearing! [...] I never felt more humiliated [...] I came away deeply chagrined, as unhappy as I have ever been these ten years; & revolved it in sleep & dreams all night; & today has been ruined (D3, 90-91).

In this extract from the diary, Woolf charts her feelings which arose after Clive remarked upon her hat. The next day she returned to her diary and was either astonished at the previous day's entry or embarrassed by it; either way, she wished to dismiss the feelings recorded the day before. The next day's entry begins with the following statement: 'These reflections about the hat read rather
amusingly I think. What a weathercock of sensibility I am! How I enjoy - or at least how (for I was acutely unhappy & humiliated) these gyrations interest me, conscious as I am of a strong lynch pin controlling them - Leonard in short' (D3, 91). Woolf does not deny that she felt unhappy and humiliated the previous day - the record of sensibility made in the moment is allowed to stand as factually accurate - yet her rapid change in feeling (perhaps due to Leonard's influence, it seems) leads her to describe herself as 'a weathercock of sensibility' implying that she is apt to blow with the wind and be led quickly from one feeling to another without any control over these movements.

Although Woolf's remark about herself being a weathercock is self-mocking, I believe it can helpfully be used in a more serious context in order to help think about the way in which she depicted herself observing herself and her sensations when she was ill. Although sensibility is not to be confused with sensation (although Head and Rivers do use the term 'sensibility' to describe different modes of sensation), I want to focus on this weathercock metaphor, transporting it to another context, to think about what lay behind the ways in which an abandonment of the mind, an anti-mental technique, became central for Woolf in her diary and for Head in his experiment when observing and recording their own sensations during illness or when otherwise physically impaired.

A weathercock is a recording device without a will of its own but rather it is one which simply responds to the data given to it which it unquestioningly presents without thought. It is a recording device which cannot interpret the data it receives, it has no choice but to react to the external conditions around it which it then presents as data; a weathercock cannot stop itself from reacting to the wind and recording its direction. The automaticity and anti-mentality of the weathercock as an image fits with Armstrong's notion that, within modernity, 'subjective attentiveness first began to overlap with the idea of automatic behaviour and functioning [...] The issue of the automatic is crucial within the specifically modern problem of attention'. Woolf's description of herself as a recording device can also be understood in terms of a larger trend which has been identified by critics such as Tim Armstrong, Sara Danius, Yoshiki Tajiri, Patricia Di Bello and Gabriel Koureas who describe the particularly modernist sensory

80 Armstrong, Modernism, p. 79.
experience as being increasingly associated with technology. For example, Tajiri writes that 'sense perception became infiltrated by technology in the early-twentieth century' and Di Bello and Koureas that 'from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present, a time of dramatic sensual changes [which] related to the development of mechanically produced and reproduced stimuli [occurred]'. Sara Danius argues that 'the emergence of modernist aesthetics signifies the increasing internalisation of technological matrices of perception'. However, these critics all refer to uniquely modern technologies such as photographic cameras, cinema and X-rays. Woolf's choice of a weathercock connects her with a recording device of a decidedly pre-modern type, thus linking this loss of control, automaticity or anti-mentality with more primitive and less intelligent pre-modern technologies.

Weathercocks date back to ancient times. They featured in classical architecture and then became a widespread feature of Christian churches from the ninth century AD when Pope Nicholas decreed that they should be installed on every church. The Bayeux Tapestry of the 1070s depicts a man installing a weathercock at Westminster Abbey. The weathercock is a decidedly pre- or even anti-modern recording device. It therefore seems appropriate that both Woolf and Head sought out non-modern non-urban spaces when embarking on their own sensory self-observations and subsequent recordings which mimicked the state of the anti-mental, non-modern weathercock. The fact that Woolf's and Head's sensory self-observations required a retreat from modernity associates their practices with modernist primitivism which sought out or valorised states understood as more primitive than technological and urban modernity.

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82 Tajiri, Samuel Beckett and the Prosthetic Body, p. 4; Di Bello and Koureas, 'Introduction' to Art, History and the Senses: 1830 to the Present, pp. 1-17 (p. 2).
The idea of the city as the cradle of modernism is present in a number of critical works which are concerned with place and/or space in modern fiction. However, others have recently begun to consider the modernisms which existed away from the city. There has been a large amount of criticism on Woolf and the city, but very little which considers her relationship with the countryside in as much depth despite the fact that Sam Wiseman has argued that Woolf was '[p]owerfully drawn to both rural and urban environments' and that she offered a 'critique of a reductive, dualistic understanding of the relation between

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86 For example, Wesley Kort, in his 2004 book *Place and Space in Modern Fiction* identifies only two types of 'modern space' and these are the city and the interior. The country does not feature (Wesley A. Kort, *Place and Space in Modern Fiction* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2004). Earlier in the book Kort has quoted from Malcolm Bradbury who wrote in his and McFarlane's classic text on modernism that 'London increasingly comes to typify the great city of modernity' (Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, eds., *Modernism 1890-1930* (1976) (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 4). And this step from London as the great city of modernity to London as the great location of modernism is perhaps too easily made in many of the books on place and space in modernism. Elsewhere, when Andrew Thacker writes about the 'geographies of modernism' in the introduction to his book *Moving Through Modernity* (2003) he focuses almost entirely on the city, perhaps influenced by 'that long critical tradition which analyses the urban character of modernity' (Andrew Thacker, *Moving Through Modernity: Space and Geography in Modernism* (2003) (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), p. 2). When the countryside does get a mention here it is as an oft forgotten space characterised as nostalgic rather than being something connected to the modernist fervour for novelty: 'In contrast to the familiar metropolitan flavours of modernism is the often occluded space of the countryside, surviving seemingly as a place of nostalgic refuge'. (Ibid., p. 6).

87 In the 'Introduction' to their 2009 book, *Modernism on Sea*, Lara Feigel and Alexandra Harris write that although '[m]odernism is usually seen as the most urban and frenetic of artistic movements [...] *Modernism on Sea* puts the case for a new geography of avant-gardism, acknowledging that the most intriguing cultural hubs of modern times include Swanage, Margate, Morecambe and Hythe' (Lara Feigel and Alexandra Harris, 'Introduction' to *Modernism on Sea: Art and Culture at the British Seaside*, eds. Lara Feigel and Alexandra Harris (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 1-12 (p. 1).). This collection also includes an essay by David Bradshaw called 'The Purest Ecstasy': Virginia Woolf and the Sea' (pp 101-115). 'Why, we asked, is modernism so often linked with the life of the city and so rarely with the shore?' (Feigel and Harris, 'Introduction' to *Modernism on Sea*, p. 3). Their question here can be extended to include the countryside and the non-metropolitan world more generally. Indeed, it is extended by Harris in her 2010 book *Romantic Moderns* which traces modernism as it manifested itself in village halls and country gardens, and in 'old churches and tea-shops' (Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2010), p. 12). In her chapter on 'Village Life' she notes that 'If a Domeday Book had been compiled in the late 1930s, recording the inhabitants of villages and outlying farms, it would include most of the major figures of English art and letters' (Ibid., p. 169). The Woolfs at Rodmell are included in her list of modernists who 'had a feel for what English village life had been and might still be - and each explored these possibilities in art' (Ibid.).
countryside and city'. However, in *Romantic Moderns* (2010) Alexandra Harris offers an account of rural modernism which places Woolf at its centre and focuses on the importance of the countryside, as well as the city, for Woolf’s work. As modernist primitivism looked back and away from modernity to what it considered more primitive forms, many modernists - including Woolf and Head - sought out and valorised the countryside alongside the city as an important site of modernist cultural production, in this case particularly in relation to sensory self-observation.

The title of Harris’s book suggests that the countryside offered modernists a location which enabled access to older - Romanticist - modes of being which were denied by the metropolis of modernity. Crary and Armstrong have argued that the mode of attention associated with the spectacle and modernity led to ‘absorbed states that are no longer related to an <i>interiorization</i> of the subject, to an intensification of a sense of selfhood’. Modern attention, Armstrong writes, involved ‘a condition of externalization’ and therefore went against ‘the inwardness of what Hegel called romanticism’. In travelling to the country Woolf and Head sought to side step precisely this exteriorised mode of modern attention - associated with spectacle and modernity - and to cultivate a

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89 Armstrong, Modernism, p. 79.

90 Ibid., p. 79.
mode of attention associated with the 'interiorization of the subject' which Armstrong associates with romanticism. This can also be associated with a particularly anti-mental (and romantic) strand of modernism which Harris associates with the countryside. For both Woolf and Head, a retreat from the city of modernity to a more rural setting enabled their own sensory self observation and related recordings. Like all modernists who valorised the primitive, they both saw the city and civilisation as forces which could get in the way of being truly and fully human.

This was no doubt connected to the preoccupation of the age with the potentially dangerous effects of sensory overload. Writing on 'The Sociology of the Senses' in 1907, Georg Simmel notes that:

The modern person is shocked by innumerable things, and innumerable things appear intolerable to their senses [...] The individualising tendency of modern human beings and the greater personalisation and freedom of choice of a person's commitments must be connected to this [...] And this inevitably brings with it a greater isolation and a sharper circumscribing of the personal sphere. [...] In general, with the increase of culture, the long-distance effects of the senses become weaker and their local effects become stronger; we become not only short-sighted but short-sensed in general; yet at these short distances, we become that much more sensitive.  

In Simmel's account from 1907, the senses - shocked by the innumerable stimulations increasingly available to them - become typical modernist agents as their reaction to modernity takes the form of an inward turn or retreat. The modern senses work much better at close range, focusing them in on the self, corresponding with Head's new description of sensation as a purely psychic event generated by introspection.

Simmel's notion that a shocking new burden was placed upon the senses by modernity also manifested itself in the diagnosis of neurasthenia, popularised by American neurologist George Beard (1839-1883) which Armstrong has connected to the modern 'theoretical preoccupation with defence against [sensory] stimuli'. Neurasthenia and its cure - rest - was further written about in a popular book by another American doctor Silas Weir Mitchell (1829-1914) who felt that overworking the brain caused damage to the nervous system and

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92 Armstrong, Modernism, p. 93.
therefore adequate rest from intellectual exertion was necessary for the health of
the nervous system. He felt that such 'overtaxed' 'nervous system[s]' were
exclusive to the city, expressing fear at the growth of capitalism and
industrialisation.\textsuperscript{93} He was careful to point out that 'I am talking chiefly of the
crowded portions of our country [...] of our great towns' and that '[i]t has long
been believed that maladies of the nervous system are increasing rapidly in the
more crowded portions of the United States'.\textsuperscript{94} Using the statistics from Chicago
and Philadelphia he found that cities have more 'deaths from nervous disease'.\textsuperscript{95}

Woolf was famously diagnosed with neurasthenia and (usually
reluctantly) undertook a number of rest cures. As Woolf's biographer Hermione
Lee explains, '[a]ll her doctors recommended rest cures, milk and meat diets for
weight gain, fresh air, avoidance of excitement and early nights'.\textsuperscript{96} Woolf's notes
for 'A Sketch of the Past' reveal that after her mother's death in 1904 she had a
breakdown and was instructed to take '[n]o lessons, no excitement: open air,
simple life'.\textsuperscript{97} These instructions were most frequently given by one of Woolf's
doctors, Dr. Savage, who constantly insisted that Woolf needed rest and to get
away from London.\textsuperscript{98} Lee notes that 'Savage's orders to keep her out of London in
1904 met with furious objections'.\textsuperscript{99} Again in 1910 and 1912 Woolf was sent to a
'private home at Burley Park, Twickenham, for ladies with mental problems [...] for "rest cures"'.\textsuperscript{100} According to Leonard Woolf, Head also told his wife in 1913
that 'she must go to a nursing home and stay in bed for a few weeks, resting and
eating.'\textsuperscript{101} What Head said to Woolf on this occasion is only available via the
mediation of Leonard Woolf as Virginia wrote nothing of this encounter and
Head's consultation notes do not survive. Whatever treatment advice Head
offered to Woolf, the writings of both figures which focus on sensory self
observation and associated technologies of recording certainly advocate rest and
an escape from the city as means through which to optimise sensory self-

\textsuperscript{93} Silias Weir Mitchell, \textit{Wear and Tear, or Hints for the Overworked} (Philadelphia: J. B.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., pp. 8, 20.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{96} Lee, \textit{Virginia Woolf}, p. 183.
\textsuperscript{97} Virginia Woolf, MHP A5C, Sussex, quoted in Lee, \textit{Virginia Woolf}, p. 178.
\textsuperscript{98} Lee, \textit{Virginia Woolf}, p. 183.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., p. 184.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., p. 182.
\textsuperscript{101} Leonard Woolf, \textit{Beginning Again: An Autobiography of the Years 1911 to 1918} (London:
observation. Mary Childers has noted Woolf’s ‘advocacy of certain forms of
consciousness that are largely dependent on ample leisure time’ and one of these
seems to be the state she entered into in the countryside (often during illness)
which enabled her to observe her own sensations and to record them in her
diary. ¹⁰²

In Woolf’s memoir ‘A Sketch of the Past’ which she began whilst at
Monk’s House in Rodmell, she breaks off for a digression in which she reflects on
her current setting and its effect upon her:

The lemon coloured leaves on the elm tree; the apples in the orchard; the
murmur and rustle of the leaves makes me pause here, and think how many
other than human forces are always at work on us. While I write this the light
glows; an apple becomes a vivid green; I respond all through me; but how? Then
a little owl chatters under my window. Again I respond. Figuratively I could
snapshot what I mean by some image; I am a porous vessel afloat on sensation; a
sensitive plate exposed to invisible rays; and so on. ¹⁰³

It is the apples in the orchard and the rustle of the leaves that make Woolf pause,
the apple turning green or the chattering of the owl which makes her respond.
These country sights and sounds turn Woolf from a conscious human into ‘a
porous vessel afloat on sensation’ and make her assume a state akin to Head’s
‘negative attitude of attention’. This sense that being in the country allows Woolf
to better absorb her sensations also manifests itself in her Diaries.

When Woolf was in London her diary mostly gives detailed accounts of
social encounters, cutting or satirical remarks concerning people and society or
descriptions of people she has encountered and parties she has attended. Whilst
in London there is so much else to write about that her own inner state and
sensations often become absent from her diary. In fact, Woolf was often so busy
in London that she didn’t even have time to write her diary at all. This is
something that she commented on twice during 1924 (the year she and Leonard
moved their London residence from suburban Richmond to Tavistock Square in
Bloomsbury, Central London): ‘5 May 1924 - For it seems to me that this diary
may die of London, if I’m not careful’ (D2, 301); ‘Monday 21 December 1924 -

¹⁰² Mary Childers, ‘Virginia Woolf on the Outside Looking Down: Reflections on a Class of
Women,’ Modern Fiction Studies, 38 (1992), 61-79 (pp. 76-77).
Really it is a disgrace - the number of blank pages in this book! The effect of London on diaries is decidedly bad' (D2, 325).

This view that the city and its sensory demands was bad for diary-writing was also held by Woolf's contemporary Arthur Ponsonby who wrote in his 1923 book *English Diaries* that

> In the more mechanical age in which we now live excessive pressure caused by the mania for movement and the frenzied eagerness for varied sensations make accomplishment of every sort more difficult, and render moments for reflection much more rare. People are not busier, but they hear and see too much and they are more quickly tired, and it may be surmised that apart from diaries produced by the war, there are rather fewer diarists relatively speaking.\(^{104}\)

In this setting, time for reflection and time in which to write an introspective diary as a technology of registration of one's own sensations had to be cultivated, as it was by Woolf who saved up analysing her own mind in her diary for when she was in the country: 'There is nothing at the moment to record: or if so, & one's state of mind is overwhelmingly important, I leave that too for Rodmell' (D3, 95-6). This was because, as she had previously said during 1918, 'one's faculties are so oddly clarified [when in the country] that the page detaches itself in its true meaning & lies as if illuminated before one's eyes; seen whole & truly not in jerks & spasms as so often in London' (D1, 94-5).

Getting away from London not only made Woolf write more in her diary and allowed her to 'see whole & truly', it also made her write a different kind of diary, the kind in which she recorded her own sensations, rather than urban events and social gatherings. Whilst in London in 1918 she wrote that '[t]hey say it has been raining heavily; I daresay it has, but such is the civilisation of life in London that I really dont [sic] know. What with fires, electric light, underground railways & umbrellas, how can one take notice of the weather' (D1, 111). In the city the interference of modernity meant that Woolf couldn't even notice the weather. In the country, she noticed not only the weather (which she recorded particularly faithfully in her Asheham diaries during 1917) but she also became a weathercock of her own sensations as well. Indeed as her diaries developed, and the Woolfs moved from Asheham to Monk's House, Woolf increasingly moved

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away from documenting the weather whilst in the country (as she did at Asheham during 1917) and shifted her rural observations towards her own psychic sensations. During June 1927 Woolf explained that 'after a week at Rodmell, my freedom from inspection, my dive into my own mind will begin' (D3, 137).

This belief that the country was better suited for introspective analysis was a sentiment that Head shared with Woolf. Although Woolf loved London and frequently bemoaned her forced removal from it, Head hated London and left it whenever he could. Head’s biographer Jacyna has written that 'the urban environment in which Head was obliged to spend so much of his time was a source of spiritual gall. His letters often complain of the soul-destroying effect of the metropolitan life’.105 Being in London was spiritually difficult for Head and therefore he had a 'revulsion for metropolitan life [...and] passion for an idealised countryside. When his work commitments permitted, he would seek spiritual solace in some rural setting.'106

Head’s idealised understanding of the countryside as an idyllic retreat shaped the way in which the nerve regeneration experiment he carried out with Rivers was conducted. Discussing Head’s trips to Cambridge to carry out these experiments, Jacyna writes that although Cambridge is in fact a small city, 'Head saw these trips as a withdrawal from the hurly-burly of London life, with all its tedium and demands, to an idyllic setting in which he could pursue his true intellectual interests. It was, above all, a retreat from the demands of the world into the inner life of Head’s own sensations'.107 Head, like Woolf, saw the retreat into the inner life and the world of sensations as being connected to getting away from London. Head’s feeling that Cambridge was a rural idyll is captured in the letters which he wrote to his future wife Ruth whilst there to carry out the 'Human Experiment in Nerve Division'. On 2 October 1903 Head wrote to Ruth after he first arrived in Cambridge. The letter begins with a long description of the joy he felt while taking a country bike ride and his exultation in watching the sunlight upon some sheep: 'The sun shone on the backs of a [...] flock of sheep lighting up their drying fleeces - I was a boy again'.108 He then moves on to explain the logistics of his accommodation: 'I was glad to get away for during this last

105 Jacyna, Medicine and Modernism, p. 3.
106 Ibid., p. 6.
107 Ibid., p. 125.
108 Henry Head, letter to Ruth Mayhew (October 2 1903), PP/HEAD/D4/16/527, Wellcome Library Archives.
fortnight many worries accumulated within me. On Thursday morning I
determined that Whitehead's rooms were no place for a lengthy holiday. So with
good fortune I attained rooms on this first floor on the south side of the great
court'. In this description Head refers to his trip to get his nerves severed and
then conduct rigorous psychological tests as a 'lengthy holiday'! This makes it
implicitly clear that Head felt himself to be in a more 'relaxed' state when away
from London whatever the circumstances, and that relaxation was connected
with the ability for scientific introspection. Head and Rivers felt that this rural-
holiday state of mind was necessary to achieve the state required for the sensory
self-observation which was such a crucial aspect of their experiment.

In the paper 'A Human Experiment in Nerve Division', which appeared in
*Brain* in 1908, there is a section devoted to the 'Conditions of Experiment'. Here
the authors specifically explain that it was essential that the experiments did not
take place in London:

> It was recognised by experiments before the operation that the ordinary
distractions of a busy life were fatal to the detachment required by the sensory
tests we wished to apply. We therefore determined that the work should be
carried out in St John's College Cambridge. The inner of a set of rooms on the top
floor of the second court, belonging to Dr. Rivers, was devoted to these
observations. Here, absolutely quiet and undisturbed, free from the petty
worries of a busy life, H. gave himself entirely over to examination ('Human
Experiment', 242).

Head's 'petty worries of a busy life' were all bound up with London and this made
London itself 'fatal to the detachment required by the sensory tests we wished to
apply'. This seems to imply that both Head and Rivers, like Woolf, felt that it was
more difficult to be psychologically aware of one's own sensations in an anti-
mental state whilst in the city.

**Conclusion**

Here I have identified that the sensory self-observation of both Woolf and Head
was anti-mental in a number of ways: Through illness or neurological lesions they
sought to observe anti-mental states associated with the lower nervous centres
(Woolf's spinal cord and Head's protopathic sensibility); they both described the

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109 Ibid.
state best suited for sensory self observation as being (although necessitating
keen psychological awareness) somehow anti-mental or void of mental faculties
(Woolf’s being only a sensibility and Head’s negative attitude of attention); they
both felt that it was necessary to escape London, and thus to retreat from
modernity (associated with rational mentality) in order to observe their own
sensations (Woolf’s Monk’s House, Head’s Cambridge-as-rural-idyll), thus
connecting them both with the focus on the primitive or the non-modern within
modernism.

To conclude I want to briefly turn to the work of the historian Tiffany
Watt-Smith who has written on Head’s negative attitude of attention, comparing
it with a state of mind he had described in one of his ‘Ragbooks’ which he had
whilst watching the actress Eleanora Duse perform at the theatre. Watt-Smith
argues that there are shared characteristics between Head’s description of the
trained and ideal psychological observer and concurrent descriptions of the ideal
theatrical spectator as both must be able to describe sensations accurately
immediately after receiving them, and what’s more, they must do this in a state
of reverie, again emphasising the way in which the negative attitude of attention
involved simultaneous attention and distraction. Watt-Smith argues that even
though Head’s work in the ‘Human Experiment in Nerve Division’ was criticised
not long after its publication by other physiologists such as Wilfred Trotter and H.
Morriston Davis who were informed by the more objective bent experimental
psychology was taking, there is nevertheless much of value in Head’s work with
Rivers in this experiment. Its special value arises, she argues, when it is
considered alongside theatrical theory:

by looking sideways to the techniques and problems Head’s introspection shared
with actors and theatrical audiences, his “negative attitude of attention” also
emerges as a distinctive and characteristic technique for self watching at the
beginning of the twentieth century, one that was manifested in both aesthetic
and scientific contexts.¹¹⁰

Woolf’s diary writing is also a manifestation of this distinctly early-twentieth
century ‘technique for self watching’ which involved psychological self-awareness
during an apparently anti-mental state. I also believe that with its focus on

¹¹⁰ Tiffany Watt-Smith, ‘Henry Head and the Theatre of Reverie’, 19: Interdisciplinary
Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century, 12 (2011),
impressions, sensations and rural introspection this technique is not just specifically early-twentieth century, but also (like both Woolf and Head themselves) specifically modernist.

Considering Woolf and Head in this manner demonstrates that there were important parallel developments in both neurology and modernist literature during the early-twentieth century and therefore we can consider Head and Woolf as belonging to a shared early-twentieth-century modernist intellectual tradition which spanned both neurological and literary cultural production. The worlds of Head and Woolf connected: Head was chosen as Woolf’s doctor in 1913 and later in his life enjoyed her novels. However, through reading their work alongside one another it becomes clear that their intellectual affinities extended far beyond these life events. Through investigating the shared techniques used for sensory self-observation in the works of these two modernists, modernism, and specifically anti-mental modernism which focuses on the primitive, emerges as a cultural practice which extended across both literary and neurological textual and cultural production.

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111 This builds on the work of Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail who have argued that ‘to speak of neurology is to describe a relationship of mutual constitution [...] To begin to chart this complex and knotty relationship between neurology and modernity is not simply to suggest that the neurological self was a corollary of modernity, nor is it to propose that neurology, as a discipline, was just the product of the emergence of historical modernity; rather it is to explore the ways in which the two were symbiotically related, complexly co-generative’ (Salisbury and Shail, ‘Introduction’ to Neurology and Modernity, p. 1.)

On or around the 7th November 1933 Anais Nin (1903-1977) wrote in her diary that she ‘impulsively decided to ring Rank’s doorbell’ having devotedly read his books for some time.¹ This was the start of the personal relationship between Nin and psychotherapist Otto Rank (1884-1939) which lasted until mid 1936.² This relationship began with Rank as Nin’s doctor but ended up with him as her lover. Here I will argue that the encounter between Nin and Rank changed both of them fundamentally, and that their personal relationship cannot be separated from the intellectual influence they exerted on one another. In particular I will argue that their relationship changed the way in which both of them felt about diaries, diary-writing and textuality and the associations between these forms of writing and the instincts, irrational and anti-mental. In the theoretical writings of Nin and Rank, and in Nin’s depiction of their relationship in her diaries, there is a constant concern with the nature of the connection between life and writing. This dichotomy also becomes bound up with the perceived split between, respectively, the anti-mental and the mental.

My main argument will be that both Nin and Rank felt that the instincts, the anti-mental and the primitive were key aspects of life, and that it was their romantic relationship (as portrayed by Nin) which marked a turning point for both of them in terms of truly accepting and celebrating these practices/ideas in their lives/texts. Specifically I will argue that their relationship changed the way that both Nin and Rank felt about writing and texts. Only after her relationship with Rank did Nin fully come to articulate her instinctive theory of diary-writing, and only after his relationship with Nin did Rank come to dismiss psychology and

¹ Anaïs Nin, Incest: From a Journal of Love. The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin 1932-1934 (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1992), p. 291. All quotations are from this edition and will be listed in the text in parentheses as Incest with the page number.
² In the previous chapter I italicised the title of Woolf’s Diaries because there is one coherent version of the diaries published in textual form. Nin’s diaries appeared in two different editions so it makes sense to italicise only the titles of these volumes and not diaries as a term which applies to them in a general sense, as it does for Woolf.
textuality because he felt they were always antithetical to the fundamental irrationality of what he perceived as 'life itself'. The work of both Nin and Rank ties into the connection that T. J. Jackson Lears has made between the early-twentieth-century 'revaluation of primal irrationality' to 'widespread gropings toward "real life"'; a quest for authentic lived experience is a key concern for both Nin and Rank.³

I will begin by exploring the world of Nin before she met Rank and the world of Rank before he met Nin. I will then explore the initial clinical encounter between Nin and Rank and what was said about the diary during it before moving on to examine their romantic relationship and the effects which it had. These effects will be demonstrated through an analysis of Nin’s changed attitude towards diary-writing, in which she describes it as the only textual form capable of expressing the fundamental anti-mentality of life itself, and of Rank’s final book (the only one which he wrote after his relationship with Nin), Beyond Psychology (written 1939, published 1941) which renounces all mental and textual systems - including modernism and psychology - which are seen as being incompatible with the fundamental anti-mentality of life itself.

Anaïs Nin’s Diaries

Anaïs Nin wrote diaries obsessively and almost continuously from the age of eleven in 1914 until near to her death in 1977 aged seventy-three. Nin had started keeping her diary when her father abandoned her family (it began as a letter addressed to him) and this was one of the ways in which she coped with this loss. Here I will be examining her diaries from 1931-1937 when Nin, like the century, was in her thirties and was predominantly living in Paris. This period of 1931-1937 was a particularly fecund one for Nin. During this period, her diaries portray a number of relationships, beginning with her entangled love affair with husband and wife Henry and June Miller, and then various other sexual relationships with a range of people including her analysts René Allendy and Otto Rank, Peruvian revolutionary Gonzalo Moré and her own father. This was also the period in which many of Nin's own psychological and aesthetic theories began to

be forged in earnest and not coincidentally was also the period during which she first discovered the work of and met Otto Rank.

Rank himself was working as a psychotherapist in Paris during this period. He had moved there from Vienna after his break from Freud in 1926. When Nin rang Rank’s doorbell in November 1933 she found a man who had recently emerged from a busy period of authorship and who was currently focusing his energies practicing as a psychotherapist rather than writing about psychotherapy and psychology. Rank’s biographer E. James Liebermann describes this period as follows:

After 1933, the year he met Nin, Rank published little [...] His writings had fallen off after 1931 [...] After the post-Vienna frenzy of authorship – six books in six years (1926-32) – Rank turned from writing to living, reversing the balance of his earlier life. Nin seemed compelled to attempt both simultaneously: She lived to write and wrote to live.  

Liebermann’s remark here not only gives an insight into Rank’s world during the period in question but also articulates the apparent split between writing and life which formed the core of the Nin-Rank relationship as well as the works of each, and will also be central to the argument of this chapter. I will argue here that Rank’s encounter with Nin compounded his emerging feeling that living life might be more important than thinking (or writing) thoughts, and also that these activities (living life and thinking thoughts) were distinct from one another. Although Liebermann suggests that Nin’s life and writing were more intertwined than Rank’s - which was true - I will further argue that we should not take Nin at face value when she describes diary-writing as a textual form which is intimately bound up with, or indistinguishable from, anti-mental life processes or ‘life itself’. In fact, in professing to capture the instinctive rhythms of life-as-lived through their non-mental composition method, Nin’s diaries in fact draw attention to the gulf between the text and the anti-mental, and the impossibility of portraying anti-mentality in any textual form, even, or perhaps especially, a diary.

4 I refer to Rank as a psychotherapist rather than a psychoanalyst as he had moved away from psychoanalysis by this period and instead was practicing what he had called ‘Will Therapy’.

Nin’s diaries from 1931 onwards were published in two different formats. They first appeared in the 1960s under the editorship of Gunter Stuhlmann and Nin herself under the title *The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Volumes 1-7*. These diaries were cut, edited and often re-written by Nin during the publication process. Nin’s husband Hugo Guiler did not wish to appear in these originally published diaries, and his absence from these texts often makes for strange reading as it means that a number of events and trips go mysteriously unexplained. These versions of the diaries also edit out any direct allusions to sex, meaning that a large proportion of Nin’s life and her relationships – with Rank, for example – is absent. When Nin died she left her diaries in their supposedly ‘original’ form to be published. She gave her second husband Rupert Pole (who she was bigamously married to, along with Hugo) the monumental task of publishing the ‘unexpurgated’ diaries after her death. These unexpurgated diaries now include all the sex, names and gory details left out in the originally published diaries, but, despite being true to the manuscript diaries left by Nin, are far from being transparent sources themselves due to Nin’s purposeful preparation of the texts before her death (which was not sudden) as well as Pole’s cutting and crafting them for publication. They have appeared under the novelistic and sensational titles *Henry and June* (1986), *Incest* (1992), *Fire* (1996) and *Nearer the Moon* (1996).

There are many differences between the two texts (the originally published and unexpurgated diaries) and they are also dated differently. In the originally published diaries, entries do not appear under a specific date but rather within a long section called something like ‘Winter 1931-2’ or ‘August 1933’ whereas in the unexpurgated diaries each entry appears under a single date – the date on which it originally appeared under in the diaries. Philip K Jason argues that these two versions of the diaries should be considered as two separate literary texts: ‘Rupert Pole’s shaping of materials “from the unexpurgated diary” presents not only another side of Nin but also another literary text’. The original diaries comprise another text in themselves and they now exist in the archives at UCLA. The publication history of Nin’s diaries points to the complex way in which truth and reality operate within these texts, which although described as being true to life and ‘instinctive’ were constantly edited both during their composition and their publication. Here I will be focusing my analysis on *The Diary of Anaïs Nin*, 1931-2020.
Nin, Volumes One and Two and also Incest and Fire from the ‘unexpurgated’
diaries, all of which cover the years 1931-7. I will quote interchangeably from all
these texts, using them to create a composite portrait of Nin’s portrayal of her life
during these years. I refer to the published rather than archive diaries as my chief
concern is with these diaries as consciously constructed literary texts. In
describing events from Nin's diaries it is important to note that we are primarily
dealing with a textual world, and although events described in Nin's diaries may
 correspond with reality in many ways (as is shown by Deidre Bair’s biography of
Nin and E. James Lieberman’s biography of Rank) they should not be read as
straightforwardly autobiographical.7 My account of events here is based on that
given by Nin in her diaries; although the account centres around events which
were part of the lives of Nin and Rank, this remains a fundamentally textual
account.

The publication history of the diaries also helps to divide the criticism
written on Nin’s work which fits broadly into two categories: that written before
she died and the unexpurgated diaries had been published, and that written after
these two events had occurred. The ‘first wave’ of Nin criticism took place
concurrently with the second wave of feminism and subsequently she was taken
up as something of a feminist icon during the 1970s by critics such as Kate Millett,
much to the dismay of others.8 Nin herself gave many interviews and lectures to
this end during this period.9 However, much of the criticism written during this
‘first wave’ is not particularly critical, as more recent critics have noted: Frances
Wilson describes Nin's 1970s ‘cheerleading critics’ and Philip K Jason their

7 Deirdre Bair, Anaïs Nin: A Biography (London: Bloomsbury, 1995); Liebermann, Acts of
Will.
8 In Anaïs Nin and her Critics, Jason explains that even though Nin is frequently shunned
and rejected by feminists for what they perceive as her over sexualisation and lack of
engagement with politics, she did also have famous feminist champions. For example,
Kate Millett wrote a highly appreciative article about Nin. This was originally published in
Le Monde in 1976 as ‘Portrait de l’Artiste en Femme’, and then as ‘Anaïs - A Mother to us
Jason writes that ‘Kate Millett’s ‘Anaïs – A Mother to Us All: The Birth of the Artist as a
Woman’ is a reminder that at least one prominent feminist finds Nin’s achievement
significant. Millett tells her audience that of all the woman writers who had risen to
prominence after World War II, Nin is the one who has come to matter most to the
women’s movement. And the Diary is specifically what matters: ‘as a new form, as the
expression of a sensibility of “exquisite discernment,” and as a personal record of every
woman’s struggle. “We are the future she has made possible,” writes Millett, “and the
past accepted, transcended, embraced”’ (Jason, Anaïs Nin and her Critics, p. 80).
9 Anaïs Nin, A Woman Speaks: The Lectures, Seminars and Interviews of Anaïs Nin, ed.
‘unrelieved boosterism’.\(^\text{10}\) Both Wilson and Jason criticise those such as Bettina Knapp, Sharon Spencer, Franklin V and Schneider for celebrating and praising Nin and her work without engaging particularly critically with it.\(^\text{11}\) However, it must be remembered that these are the people who forged the field of ‘Nin studies’ and that prior to the cheerleading critics there were no Nin critics at all.\(^\text{12}\) Nancy Scholar attempted to reclaim Nin from this critical fate in 1984 explaining that ‘Nin has been treated to a good deal of abuse as well as to cult worship ad nauseum, but rarely to serious study. The predominant tone in the book-length studies published to date has been “appreciative”, but hardly critical’.\(^\text{13}\) Scholar wanted her book to do something different. However, as the book was published before the unexpurgated diaries it can only go so far in what it can say about Nin’s life and her diaries. Today there is a lot of extra material on Nin, including a lot more of her diaries, available to us.

More recent critical work on Nin has attempted to reclaim her as a canonical modernist. Like these critics, I believe that Nin deserves a place alongside the more well-known and studied modernists in this thesis - D. H. Lawrence, H.D., Virginia Woolf - and that her work not only engages with these other writers (Nin’s first book was a study of D. H. Lawrence) but that she also partook in the same wave of modernist anti-mentality which emerged in the wake of the neurological developments of the 1860s.\(^\text{14}\) Nin’s technique of working from and representing dreams, undercurrents and impulses - which she specifically relates to the diary as a form - certainly places her comfortably alongside these more canonical modernists, and yet she is not canonical. In 1998 Diane Richard-Allerdyce described Nin as ‘an important Modernist and feminist writer’, and yet in 2003, Helen Tookey wrote that Nin has never quite appeared

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\(^\text{10}\) Frances Wilson, \textit{Literary Seductions: Compulsive Writers and Diverted Readers} (London: Faber & Faber, 1999), p. x; Jason, \textit{Anaïs Nin and her Critics}, p. 10.


\(^\text{12}\) An example of one of Nin’s ‘cheerleading critics’ from Knapp (1978): ‘She struggled ceaselessly to make her voice heard. The road was arduous, sometimes excoriating. Yet, she succeeded because the will, the courage, and the talent were there. Today her books are read in many languages and throughout the world. They are absorbed by young and old, male and female, by all classes of society’ (Knapp, \textit{Anaïs Nin}, pp. 2-3).

\(^\text{13}\) Preface to Nancy Scholar, \textit{Anaïs Nin} (Boston: Twayne, 1984).

‘in the main text of feminist-modernist criticism’. In light of this, Tookey goes on to explain: ‘In this context, one of my aims is to reassert Nin’s place within the feminist-modernist nexus, to show that there are clear links between Nin’s work and that of other, now “canonical”, women modernists’. Elsewhere, in *Daily Modernism* (2000), which deals with modernist literary diaries, Elizabeth Podnieks argues that diaries deserve a serious place on the modernist literary map which they have not previously been granted. She believes that if we came to see diaries as major modernist achievements and texts in their own right then this would alter Nin’s position in the canon. Reflecting on why it is that Woolf is considered a major writer and Nin a minor one she concludes that it is because diaries are undervalued:

Woolf has been honoured first and foremost as a novelist, while her diaries have garnered scant attention as literary texts. Nin, on the other hand, has been recognised as a prolific diarist, but at the expense of becoming infamous and thus devalued [...] Once we recognise that diaries deserve a place on the literary map [...] we can begin to ignore the misleading signposts of “major” and “minor”.

Like Tookey and Podnieks, I believe that Nin’s diaries are in themselves inherently modernist texts. Later in this chapter I will return to these issues, and will refer to (and interrogate) some of Nin’s remarks from the 1960s in which she argues that because she was primarily a diarist she was more modernist than novelists such as Joyce.

Another way in which this chapter will expand the current work available on Nin is by offering a new understanding of and perspective on Nin’s relationship with Rank. Many critics have already written about their relationship. However, much of what is written focuses on the way in which Rank influenced Nin rather than vice versa. Here I intend to show that although Rank did influence Nin, Nin had an equally profound effect on Rank and the work he produced after their relationship. This is not something taken fully into account by those who write about either Nin or Rank, including Rank’s own biographer, E. James Libermann,

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16 Tookey, *Anaïs Nin, Fictionality and Femininity*, p. 3.
despite the fact that he devotes an entire chapter to Rank’s relationship with Nin. Moreover, much of the work on the relationship between Nin and Rank does not mention or quote from Rank’s work itself. A notable exception to this is Helen Tookey’s 2003 book on Anais Nin which gives an in depth analysis of Rank’s concept of creative will and the ways in which it helped and influenced Nin.  

**Otto Rank and his pre-Nin, post-Freud works**

Like Nin, Rank is also an underappreciated and un-canonical figure. Just as a claim needs to be made for Nin’s place in the mainstream of modernism, the same needs to be done for Rank within psychoanalysis and medical psychology. Rank began as one of Freud’s inner circle in Vienna, the chosen few to whom Freud each gave a ring, and was thought by some to be Freud’s favourite. Yet when Rank published *The Trauma of Birth* (1924) a movement began which resulted in him being ostracised from Freudianism. Although the book was dedicated to Freud, many saw it as going against Freudian orthodoxy by citing the trauma of birth, rather than the Oedipal trauma, as the original trauma. Rank’s Freudian excommunication has haunted him in many ways. Firstly, because it meant that he went virtually unknown for years. And although recent work has seen this change, and there has been something of a Rankian renaissance of late, much of the work that does appear on Rank is dominated by his relationship with and split from Freud, rather than on work done by Rank after this split. The vehemence of Freudian hatred towards Rank after the scandal surrounding *The Trauma of Birth* was so extreme that A. A. Brill made all members of the American Psychoanalytic Association who had been analysed by Rank get re-analysed to

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19 For example, the only article in recent years in *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* which directly refers to Rank in its title is about Rank and Freud: Francisco Pizarro Obaid, ‘Sigmund Freud and Otto Rank: Debates and Confrontations About Anxiety and Birth’, *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 93 (2012), 693-715. The Rank-Freud letters were recently published, but Rank’s letters in their own right have not yet appeared. Often Rank is mentioned in passing as a renegade outcast from Freudianism. However, the publication of a new translation of Rank’s *Psychology and the Soul* in 1998 did get reviewed in *Psychoanalysis and History* by Naomi Segal in 2002. The little academic coverage which Rank has received appears in journals such as *The Humanistic Psychologist* and *The Journal of Religion and Health* which are outside the mainstream of Freudian psychoanalysis. For example, see: Will Wadlington, ‘Otto Rank’s art’, *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 29 (2001), 280-311; Esther Menaker, ‘Otto Rank’s Conception of the Will’, *Journal of Religion and Health*, 37 (1998), 9-13.
retain their membership and therefore psychoanalysts would not cite Rank for a long time even if (knowingly or unknowingly) they engaged directly with his ideas. In his introduction to Rank’s *Psychology and the Soul* E. James Lieberman writes that ‘we find major innovators who were either unaware of Rank or who kept their distance despite having much in common with him’.  

Carl Jung, Erik Erikson, Erich Fromm, Franz Alexander, Karen Horney, Heinz Kohut, Julia Kristeva, Arthur Koestler, Jacques Lacan are among those listed. Furthermore, there is very little work done into Rank’s connection with culture and literature more generally, despite the fact that studies of art, literature and artists make up a major part of his work.  

There have been various attempts to re-integrate Rank into the mainstream or to assert his importance such as Michael Shepherd’s article ‘The Only Metaphysical Man: A Re-examination of Otto Rank’ (‘The only metaphysical man’ is a quotation from Nin’s diary) in the volume *Conceptual Issues in Psychological Medicine*, as well as the work of others such as Esther Menaker and E. James Liebermann. However, work on Rank remains sporadic, and most of what appears about Rank is written by diehard Rankians. Here I will do as many have done before and focus on Rank’s relationship with Nin. However, I hope that by focusing in some depth on Rank’s own work and the effect which his relationship with Nin had upon it, as well as Rank’s thinking on diaries, this will create stimulus for further work on Rank both in relation to literature and in his own right.

Otto Rank was originally named Otto Rosenfeld, but changed his name to Rank after the character in Ibsen’s play *A Doll’s House*. Ibsen’s Rank is a doctor, although we never find out much about his clinical work. Although we do know more about Otto Rank’s clinical work, some may question whether he deserves

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21 For example, Rank’s books *The Artist* (1907), *The Incest Theme in Literature and Legend* (1912), *The Don Juan Legend* (1924) and *Art and Artist* (1932).  
23 An exception is Peter Rudnytsky’s 2002 book *Reading Psychoanalysis* which contains a chapter on Rank but is somewhat sceptical of both Rank’s later work and Rankians in general: Peter L. Rudnytsky, *Reading Psychoanalysis: Freud, Rank, Ferenczi, Groddeck* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).
the title of ‘doctor’ because he was a lay analyst and later psychotherapist and not a medically qualified doctor. The letters before Rank’s name come from a PhD in the arts. Nevertheless, Nin constantly referred to him as ‘Dr Rank’ in her diaries and clearly meant it in a clinical rather than an academic sense. She thought of him as her doctor even though he was not medically qualified.

Lay analysts were something new. They had the power to make people less sick acting under the auspices of a medical science (psychoanalysis), but yet being medically and scientifically qualified was not a prerequisite for this position. Freud was always in favour of lay analysts and it was him who encouraged Rank to study the arts rather than medicine. Freud also wrote a long pamphlet in defence of lay analysts in 1926 where he argued that psychoanalytic rather than medical qualification was the essential prerequisite of practicing psychoanalysis. 

Of course, there had been healers who were not doctors around for a very long time, but lay analysts were different as they did not claim to heal using spirits or magic but science. After Rank broke ranks with psychoanalysis and set up as an independent psychotherapist his position changed somewhat but he still existed as a non-medical clinician in the business of healing.

Rank’s lack of medical and scientific training makes him a very different doctor to John Hughlings Jackson, Havelock Ellis or Henry Head. However, it is for exactly this reason that I include him in this account of the anti-mental which aims to bring together neurological and psychological accounts of selfhood. Hughlings Jackson was a major influence for Freud, and Freud was a major influence for Rank. Within this brief chain the approach to doctoring and the self is hugely altered, and yet it is only one person - Freud - who separates Hughlings Jackson from Rank. The work of Hughlings Jackson and Rank is worlds apart, and yet it emerged from a shared tradition which placed the anti-mental at the foundation of selfhood. In the 1950s Dr. Lovell Langstorth wrote a neurological book which mapped Rank’s psychology onto neuroscientific understandings of the

25 Although in the pamphlet on Lay Analysis Freud does admit that ‘nothing takes place between them except that they talk [...] It would be magic if it worked rather quicker’ (Freud, ‘The Question of Lay Analysis’, Standard Edition: Volume 20, p. 187).
nervous system. Langstorth's *Structure of the Ego: An Anatomic and Physiologic Interpretation of the Psyche Based on the Psychology of Otto Rank* (1955) is a sort of reverse *Project for a Scientific Psychology* which seems to take the chain full circle and is testament to the ongoing messiness of the psychology/neurology relationship, which Rank's work also fed into, despite his lack of scientific or medical training.

When Rank found Nin knocking at his door in November 1933 he had already written the majority of his life's work. The only book which he would write after his encounter with Nin was *Beyond Psychology* which I will explore in depth later in this chapter. Rank's early works such as *The Artist* (1907) and *The Incest Theme in Literature and Legend* (1912) are thoroughly Freudian. *The Trauma of Birth* (1924) was, despite its erring from the established orthodoxy which led to Rank's eventual banishment from Freudianism, an essentially Freudian book and was even dedicated to Freud: 'the explorer of the unconscious, creator of psychoanalysis'. Prior to *The Trauma of Birth*, Rank had written a number of books based upon Freudian thought including a book with Ferenczi called *The Development of Psychoanalysis* which although it criticised certain aspects of Freudian orthodoxy, was still an essentially Freudian book.

Here I will focus on the books which Rank wrote after his split from Freudian psychoanalysis and immediately before his encounter with Nin. These are *Truth and Reality* (1929), *Will Therapy* (1930), *Psychology and the Soul* (1930), and *Art and Artist* (1932). It is in these books that Rank developed ideas and theories which were most important and influential for Nin and her work. She read many of these works and was influenced by them profoundly throughout the rest of her life. For example, speaking to the Otto Rank association in 1972, Nin

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27 Dedication to Freud contained in the original edition of *The Trauma of Birth* quoted by Liebermann in the introduction to the 1993 edition of the book, p ix.
29 I find these post-Freudian works fascinating. The opposite view is held by some such as Rudnytsky who writes that 'Unlike those who consider themselves Rankians, I have never been able to muster much enthusiasm for the writings of Rank’s final period. If the prodigious labours during his first two decades in Freud’s circle are limited by what can now be seen to be excessive orthodoxy, those of his final twelve years are, in my view, even more limited by his repudiation of the entire Freudian tradition.' (Rudnytsky, *Reading Psychoanalysis*, p. 86) His dislike of these final years leads him to only focus his ‘rereading’ of Rank on the Freudian years and the period 1924-7.
declared that upon revisiting Rank’s book *Truth and Reality* after an interval of almost 40 years, she ‘found that my whole life as a woman artist had been influenced by it’.\(^{30}\) Furthermore she wrote a preface to the 1968 edition of *Art and Artist* where she asserted the profound influence this book had had upon her.\(^{31}\) The same was the case in December 1932 when, before she had even met Rank, whilst reading *Art and Artist* for the first time, she wrote that ‘[m]uch that I am reading in *Art and Artist* helps me to confirm the intimations I have had about the artist. What efforts I am making to understand’ (DV1, 158).\(^{32}\) Based upon her reading of this book Nin imagined herself saying, before her first visit to Rank, ‘I am one of the artists you are writing about, Dr Rank’ (DV1, 270).

In *Art and Artist* Rank described what he called ‘creative will.’ Esther Menaker has defined Rank’s notion of the will as ‘the human manifestation of the cosmic life force’.\(^{33}\) Explaining creative will Rank wrote that ‘I see the creator-impulse as the life-impulse made to serve the individual will’.\(^{34}\) Rank explained that in a productive and healthy artist, ‘the will dominates, and exercises a far-reaching control over (but not check upon) the instincts’ (A&A, 39). These formulations demonstrate the way in which Rank’s notion of the will was a strange combination of impulse and volition, a force which controls but does not totally inhibit the instincts, a peculiarly anti-mental type of mentality. A key concern of the creative will is that the artistic creation it engenders must be objective in order to be non-neurotic. In 1935 Rank gave a lecture before the Californian Academy of Medicine which was essentially a potted version of *Art and Artist* and here he explains it clearly: ‘when we turn now from the creative type back to our present subject, the neurotic type, we see that his productivity


\(^{32}\) Anaïs Nin, *The Diary of Anaïs Nin: Volume One, 1931-1934*, ed. Gunther Stuhlmann (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1966), p. 158. All quotations are from this edition and will be quoted in the text in parenthesis as DV1 with the page number.


remains exclusively confined to his own ego’.  

In *Art and Artist* Rank writes that the purpose of non-neurotic creation must be ‘to render it objective’ (*A&A*, 41). Rank felt that the creative will is only successfully deployed when it moves beyond the ego of the creator. These theories put forward by Rank in *Art and Artist* will provide useful insights into Rank’s reaction to Nin’s diary in 1933. Diary-writing, which is both based around the creator’s ego and non-objective, seems to be the antithesis of what Rank considered non-neurotic creation. I will argue that this had a profound effect on the way in which he reacted to Nin and her diary.

The ideas of will used by Rank in *Art and Artist* to fully develop his theory of creativity (which had also appeared in a less developed form in a number of his earlier books such as *The Artist* which appeared in 1907), were indebted to his earlier books *Will Therapy* (1930) and *Truth and Reality* (1929). In *Truth and Reality* Rank wrote that ‘[i]f the will is affirmed and not negated or denied, there results the life instinct, and happiness, like salvation, is found in life and experience, in the creation and acceptance of both without having to ask how, whither, what and why’.  

Rank’s will is a volitional force, but it is profoundly connected to instinct. Rank’s notion of the will fundamentally entwines the mental and the anti-mental aspects of selfhood and it places non-mental drives and instincts at the heart of volitional mentality. He writes, in a Jacksonian formulation, that ‘the psychic ego is born out of the biological corporeal ego’ (*T&R*, 209).

For Rank the will is central to both life and therapy, and he rejects the views of previous thinkers - such as Freud - who he believed characterised the will as something ‘bad’ to be dominated. He asks ‘[w]hy must will be denied if it actually plays so great a role in reality’ (*T&R*, 221)? Rank writes that for Freud ‘the individual in the nucleus of his being (the so-called “id”) is subject to great natural laws’ (*T&R*, 212) and he felt that Freud's biological determinism diminished the power of the subject and their volitional will. Therefore, he emphasised the way

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36 Otto Rank, *Truth and Reality* [and *Will Therapy*] (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), p. 305. All quotations are from this edition and will be quoted in the text in parenthesis as *T&R* with the page number.
in which an individual must harness their biological drives and use them in a psychic process of self creation:

For in this act the psychic ego is born out of the biological corporeal ego and the human being becomes at once creator and creature or actually moves from creature to creator, in the ideal case, creator of himself, his own personality (T&R, 209-10).

This emphasis on psychic self creation is at the core of Rank's psychology and his conception of therapy. However, it is key to remember that Rank's seemingly highly mental focus on the will and psychic self-creation has its roots in the anti-mental 'biological corporeal ego'.

In *Will Therapy* Rank took the concept of the will which he had outlined in *Truth and Reality* and applied it to his therapeutic practice. For Rank the most important and revolutionary aspect of psychological therapy is ‘the therapeutic experience itself’, which he saw as Freud's most fundamental contribution. Rank writes that the success of the therapeutic situation depends on the extent to which it enables the patient to exercise their own will without feeling guilty about it or projecting onto the therapist. Rank thinks that the will must not be thought of (as others have conceived of it) as the will to power or as the sex drive but that rather we must ‘recognise its true psychological nature’ (*WT*, 8). Rank's will is, he says, purely psychological, despite being based upon biology and the body. He describes his conception of the will as distinct from that of Adler, Freud, and Schopenhauer, although he is more sympathetic towards Nietzsche, who was a great influence for him:

In every case, however, they arrived at no will psychology because (with Nietzsche on the whole excepted) they brought in moral or social values which are probably justified therapeutically or pedagogically, yes, might even be necessary, but stand in the way of a purely psychological understanding. For Adler’s “will to power” is at bottom exactly as “bad” as Freud’s instinct, which he euphemistically calls the infantile wish, and with both, the therapy consists in freeing from, rooting out, mastering or sublimating (to his will), and where Adler came upon this counter-will he called it masculine psychology, or obstinacy in the pedagogical meaning. At the basis of both presentations lies a moral evaluation; it is “bad” (*WT*, 8-9).

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37 Otto Rank, *Will Therapy* [and *Truth and Reality*] (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), p. 5. All quotations are from this edition and will be quoted in the text in parenthesis as *WT* with the page number.
Rank argued that the will must not be ostracised, asking ‘why must we always deny the will, call it now God, now Fate, or attribute to it an “id”’ (WT, 10). He believed that this ‘othering’ of the will led to guilt feelings, and saw the main aim of therapy as doing away with guilt in connection to will: ‘It is important that the neurotic above all learn to will, discover that he can will without getting guilt feeling on account of willing’ (WT, 9). This purely psychological understanding of the will is, he believes, what sets him apart from Freudian psychoanalysis: ‘The difference, therefore, between the analytic therapy and the will therapy is, as has already been said, that analysis is pedagogically oriented, while will therapy works purely psychologically’ (WT, 19). He also felt that whilst Freudian psychoanalysis demanded mental dominance of the will, his own will therapy allowed for the dynamic functioning of the will independently of mental dominance. And yet despite his emphasis on psychology, which he uses to set himself apart from the more biologically minded Freud, Rank’s will still has the instinctual, biological, corporeal, anti-mental drives at its root, haunting it in a way which will eventually tear will therapy and all psychology apart in Rank’s later work.

Another key aspect of Rank’s psychology was to reassert the importance of the soul. In Psychology and the Soul (1930), Rank aimed to introduce the soul as an essential aspect of contemporary psychology thus linking religion, the psyche and the body in a manner reminiscent of the work of H.D. and Ellis which I considered in chapter two. In a letter to his friend Jessie Taft, Rank described Psychology and the Soul as follows: ‘Our scientific psychology grew out of the belief in the soul (immortality) and still represents for us the same although it denies the existence of the soul’. 38 In his preface to the book Liebermann explains that this means that for Rank there is ‘a strong, flexible bridge between rational and irrational’, a sentiment also held and lived out by Nin, as well as being encapsulated in the neurology of Hughlings Jackson, and the works of every writer I have considered in this thesis. 39

In Psychology and the Soul Rank quotes from William Osler who, in 1904, wrote that ‘modern psychological science dispenses altogether with the soul [...]”

The new psychologists have ceased to think nobly of the soul, and even speak of it as a complete superfluity [...] Science minimizes to the vanishing point the importance of the individual.40 Rank took up arms against the mainstream of scientific psychology, expressed here by Osler, when he tried to reintroduce the soul into psychology. He explains the paradox which he saw in contemporary psychology as follows:

To write a history of psychology is to write a history of the soul, [...] To know psychology one has to know its object, the soul. But given its peculiar nature, psychology finds itself in a unique position: it must provide the object of study – a scientific concept of the soul. In fact, psychology does not know its own object, and flatly denies the object that tradition hands down. The soul, as we know it from antiquity in folk belief, religion, and mythology, does not exist for scientific psychology, yet research goes on as if it did. Ironically, psychology purports to determine the validity of the soul-concept, but its research only confirms that there is no soul, leaving the matter to other disciplines, notably ethnology (P&S, 1).

The problem Rank identifies here is one that will emerge as increasingly central to his work after his relationship with Nin. He is concerned with how it can ever be possible to develop a rational and scientific account of the mind when this mind itself was born out the a- or anti-mental/rational soul. The fact that Rank turns to ethnology and 'folk-belief' here is significant, as it grounds his conception of the anti-mental soul-mind within discourses of primitivism which ethnology gave rise to, and which he felt disrupted notions of the mind. Rank also writes that in what he calls the 'animistic' and 'primitive' era, the soul was consciously believed in, and so the world was filled with soul-belief: 'They made the world less real, more like the self' (P&S, 8). This is a description that could equally well be applied to Nin’s diaries; her attempt at capturing the self had no concern with what was conventionally understood as reality.

Rank himself explained it thus: ‘recognising the unconscious, Freud acknowledged the soul; but by explaining the soul materialistically, he denied it’ (P&S, 3). Or, ‘[c]ontemporary psychology may be a science, but its basis, the soul, cannot be explained by science. The psyche is neither brain function, as modern neurology believes, nor sublimated biological drives, as Freud conceived it’ (P&S, 3). Rank criticised neurology and Freud for what he saw as their biological determinism, and yet, the anti-mentality which Rank saw as the essential element of the soul (which he felt was inaccessible to materialistic neurological modes of

self construction) was also a central facet of the work of neurologists. As I have shown, the discourses Rank criticises here also placed anti-mentality at their centre, although they did not use the term soul. In *Psychology and the Soul* Rank attempted to distinguish himself from traditions which, in fact, formed the bedrock of the psychological tradition he found himself within.

In all of these works Rank is concerned with the anti-mental aspects of the self. However, at this stage he remained committed to psychology itself as a system of meaning and representation. After his encounter with Nin, Rank made a decision to focus on living rather than writing (thus setting up these notions as antithetical). This decision marked an increasing turn towards the anti-mentalt, and meant that Rank would come to reject psychology and its systems altogether because he felt it was a discourse too much concerned with and bound to mentality and rationality and that therefore it could never adequately articulate the anti-mentality which he felt formed the core of selfhood.

**Anaïs Nin pre-Rank: Anti-mentality in the diaries, 1931-3**

The notion of dividing Nin’s life into pre and post Rank periods may seem to overemphasise the importance of their relationship. However, not only do I believe that its importance for them both cannot be overemphasised, but furthermore this way of structuring the chronology of her life is also used by Nin herself. On April 27 1934 she looked back upon ‘the pre-Rank epoch’ (*Incest*, 324) of her life, and here I will briefly explore Nin’s world in this pre-Rank epoch. In 1931-3, the years immediately preceding her first encounter with Rank in November 1933, Nin was already fostering a world devoted to the exploration of the instinctual, anti-mental and primitive facets of life, yet it was only after her relationship with Rank that she came to explicitly describe her diary-writing itself in these terms. Part of the reason why Nin was so fascinated by her reading of Rank’s books, and later came to seek him out in person, was because she saw in him someone who, like her, also celebrated instinct and anti-mentality in a way which she did not feel that other psychoanalytic figures did.

Before Rank became her doctor, Nin had been a patient of the Freudian analyst René Allendy (with whom Nin also had a love affair). Nin eventually rejected Allendy because she considered him to be overly scientific and rational:
‘The end of Allendy. Revolt against his lack of imagination, his practicality [...], the way he translates my poetical facts into facts the way he scientifies, medicalises’ (*Incest*, 124). Rank, however, with his newfound freedom from Freudian orthodoxy, was much more spiritual and less scientific than more traditional Freudian analysts such as Allendy could be. Nin felt that Rank was able to accept her ‘poetical facts’, without attempting to rationalise them into ‘facts’ as she felt that Allendy had been compelled to do. Nin was always against set ideologies and systems of knowledge, and her anti-idealism was profoundly associated with her anti-mentality as she thought that all systems of understanding were based on ideas and thoughts which were opposed to life itself. This is the very idea which Rank would come to express in *Beyond Psychology* and which has also been put forward by philosophers who have argued that philosophy based in idealism is fundamentally incompatible with that based in life.  

Rank’s status as an outsider would have no doubt appealed to Nin and furthermore, much of Rank’s psychological writing – which Nin was reading during the period of her analysis with Allendy – concerned the soul and the artist which were also central preoccupations for Nin. For this reason she decided that ‘I need Rank; I need a stronger mind than Allendy’s’ (*Incest*, 227). Nin’s pre-Rank knowledge of and interest in psychoanalysis also extended far beyond her analysis with Allendy. Nin was an avid reader of much psychoanalysis and psychology in the years before she met Rank and felt particularly drawn to Jung. As Nin’s biographer Deirdre Bair explains ‘Jung’s maxim, to “proceed from the dream outward,” became the controlling metaphor for how she wrote her life as well as how she lived it’. Nin herself wrote in July 1932 that ‘the phrase which fired me and made me begin to write on June was Jung’s “To proceed from the dream outward”’ (*DV1*, 132). And this dictum became something of a mantra for Nin, shaping her life and work, eventually becoming a chapter title in her mature theoretical work *The Novel of the Future* (1968). Bettina Knapp writes that Nin’s following of Jung’s dictum helped in her ‘development and understanding of inner pulsions’ pointing to the clear way in which Nin’s attraction to Jung was


43 *Anaïs Nin, The Novel of the Future* (London: Peter Owen, 1969). All quotations are from this edition and will be listed in the text in parentheses as *Novel* and the page number.
connected to her own fascination with the instinctual and anti-mental elements of life. In June 1934 Nin wrote that ‘I would like to go to Zurich and seduce Jung’ (DVI, 329), but she never did meet him in person.

The desire to proceed from the dream outward was connected to Nin’s interest in Surrealism which also pre-dated her encounter with Rank. In March 1937 Nin was ‘introduced to André Breton and almost turned away in a panic. He awes me, because I am fully aware that his ideas have influenced all of us deeply’ (DV2, 200). This remark about ‘all of us’ clearly refers to herself, as looking back we see that as early as Winter 1931-2 Nin had written about the way in which Breton had influenced her apparently anti-mental approach to writing in her diary:

*I have always believed in André Breton’s freedom, to write as one thinks, in the order and disorder in which one feels and thinks, to follow sensations and absurd correlations of events and images, to trust to the new realms they lead one into [...] It is an effort to transcend the rigidities and the patterns made by the rational mind (DVI, 11).*

Nin later described her own diary in similar terms, and explained her ‘instinctive’ style of writing as follows: ‘my style is bare – I never think of how I will say it – only say it’. However, this was written on November 2 1935, which was during her relationship with Rank. Prior to this time Nin always felt compelled to make her diary ‘artistic’, more rational and more substantially filtered through the mind. This was in part due to the advice of both Henry Miller and Rank himself. On December 26 1932, before Nin had met Rank, but whilst she and Henry were reading Rank’s book Art and Artist, she wrote that ‘the art should overshadow the journal [...] Henry wants to see me swing out free and produce more art and less journal’ (Incest, 79). Later in this chapter I will explore Rank’s own reasons for discouraging Nin from writing her diary during their analysis using a reading of Art and Artist. However, I will expand upon current accounts of Rank’s reaction to Nin’s diary by arguing that after they became lovers there was a fundamental shift in Rank’s attitude – in part inspired by Nin – which led to him accepting the diary as a ‘human document’ (Fire, 46), which in turn led to Nin’s own acceptance

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45 Anaïs Nin, Fire: From a Journal of Love. The Unpublished Unexpurgated Diary 1934-1937 (London: Chester Springs, 1996), p. 16. All quotations are from this edition and will be listed in the text in parentheses as Fire with the page number.
of her instinctual means of writing in her diary. I will argue that it was through her relationship with Rank that she came to be able to understand and describe her diary in these instinctive terms.

Returning to Surrealism, which Nin was engaged with in the years preceding her encounter with Rank, we see that Breton himself, sounding very much like post-Rank Nin talking about her diaries, described automatic writing as ‘verbal flow’ with a desirably ‘primitive direction’. Even though Nin’s diaries are not automatic writing she still aligned herself with the Surrealists’ concern with the primitive and the origins of selfhood. Katherine Conley has written of ‘surrealist properties linked to “primitivism” [...] – irrationality, pioneer exploration of the unconscious’ and these are all also fundamental aspects of Nin’s diaries from this period. However, Nin eventually rejected Surrealism because it was an ideology which she felt attempted to overly intellectualise what she saw as that which cannot be intellectualised: life itself (characterised as anti-mental). This is why Nin dismissed Surrealism, in the end, for being overly concerned with the mind and rationality:

I say the chaos artificially produced by the mind, by geometrical absurdity, merely placing an umbrella on an operating table (Breton), is not fecund. The only fecund chaos is that of the emotions, feelings, nature. Henry [Miller] is a true surrealist because his chaos does not come from the unconscious (Fire, 411).

Here Nin advocates an anti-mentality which transcends the unconscious and links this back to her choice of Henry Miller as a lover. She sought an embrace of anti-mentality in life (Henry), rather than in art or text (Breton).

Nin’s relationship with Henry Miller, and her obsession with his wife June during 1931-3 were utterly entwined with her obsession with all things primitive, instinctual and anti-mental. In her descriptions of Henry and June she ascribes them all of these characteristics. She describes them both as follows: ‘So June is BEING. Nothing can control her. She is our fantasy let loose upon the world. She does what others only do in their dreams. Mindless, the life of our unconscious without control’ (DV1, 45). And Henry is primitive and instinctual too: ‘all his actions seem dictated by the torrential, instinctual flow of his energy [...] he

46 André Breton, ‘Le Message Automatique’, Minotaure, 60 (1933), 55-65 (p. 58). The quotations have been translated into English by Katharine Conley.

47 Katharine Conley, ‘Modernist Primitivism in 1933: Brassai’s “Involuntary Sculptures” in Minotaure’, Modernism/modernity, 10 (2003), 127-140 (pp. 130-1).
seems to live by some other laws, a primitive life, other tribal habits than those familiar to me’ (DV1, 125). Nin writes that it was Henry who allowed her to live more ‘loosely’, and how doing so helped her by ‘de-mentalising’ her. She explains ‘how I needed that looseness. How it untied, unknotted, unleashed me, how it oiled me, de-mentalised me, softened me. Henry made me great gifts’ (Incest, 401). Nin debunks the mind and believes that ‘we can only know with our feelings. Our head is false’ (Fire, 32). This is why she chose Henry as a lover in the period before meeting Rank. It is also why she ultimately left Rank to return to Henry with a newfound confidence in herself.

Nin’s oscillation between Rank and Henry was the living embodiment of an ongoing contradiction which she seemed to be haunted by: Nin wanted to inhabit a world which was not dominated by the rational mind, and yet she could not help but worship intellects such as Rank’s (who she sought out precisely for his mind), and she could not help subjecting her supposedly anti-mental instincts to highly mental textual expression in her diary. This sense of conflict between the anti-mental primitive and the intellectual world of the mind dominates her diaries during this period. Nin constantly felt torn and on February 1933 she wrote that ‘each time I take the side of the primitive men, I turn my back on half of myself’ (DV1, 175). On November 27 1932 she writes of her ‘conviction that I am worth more as a mind, talent, artist than as an animal’ (Incest, 50), yet she constantly emphasises the ways in which she wants to discard her mind in order to get in touch with her animal drives. It was this divide which Nin perceived between mentality and animality which led her from Henry to Rank and back to Henry again. In Nin’s diaries, Rank becomes a symbol of the mind and intellect, and Henry represents anti-mental animality.

According to Nin’s diaries, she had a sexual encounter with her own father during the summer of 1933, a few months before she first met Rank. This is described in detail in the unexpurgated diary volume Incest. Whilst talking to her husband Hugo’s ex-tutor and her ex-lover the American educator, pianist, and best-selling author John Erskine in 1935, Nin seems to connect this sexual

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48 This foreshadows what Liebermann will later write about Rank’s work which he believes tells us that ‘we are trapped in our human status, half animal, half divine’ (E. James Liebermann, ‘Introduction’ to Otto Rank, The Trauma of Birth (New York: Dover, 1993), p. xiii.)
encounter with her father to her philosophy of ‘living by one’s emotions instead of one’s mind’:

He observed confusion and chaos, which I call living by one’s emotions instead of one’s mind. I made a drunken speech on my flow, on spilling out. He left saying he was very worried about me. I wanted to laugh. I was full of mischief. I startled him, told him outright about my love affair with my Father, really startled and shocked him (Fire, 27).

Elizabeth Podnieks has argued that when Nin wrote about her incest with her father in her diary she was attempting to prove that ‘she was capable of transcending the rational world’ and that ‘[t]he relationship [with her father] can be considered a journey into Nin’s deepest, most instinctual and primitive fears’. And although this is a potentially dubious way to understand an incestuous relationship, it is also the way in which Nin herself presents this relationship to an acquaintance (John Erskine) as well as to the readers of her diaries. She, like Podnieks, connects her relationship with her father (either real or textually constructed) to her attempt to live by the emotions instead of the mind, a drive which informed much of her life and work, and even if this seems unusual or troubling, this remark shows just how much importance anti-mentality (or at least the representation of it) had for Nin.

This urge to live by emotions instead of the mind was also what drew Nin towards another figure in her life that, like her father, had a huge impact on her life and her writing: D. H. Lawrence. Nin’s first published book which appeared in 1932 was a study of Lawrence called D. H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study. Here Nin explains that she believes Lawrence to be an important writer because ‘his observation is not through the eyes but through the central physical vision – or instinct. His analysis is not one of the mind alone, but of the senses’ and ‘beneath the pounding and the sharpness we must sense the poet who works through visions and the primal consciousness. “The primal consciousness in man is pre-mental and has nothing to do with cognition”’. Lawrence was a major influence on Nin for many reasons, not least because of the focus he gave to instinct and the anti-mental which I have already explored in the opening chapter of my thesis.

Here we have seen how Nin embraced anti-mental aspects of selfhood, and depicted her own life as one which embodied and lived out these elements in the years before she met Rank. However, she had yet to fully come to terms with and articulate her belief that her diary itself was a text which also embodied and encapsulated these anti-mental, instinctual life-flows. Instead she was open to persuasion that the diary might be bad for her, and initially accepting of Rank's idea that she might be 'cured' of it.

The Initial Clinical Encounter between Nin and Rank: The Diary as Illness and Therapy

On October 13 1933, soon before Nin first went to see Rank, we see her addressing her diary directly and chastising it:

My poor diary, I am so angry with you! I hate you! The pleasure of confiding has made me artistically lazy. Such an easy joy, to write here – so easy. And today I saw how the diary does choke up my stories, how I tell you about things so nonchalantly, carelessly, and inartistically. Everybody has hated you. You have hampered me as an artist, but at the same time you kept me alive as a human being. I created you because I needed a friend. And talking to this friend, I have wasted my life (Incest, 276).

This entry is written partly in response to Henry Miller's criticisms of her diary and partly, I believe, in response to Rank's book Art and Artist which she had started reading in December the previous year. Nin's sense that her diaries choked up her stories would be compounded by her initial therapeutic encounters with Rank before her romantic relationship with him set her free of it.

Nin sought out Rank for therapy for a variety of reasons. Not only was she dissatisfied with her previous analyst Allendy, but she also felt a profound connection with Rank's works. Whilst working in the psychoanalytical library in Paris in November 1933, she read his birth date in the card of one of his books and realised that ‘[h]is life span was already over half spent, and I must talk to him now’ (DV1, 269). But, she admitted, ‘[t]here were other reasons […] I felt confused and lost’ (DV1, 269). Furthermore, she felt that 'I had lived out the entire contents of his profound studies so impetuously that I had had no time to understand them, to sift them. I was confused and lost' (DV1, 269-270). This combination of confusion and loss plus dissatisfaction with Allendy and a
profound sense of connection with Rank’s works led Nin to seek out Rank in person during November 1933.

Nin’s initial reactions to her first session with Rank were exultant as she felt she had found a kindred spirit. When writing up the session in her diary afterwards she wrote that ‘[i]mmediately I knew that we talked the same language’ (DV1, 271). She felt in tune with him because he, like her, rejected the ‘psychoanalytic formulas’: ‘When I mentioned the brief psychoanalytic formulas he smiled again, ironically, as if agreeing with me as to their insufficiency. I felt the expansion of his thought beyond medicine into metaphysical and philosophical universes’ (DV1, 271). She also reported that during their second meeting he said to her that:

“It was only while delving into the subconscious that we began to understand that the feminine way of acting, women’s motivations, more often came from that mixture of intuition, instinct, personal experience, personal relation to all things, which men deny having. [...] Now, the way a woman feels is closer to three forms of life: the child, the artist, the primitive. They act by their instant vision, feeling and instinct. They remained in touch with that mysterious region we are now opening up” (DV1, 276).

Here we see Nin portraying Rank as someone who shared her belief that women were - beneficially for them - less mental, and more instinctive and in tune with the primitive, than men. Nin’s growing attachment to Rank is evident in the portrait she sketches of him: ‘Portrait of Dr Rank: Impression of his keenness, alertness, curiosity, of his nonpreparedness. The opposite of the mechanical, automatic, ready formula [...] The swiftness of his rhythm of thought, because it is intuitive and subtle’ (Incest, 296-7). All of which meant that during her therapy with Rank she felt as she did when writing in her diary: ‘not too mental’, meaning not overly burdened by the mind and rationalisation rather than mentally disturbed. She explained that ‘when I sit before Rank, I was as truthful as before my journal, not too tragic, not too mental’ (Incest, 294, my italics).

In relation to being not too mental, Nin reflected after her first visit to Rank that ‘[t]he order made in reality, chronological, is another matter entirely. Rank does not believe in that “construction” by logic and reason. The truth lies

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51 When writing about these sessions Nin often reports long passages of Rank’s speech word-for-word. It seems very unlikely that he would have said things exactly as she writes them and I think these ‘quotations’ of Rank’s speech should be taken more as a composite of a general impression of the ideas he conveyed to her and the ways in which Nin interpreted them and perceived Rank.
elsewhere. The selection is made by the power of emotion. No more calendars!’ (DV1, 290). She concludes: ‘Yes. Everything has changed. There is a pre-Rank vision, and there is an after-Rank swimming’ (Incest, 299). This move from vision to swimming shows a rejection of traditional ways of seeing and understanding and a move towards a way of being and knowing based more on bodily sensations and flowing. This is related to the rejection of calendars and chronology in favour of emotion. However, although Nin felt this in relation to herself as a woman early on in her therapeutic encounter with Rank, it would not be until after their relationship had ended that she would apply such a rejection of reality, logic and chronology or ‘after-Rank swimming’, with all its connotations of anti-mentality, to her own diary-writing.

Despite Nin’s rapturous response to and instant connection with her new doctor, these early sessions with Rank were also extremely challenging for her because Rank immediately seized upon the most central thing in Nin’s life: her diary. Diary-writing had always been therapeutic for Nin, and yet it had also been a troublingly sickly practice in her life. This ambivalent role the diary played has been reflected in critical responses to it: Nin’s editor Gunter Stuhlmann has described it as her ‘crutch’ and Suzette Henke as scripotherapy, a means of coping with traumatic experiences in her life.52 Elsewhere, however, it is described in terms of illness. For example, Frances Wilson wrote that ‘[w]riting, for Anais Nin, was not compulsive so much as pathological: she was a scribomaniac’.53 Nin’s biographer Deirdre Bair quotes Nin as saying that she wrote her diaries because ‘life would be more bearable if I looked at it as an adventure and a tale’.54 Nin felt that her very existence depended upon the diaries and this very dependence perhaps indicates something problematic, even sickly, at work in them alongside the therapeutic purpose they also served in her life. Therefore, I would argue that Nin’s diaries were both manifestations of illness and therapy. Nin described the diary as her ‘opium’ (Incest, 285), aware of the connotations of addiction this conveyed. Yet, opium also provides a medicating relief from the world. As Ruth

53 Wilson, Literary Seductions, p. 21.
54 Anais Nin, from a 1973 commencement address, quoted by JNC in Linotte, Preface, vii, quoted in Bair, Anais Nin, p. 31.
Charnock writes: ‘Nin depicts her diary-writing as a kind of madness, graphomania, but also as the thing which keeps her sane’. 55

At the end of Nin’s first session with Rank he demanded that she leave her diary with him and stop writing it. He suggested that she go and live alone in a hotel room for a period in order to isolate herself from her life, and most importantly from her diary-writing. She reported that he said to her: ‘The diary is your last defence against analysis. It is like a traffic island you want to stand on. If I am going to help you, I do not want you to have a traffic island from which you will survey the analysis, keep control of it. I do not want you to analyse the analysis. Do you understand?’ (DV1, 284). At this stage Nin seems to have taken what Rank said on board. In response to this remark she wrote in her diary that ‘I felt I had chosen a wise and courageous guide’ (DV1, 284).

However, although it may be true that part of the reason Rank apparently tried to make Nin stop writing the diary was because he thought it would get in the way of his therapeutic work with her, this event can also be read through Rank’s theories from Art and Artist concerning what constitutes non-neurotic creation. This book was published the year before he first met Nin, and she had just read it before she met Rank, and so these ideas would have been fresh for both of them. Rank felt that creation must move beyond the ego and become objective, and this meant that diaries such as Nin’s were seen as a neurotic and non-artistic form of creation. Rank felt that to be truly creative, creation must be detached from the ego and he thought that Nin had not yet managed to do this because she was too focused on writing her diary rather than creating objective art. Nin internalised Rank’s view for a time and tried to become more objective, more artistic. On January 20 1934 she wrote that ‘I felt Rank’s influence – Rank’s sureness that the diary was bad for me’ (Incest, 298).

After Rank took her diary away from Nin during their first session she tried to write a so-called objective sketchbook ‘without compulsion’ (Incest, 296). However, this did not seem to have much success, nor did it seem particularly therapeutic. Ruth Charnock argues that the sketchbook is really the diary in all but name, and what’s more, Nin’s own response to this situation is rather troubling.

On 6th February 1934, the period during which she was trying to write the ‘objective sketchbook’ she writes that:

Rank did not feel it was the diary I had resuscitated but a notebook [...] Then I sat at the typewriter, saying to myself: Write, you weakling; write, you madwoman, write your misery out, write out your guts, spill out what is choking you, shout obscenely [...] Oh to be free, to be masculine and purely artist. To care only about the art (Incest, 306-8).

The sense that she needs to create ‘masculine art’ in a notebook or sketchbook rather than a diary seems to suffocate her true creative urges. Seeing as Nin has previously associated masculinity with a dominance of the rational mind then this seems to capture her attempt to abandon the anti-mental aesthetics of her diary in favour of the more mental and rational masculine art.

In Rank’s earlier work, and especially in Art and Artist (which he had published the year before he met Nin, and which Nin had read diligently) he had argued that non-neurotic creation must be objective and divorced from the ego of the creator. Therefore, for Rank in late 1933 and early 1934, diaries are to be considered as both a neurotic and non-artistic form of writing. I argue that it is for this reason (as well as the more frequently cited reason that he did not want Nin to be able to analyse her analysis) that Rank encouraged Nin to stop writing her diary. This provides a new perspective on this aspect of their therapeutic encounter, and demonstrates positions from which both Nin and Rank would deviate after their relationship had taken a much more intimate turn. Roughly six months after they initially met for therapy, Nin and Rank became lovers and their sexual relationship would last, on and off, from 1934-1936.

The Transformative Relationship

Nin’s feeling that she ought to objectivise in her writing was abandoned after her romantic relationship with Rank. By March 19 1935, when she was practicing a psychoanalyst in New York and living as Rank’s lover, Nin was able to accept ownership of the diary, and to happily embrace the fact that she felt it was her ego:
the diary – my diary. I’m so happy to have you again. At odd moments, between two patients, a furtive note is enough. It is my world, my ego. Avowed, admitted, honest. I will no longer be ashamed of it, or disguise it, or embellish it (*Fire*, 49).

During 1937, whilst living on a houseboat with her lover Gonzalo, Nin was not writing any fictional works. Therefore, she explains in her diary that, ‘I say to people that I am not writing, but it keeps on wavering here, the tale, the writing that is not writing but breathing’ (*Fire*, 291). The metaphor of breathing demonstrates that she felt her diary to be necessary for her to stay alive and that it was conceived of as a fundamental life-process, not something distinct from life. The fact that Nin was able, in 1937, to state this without anxiety or the desire to change, having previously been so concerned to do so, was partly because of the transformative nature of her relationship with Rank.

The aspects of the Nin/Rank relationship which existed beyond the medical context are not frequently discussed. Rank is so often described as Nin’s analyst, psychotherapist or doctor and nothing more. But he was only her doctor/therapist/analyst for a small portion of the time they knew one another. Here I intend to make a claim for the importance of their personal and romantic relationship (focusing on Nin’s portrayal of it) and believe that even though Rank tried to make Nin give up her diary-writing during their initial clinical work together, this all changed after and during their romantic relationship. After this had taken place Nin began to articulate her theory of the diary as an instinctive form of writing. Moreover, although Rank had previously rejected Nin’s diary, during their relationship he came to embrace it (according to Nin) as a truly ‘human document’ in March 1935. Nin writes: ‘Passed by a bargain shop and bought a handsomely bound diary at a bargain price. Diary reborn, thanks to Rank’s great enthusiasm for it as a human document’ (*Fire*, 46). Nin even writes that she began keeping a ‘twin diary’ with Rank during 1935, seemingly coaxing Rank out of his own diary-writing drought which had reigned since 1907 when he had given up the practice.56

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56 Rank himself had kept a diary, but only as a young man. He began in 1902 when he was eighteen, but this diary soon began to wind down a few years later as it started to include fragments of what would become his first book *The Artist* (1907). For Rank diary-keeping was (as it is for many people) a purely youthful activity, something done on the path to self realisation but which ought to soon be discarded. Crucially, Rank cast his diary aside when he began to write his first ‘real’ book in earnest. In this way Rank’s early life was in keeping with his own theories as put forward in *Art and Artist* many years later in 1932.
Nin's announcement of the twin diary appears on April 1 1935 (April Fools' Day) when Nin wrote of Rank:

His body of work contained the psychological insight into and interpretation of my life. I had been the actress. I had tried all the roles (also, added Rank, the poetic expression of them in writing). This was the opening page of a green bound volume which afterward I got a twin for, red leather, and we are using both as twin diaries, exchanging them each week (Fire, 62).

These twin diaries either never existed or do not seem to have survived. I have been in touch with archivists at both the Nin and Rank archives to enquire about the twin diaries, and neither archive has a record of them. Nin wrote in her diary that ‘Huck [a nickname she used for Rank] has the diaries we wrote together’ (Fire, 87) and as Rank was less diligent in keeping his papers than Nin this could perhaps explain why they are missing. Or, it could demonstrate Nin creating an excuse for the absence of these twin diaries within her own comprehensibly published and collected archive. The reality of the twin diaries remains a mystery. Nevertheless, Nin’s description of them articulates an apparent attempt to fuse Rank’s intellectual insights and Nin's lived experience into one text, and an attempt on Nin's part to win Rank over to her own preferred means of textual expression.

In Nin’s depiction of Rank’s turn to the diary he gradually begins to accept it as he turns away from ideas, and towards life, through his sexual intimacy with Nin herself. Nin's self-portrayal in her diary posits her as the ultimate force of vitality and anti-mentality. Sexuality was a key concern in all of Nin's writings, and therefore it is not surprising that the sexual elements of her relationship with Rank should have had such a profound importance. The very fact that it was sex rather than books which caused this transformation to occur in Nin's account of their relationship is itself testament to her profound and wide-reaching anti-mentality and ongoing commitment to life itself over and above ideas.

The romantic aspect of Nin and Rank’s relationship began with a dramatic declaration from Nin:

May 30, 1934. On Tuesday I decided to become an analyst [...] I fussed and fretted to obtain my new hyacinth blue dress from the cleaner. I would go to Rank the next day in my new dress because he was going to kiss me. I went to sleep full of dreams, energies, desires. I got up vibrant, courageous, impulsive. I rushed to Rank (Incest, 334).
Nin had decided to become an analyst and to kiss Rank, to fuse with him in all sorts of new ways, and it was not long before her decisions became reality. On June 1, 1934 she described the savagery of making love to Rank in a way that is reminiscent of her descriptions of him as an instinctive sort of therapist. It was seemingly essential for her to think of him as someone instinctive and primitive. She writes that ‘we kissed savagely [...] I feel this dark-skinned mythological animal so potent, not human looking, but animal’ (*Incest*, 335). It was not long before the relationship became serious: ‘June 30, 1934. I have found love, love, equal love! I am blessed, blessed with ecstasy, with a new kind of ecstasy, a new kind of love, a new man, a new world’ (*Incest*, 346).

Meanwhile, in the midst of all this Nin was following through with her decision to become an analyst. To this end she had attended a number of training sessions under Rank’s guidance. For example, in the summer of 1934, Rank encouraged her to take some training sessions he was running. Rank established the Psychological Centre at the Foundation des Etats Unis, Cité Universitaire Paris where he held a seminar series between July 15 and August 31 1934, mostly for American psychiatric social workers. Nin was also there, although she was not enthusiastic:

Monday morning I awoke ill because I didn’t want to go to the Psychological Centre, didn’t want to become a analyst. But I went for Rank’s sake [...] Pause at the end of the first conference, which was like the droning of a bee (*Incest*, 354).

However, Nin may have been unaware of the true feelings of her mentor. Whilst teaching the seminars Nin describes here, Rank wrote about them to his close friend Jessie Taft:

> I haven’t anything to “teach” and can’t have any kind of a “school” – not even an undogmatic one – whereas most people (and “good” people for that matter) want that, need it!... And yet how pathetic it is to see him [Wilbur] struggle to match my theory against the Freudian when I haven’t got one and he couldn’t understand it anyway, because he doesn’t know (what you know) that it is a question of being that theory oneself, or representing that viewpoint in one’s attitude towards life!

Rank is referring to the same seminar series which Nin criticised for being like ‘the droning of the bee’. During these seminars Nin apparently spent the whole

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time looking out the window, and Rank apparently told her that he admired her for this as he also thought that the seminar series was less important than life itself (Incest, 325).

This incident introduces us to a conflict within Rank which his relationship with Nin exacerbates: the conflict between living life and writing about ideas. Rank thought that Nin had arrived at in life what he had arrived at on paper, and admired her highly for this. She included a note in her diary on April 1 1935 written by Rank on March 20 which said:

You are great in life as I am in creation (writing). You lived my creation (before – I didn’t create you except as a woman). And in that sense you are greater, and your philosophy of living (not life – that’s abstract) is true – it is one which I arrived at in Truth and Reality – on paper! As an analyst I still tried the other. As a human being I want to live it out now as you did, with you (Rank, quoted in Fire, 62).

Nin and Rank both seemed to feel that they had shared concerns but whereas Rank had written about them Nin had lived them out. However, Nin was not simply living out these philosophies as Rank writes here, because such a significant - indeed monumental - amount of her life was devoted to the highly intellectual activity of writing in her diary and transforming her life (the apparent living embodiment of Rank’s theories) back into text, albeit text mediated by Nin’s lived experience. However, because her writing was a diary Nin did not seem to think that it created a division between life and work to the extent which Rank’s psychological writings did.

This split between life and work led to a split in Rank’s identity which is reflected in Nin’s portrayal of him. Before Rank had met Nin he had assumed the alter ego Huck, taking on the name due to his love of Mark Twain’s character Huckleberry Finn, and he frequently used this name to sign letters to close friends.58 Having originally named himself after an Ibsen character, he then created another alter ego based on a fictional character, thus further complicating the life/text split which was central to his identity. Accordingly, two

58 Liebermann describes Rank’s alter-ego Huck as follows, making Rank’s outlook on Freudianism sound very much like Nin’s: ‘Huck was the pragmatic simplifier, the open-hearted, clear headed lad who could dispense with the frightful complications that Tom [Sawyer] needed and loved. Tom, with his insistence on the authoritative, tradition-bound, slow, painfully difficult approach to liberating nigger Jim, makes a perfect Rankian parody of the classical Freudian analyst’ (Liebermann, Acts of Will, p. 346).
separate characters emerge in Nin’s diary: Rank the man who she refers to as Huck (she also creates an alter-ego for herself as Puck the fairy to accompany Huck), and there is Rank the doctor who she refers to as Rank or Dr Rank. Not once in the diary does she refer to him as Otto. Nin wrote on June 23 1934, a few weeks after their love affair began, that ‘there are two Ranks. Rank the philosopher and psychologist and Rank the human being’ (Incest, 359) and ‘Rank the human being’ is mostly referred to as Huck. This separation between Huck and Dr Rank implies a fundamental separation between the man and his works which Nin did not seem to apply to herself, conceiving of her diaries as transparent texts, assuming them to be life itself, in a way which their edited and mediated representations constantly and thoroughly undermine. On July 23 1934 Nin wrote that she has said to Rank that ‘I’m falling in love with your books. Are you jealous?’ and he replied ‘That depends on how far they take you away from me’” (Incest, 358-9). Nin’s sense that Huck the man was a different entity from the Dr Rank who appears in his works only increases as their relationship progresses. And as this belief increased, her faith in her own diaries as texts which were instinctive and true to life (in opposition to Rank’s psychological texts) gained strength.

Huck did not fully come to life until Nin and Rank were together in New York. Rank was forced to move there as he could not make enough money practicing in Paris. After he left Paris in October 1934 he and Nin missed each other so much that she eventually sailed out to join him in December 1934, almost a year after they had first met. Ostensibly she went to train as an analyst, and this is the story which appears in the originally published accounts and was also the one spun to Nin’s husband Hugo, who was happy for her to go to New York as he thought it would get her away from Henry Miller. But in the unexpurgated diaries, it is her love for Rank that drove her there as they could not bear to be apart. When she stepped off the ship, Nin gave an account of how she ‘was looking for Otto Rank’ (Fire, 1), and then she saw him: ‘His eyes! “Darling!” [...] Very slowly, with hands, tongues, mouths, we unwrapped and untied ourselves, laying open gifts’ (Fire, 2). And so a period of relative happiness began. Rarely does Nin describe herself as this whole or happy:

I have never known such a joy. I live continuously in fantasy, yet in human reality too. My instincts are at peace. No control, revolt, distaste, or conflict. And my
imagination is free. I am myself. His [Rank’s] faith gives me wings […] It has spread into one vast symphony: our talks, our ideas, our love, his work, on all levels, at once, as I always wished to live. Living in every cell. Unfolding a thousand new selves (Fire, 3).

After this they lived an intensely passionate few weeks together and on January 3 1935 Nin wrote of their sense of total interconnectedness: ‘[t]hat night, in the Hartford hotel room, we definitely discovered the twinship’ (Fire, 8). On January 7 Nin wrote of their relationship with extreme love and tenderness: ‘The twins. Impulsiveness, emotion. Abandon, absolutism. We give, give. I am given back all that I ever gave, by Huck. Given, enveloped, worshipped. “I worship you.” But we are human for each other. He is Huck and I Puck – not gods’ (Fire, 11).

However, Huck and Puck’s honeymoon soon came to an end, largely because of, on January 26 1935, ‘Henry arriving on a fog-bound ship’ (Fire, 12). However, this was not the only reason. Their physical love also began to crumble as Nin came to realise that, for her, Rank and Huck could never be reconciled. On January 3 1935 she wrote that ‘I love that moment when he comes into my arms; it is Huck then, not Dr Rank, a natural spontaneous, impulsive, shiny-eyed Huck’ (Fire, 9) and this feeling that it was Huck rather than Dr Rank who she was in love with, only half the man, could not be overcome. Although Nin never stopped admiring Rank’s works, she felt increasingly unable to love Huck due to the dominance of ‘Dr Rank’. Once Nin had renewed her relationship with Henry, Rank left New York to go on a lecture tour. On March 4 1935 Nin explained that she had just written him a letter because ‘I felt a desire to protect Huck from the will of Dr Rank’ (Fire, 34). Here it is ‘Dr Rank’ who is portrayed as the villain who is destroying the human and loveable Huck. As far as Nin saw it, Rank’s doctorhood and intellectual writing persona was an essential part of the violence he performed against the core of his selfhood, demonstrating that she perceived the core of selfhood to be anti-mental and at odds with psychological texts, but not diaries. This is bound up with Nin’s longstanding dislike of all ideologies and the over intellectualism which she saw in psychology and psychoanalysis, despite her admiration for these areas of medicine and knowledge. However it is important to note that it was the intellectual aspects of Rank which had initially seduced Nin: on March 21 1935 she wrote that ‘it is his [Huck’s] creation, “Dr Rank,” who seduced me – not the man’ (Fire, 50) and on April 18 1935 that ‘my life with Huck,
so far as I am concerned, is unreal, because I am in love with a mind, a man’s creation’ (*Fire*, 71). Nin was never as anti-mental as she proclaimed to be.

This dislike of all ideologies combined with her sense that ‘Dr Rank’ was destroying Huck was connected to the way in which Nin felt that psychoanalysis, with its focus on science, systems and rules, diminished the importance of the individual. In April 1935, in the midst of the breakdown of her relationship with Rank, Nin visited a psychoanalytic convention at Long Beach. Whilst she was there she felt that

It seemed to me that day that all of them were examining fragments which should never have been separated except in a laboratory. I was not a scientist. I was seeking a form of life which would be continuous like a symphony. The key word was the sea. It was this oceanic life which was being put in bottles and labelled. Underneath my feet, moving restlessly beneath the very floor of the hotel, was the sea, and my nature which would never amalgamate with analysis in any permanent marriage. I could not hear the discussion, I was listening for the sea’s roar and pulse. It was that day I realised once more that I was a writer, and only a writer, a writer and not a psychoanalyst (*DV2*, 41).

Like H.D. and Ellis, Nin conceived of the depths of selfhood in relation to the ocean. She felt that these anti-mental depths of the self could never correspond with psychology or psychoanalysis although, crucially, she did believe that they were attuned with her practices as a diary-writer. However, this brings us to the main slippage within Nin’s diaries which claim to encapsulate anti-mentality: they are texts. Language itself is a rupture, a transformation of life processes, instincts and anti-mentality. Nin’s faith that her writing can (unlike psychoanalysis) truthfully articulate the oceanic base of herself is undermined by language. As psychoanalyst Adam Phillips writes, ‘the representation of passion ruptures language, reveals a daunting lack in representation itself’.59

Nevertheless, it was the disparity which Nin saw between psychology and anti-mental selfhood, and her feeling that psychoanalysis bottled the oceanic life, which led her to reject Rank. Even though she felt that she Rank was ‘the only metaphysical man’ (*DV2*, 152) in psychoanalysis, she still saw him as ‘one of them’. Even though Rank himself had argued that psychology was incompatible with the anti-mental soul in *Psychology and the Soul*, he still, at this stage, remained intellectually and professionally committed to psychology as a

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discipline. Therefore, Nin felt that Huck was helplessly dominated by the mentality of Dr Rank and for this reason she ultimately rejected both psychoanalysis and Rank as a lover.

Nin’s growing frustration with Rank’s intellectualism was deepened by the arrival in New York of the powerfully animalistic and anti-mental force of Henry Miller. Nin included another note stuck into her diary which had been written by Rank in January 1935. This said that ‘[i]t is not because he is evil that the woman likes the “bad man” but because he is natural. It would be more human to throw away all therapy and to be free, not to be bad but to be human, natural’” (Rank, quoted in DV2, 13). This is surely written partly in response to Nin’s return to Henry Miller, the supposedly bad and natural man, and also in response to Nin’s own feelings, as expressed in March 1935 that “Rank seeks to change, control. Henry is happier. Wisdom gained from ideas, the effort to control life intellectually is disastrous’ (DV2, 26-7).

In April 1936, after their relationship had ended, Nin paid one last visit to Rank. She describes their final encounter in her diary:

Visited Rank [...] We have an hour to talk, as if I were a patient [...] To a great deal Rank asked me, I answered: “I don’t know, I don’t live by analysis any more, but by a flow, a trust in my feelings.”

“I envy you,” said Rank [...] It seemed to me that living by my feelings and impulses I was happier. To flow, to drift, to live as nature. I felt that Rank was sad and wished he could be free, discard the doctor. I went to the limit and to the end of this experience, finished with it (DV2, 69).

Here we see that, in the process of taking on and then discarding Rank, Nin came to trust in her ‘flow’ and fully reject the mental and rational modes of understanding which she had portrayed the Dr Rank half of his character as embodying. She remained committed to the idea that because Rank was a doctor, he was fundamentally denied the ability ‘to live as nature’. This rejection of Rank and what she perceived to be his intellectual, rational, and scientific modes of discourse was a significant step in Nin’s path towards developing her own theory and aesthetics of diary writing which she would hint at in her diaries from 1935-1937 and make explicit in 1968 in The Novel of the Future. These theories have the anti-mental at their core.
In August 1936, after her relationship with Rank had ended, Nin reflected on how she valued her diary because it was ‘[m]y instantaneous vision of the world I believe in. It is my reality. It is born of intuition, of feeling’ (DV2, 111). And this understanding of a diary as a representation of the world as believed in or intuited is very different from a more traditional understanding of a diary as a record of external events which took place in the world. It was only after her relationship with Rank that Nin became comfortable with this understanding of her diary. A month later, on September 11 1936, she wrote that ‘[t]he two activities, the transformed and the natural, are antithetical. If I were a real diarist, like Pepys or Amiel, I should be satisfied to record, but I am not’ (Fire, 297). Here, Nin distinguishes herself from writers she considered to be ‘real’ diarists, and despite the fact that at this post-Rank point in 1936, she had accepted this transformed and non-naturalist nature of her diary, she still believed that because her diary depicted the world transformed through her own subjectivity she was not a ‘real diarist’.

This is a conservative understanding of the diary which has also recently been articulated in Phillipe Lejeune’s book On Diary (2009). Here, Lejeune argues – in relation to an experiment with diary writing he himself is carrying out – that ‘it was a real diary’ and to clarify what makes it a ‘real diary’, he explains that it is real because ‘once the day was over, I never went back to erase, add, or change anything’. For him a diary is a true diary when it is only edited and refined as you go along, in the present of the writing which corresponds to the date on the page. For Lejeune, any diary written or edited in retrospect is not a real diary. Elsewhere, Lejuene explains that he is not interested in the published diaries of writers as he finds them to be a ‘false genre’ as they are not ‘real diaries’ within the parameters defined above. However, this generic conservatism is not shared by all those who have written on diaries. For example, Lynn Bloom argues that the ‘process of adaptation to an audience is characteristic, to a greater or lesser

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61 Lejeune, On Diary, p. 151.
extent, of all diarists who conceive of an audience external to themselves. She believes that there is no such thing as a truly private diary because a reader of some sort is always looming in the mind of the diarist. She argues that ‘many private diaries are actually public documents’.

Lejeune’s and 1930s Nin’s sense of a ‘real diary’ has roots in the work of those such as Arthur Ponsonby who, in the 1920s, produced the books *English Diaries* (1923) and *More English Diaries* (1927). These works by Ponsonby, as Elizabeth Podnieks argues, ‘tend to discriminate between “pure” and “false” diaries’. However, this critical formulation (despite Lejuene’s present day commitment to it) was challenged in the 1980s by poststructuralism. In 1988 Felicity Nussbaum argued that as poststructuralism emerged and changed our attitude towards the self, allowing it to be seen as a process rather than as something fixed, so our attitude to diaries also began to transform. This is evident in the work of those such as Podnieks, who explains that she wants to challenge the usual dichotomy between the diary as either ‘truthful’ and therefore non-artistic, or artistic and therefore not truthful and subsequently not a ‘real diary’. Elsewhere, Liz Stanley and Helen Dampier, writing in 2006, argue that the diary of Johanna Brandt-Van Warmelo, which was written over a year after the dates on which it claimed to be written and was produced retrospectively in order to provide ‘manuscript truth’ for a concurrently written book about the events in question, is ‘more real than “real reality”’. Nin herself anticipated the arguments of critics such as Nussbaum, Podnieks, Stanley and Dampier in her 1968 book *The Novel of the Future* where she expresses her own theory of ‘transformative’ diary keeping with total assurance, even arguing that as a method it should underpin the way in which

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63 Bloom, ‘“I write for myself and Strangers”’, *Inscribing the Daily*, p. 25.
future novels are written, and therefore surpassing her sense in the late 1930s that her method of transformative diary-writing was not 'real' diary-writing. In The Novel of the Future Nin explains the 'theme' in her diary-writing: 'My main theme was that one could only find reality by discarding realism' (Novel, 3). Therefore, Nin's biographer Bair 'wonders [...] why “truth” is the primary criterion for judging diaries, especially those such as Nin's, which were intended from the beginning to represent one woman's view of herself and her life'. It was during and immediately after Nin's relationship with Rank that she began to develop and articulate this understanding of diary writing more fully. During this time she embraced the method of diary-writing which would be expressed in her critical and aesthetic work of the 1960s. Nin herself wrote in 1935 that 'lying is the only way I have found to be true to myself' (Fire, 58, original italics).

Deidre Bair has criticised 'professors' who 'tend to shun the diaries as “untruthful” or “unreliable”' and perhaps it was critics like Joan Bobbit, who has spurned the 'calculated artistry' of Nin's diary, who she had in mind. Bobbit argues that this artistry stands in 'direct opposition to Nin's espoused ideal of naturalness and spontaneity'. However, the calculated artistry of Nin's diaries need not stand in opposition to their ideals of naturalness and spontaneity if they are conceived of primarily as texts rather than historical documents, or if they are conceived of as diaries in the poststructuralist vein described by Nussbaum, Podnieks, Stanley and Dampier. If we understand Nin's diaries as texts about naturalness and instinct, and as diaries with a fluid relationship with truth, rather than as a 'truthful' documentation of Nin's life then whatever the precise relationship between the content of Nin's diaries and the events of her life, her diaries remain texts which are fundamentally and profoundly committed to these ideas, which they are.

In The Novel of the Future, Nin describes the immediacy of her diaries, writing that

The diary, dealing always with the immediate present, the warm, the near, being written at white heat, developed a love of the living moment, of the emotional

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68 Bair, Anais Nin, p. 518.
Here Nin describes the diary as an instinctive text conveying anti-mental experiences observed though the senses and not the mind. Like Woolf, Nin describes her diary as a specifically anti-mental text. For this reason Nin writes, arguing pre-emptively (in her 1937 post-Rank diary) against her critic Bobbit that: ‘I am not natural outside of the diary. The diary is my form. I have no objectivity. I can only write while things are warm and happening. When I write later I become artificial. I stylise. I become unnatural’ (Fire, 374). Nin is describing her diary as a form of writing which follows her instincts and not her mind. Even though the diaries were retrospectively edited, instinct and immediacy remained their core textual concerns. Although Nin tried to convince herself and her readers that the diaries in fact embodied and made manifest these immediate instincts, in reality they are textual constructions which place these elements of selfhood at their centre. Nin's 'calculated artistry' in which she retrospectively (in 1968) describes her 1930s diaries as having been written 'at white heat' is part of her ongoing textually expressed commitment to ideas of 'naturalness and spontaneity' in which truth must constantly be re-written as time passes.

In The Novel of the Future Nin describes her diary-writing as ‘taking notes from reality and recording daily life faithfully’ (Novel, 107) and writes that her diaries are ‘spontaneous and improvised’ (Novel, 107), despite the ongoing editing and re-writing which she subjected them to. She suggests that the diary is closer to life than fiction could ever be because the diary captures the living essence due to the method in which it is written: ‘The living moment was caught. The character was caught while living, with all his ambivalences, contradictions, paradoxes’ (Novel, 145). She argues that this makes the diary better able to capture peoples’ real essences as it is not like fiction which she sees as being ‘rearranged by memory and altered by the novelist to suit his theme’ (Novel, 145). In the 30s she had connected this quality, in celebratory mode, to

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71 Hope Wolf has written about the trend towards 'immediacy' in diary-writing– focusing in particular on war diaries – and the ways in which metaphors of heat are frequently used to describe this type of writing. Her article questions whether such a drive to 'immediacy' may actually be the best or most productive means of self reflection, questioning the ethics behind this drive towards immediacy in diary and journal keeping. (Hope Wolf, 'Mediating War: Hot Diaries, Liquid Letters and Vivid Remembrances', Life Writing 9 (2012) 327-336).
mindlessness and femininity. Describing herself in relation to her male author peers Nin explained that ‘we all write about the same people, but so differently. I am always true to life, as a woman is. Henry [Miller], [Michael] Fraenkel and [Fred] Perles invent, fictionalise’ (DV2, 44). Although Nin edited and re-wrote her diaries, she always strove to avoid fictionalisation, and felt that the truth of the diaries corresponded with her own psychic reality, even if not with the external reality shared with others.

Fully aware of Nin’s elastic conception of truth, her editor Gunther Stuhlmann wrote ‘Miss Nin’s truth, as we have seen, is psychological’. 72 This statement of Stuhlmann’s (who, having edited Nin’s diaries for publication alongside their author must have been extremely familiar with both their contents and composition) is a very helpful way in which to understand Nin’s diaries. If truth in the diaries is psychological then this explains Nin’s desire to yield to her inner life and instincts at every moment of writing even if this involves what seem to be contradictions and lies: ‘Reality is like a violation to me’ (Incest, 140), she wrote in 1933. In her diary, Nin was constantly telling herself and her readers that she wanted to disregard her mind: ‘I want to yield, to yield to the impetus of my dream – like flowingness – unthinking psychic flowingness. My mind was only for the others – a guarantee for them. Let it sink’ (Incest, 261). The anti-mental attitude described here lay behind most of Nin’s actions as depicted in her diary, as well as her depiction of her diary-writing as the textual expression of ‘unthinking psychic flowingness’, even if, in fact, it was the very opposite.

This focus on inner rather than outer reality, and her emphasis on anti-mental flows, is what makes Nin’s diaries profoundly modernist. In ‘Modern Fiction’ Virginia Woolf calls for modern novelists to ‘record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon consciousness’. 73 For Woolf this is what sets the modernist novel apart from its more realist predecessors. For Nin, this is what sets the diary apart from the novel. She articulated this in The Novel of the Future where she argues that her diaries are better equipped to communicate experience and psychological reality than modernist novels by writers such as Joyce:

72 Stuhlmann, ‘Introduction’ to DV1, p. xi.
Now I can see that what I sought was a psychological reality and that this reality has a logic, a pattern, a consistency of its own which cannot be invented. Narrative, or a Joycean symphony, can be invented. Not the subtle plots created by the unconscious. They are marvels of a kind of logic never known before which cannot be imitated or substituted, for every link is essential, every detail. Later I will show how difficult this was to achieve in fiction (Novel, 156).

For Nin, 'psychological reality' was better captured in a diary than a modernist novel. And yet, in arguing that the novel of the future should become more like a diary she retains fictionality as a fundamental quality of the diary and her diary-writing.

It was Nin’s apparent 'instinctual' or anti-mental method of writing her diary which had led Otto Rank to try and cure Nin of her diary writing. This attempt was in tune with the attitudes of the period. In an article called 'The Diary on Trial', which appears in On Diary, Lejeune recounts that after having read some of the classic works on diary he finds that ‘the overall theme is either medicalising or moralising critical discourse. Overall, the personal diary is treated like a disease or a symptom’. Lejeune notes that the idea of the diary as illness became widespread during the 1880s. He writes (and he is talking about France, where Rank tried to cure Nin or her diary) that

[a]n overview of the reception of published diaries in the 1880s would show how the standard image of the diary as stemming from neurosis, gossip and pride developed during that decade with the publication of the diaries of Amiel in 1882-84 and Goncourt and Marie Bashkirtseff in 1887.

He writes that these publications resulted in ‘waves of assault [upon the diary] between the 1880s and the late 1940s’ with, for example, Marie Rauber writing an article in 1896 which he says ‘broadens the general condemnation of the personal diary as a disease’. Lejeune finds that when diaries came onto the literary scene as published and widely available texts at around the turn of the twentieth century (not coincidentally, I believe, at around the same time as the emergence of modernism as a literary movement), it upset ‘certain rules of civility

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74 Lejeune, On Diary, p. 152.
75 Ibid., p. 155.
76 Ibid., pp. 156, 152.
with its self-indulgence, immodesty and gossip, and trespassing on the territory of other genres'.

However, might there be a reason beyond Amiel, Goncourt and Bashkirtseff which explains why Rank might have tried to cure Nin of her diary-writing, one connected to aspects of selfhood which might also upset ‘certain rules of civility’? Nin herself described her diaries in terms of instinctual flows and anti-mentality, the precise qualities which Sass has described as being central to both conceptions of madness and of modernism. These are also the elements of selfhood which Hughlings Jackson placed at both the foundation of selfhood and at the core of his account of neurological disease. In a culture in which anti-mentality was pathologised, perhaps it was not so surprising that a self-proclaimed anti-mental text might be associated with neurosis and illness. Therefore, Rank’s attempt to cure Nin of her diary can be seen as another means through which the anti-mental was pathologised, and one which takes this diagnosis beyond biology, applying it equally to textual forms associated with anti-mentality.

Looking back on the early 1930s, Nin documented herself saying the following to Henry Miller on September 11 1936 (after her relationship with Rank had ended): “until now I fought my disease; I tried to cure it. You tried to cure it. Rank tried to cure it” (Fire, 299). Here we see the transformation undergone by the earlier Nin who had called Rank a wise guide for trying to make her abandon her diary-writing in favour of a ‘less neurotic’ and more objective and mental form of writing. Now, after her relationship with Rank, she was able to say that ‘I think I have found my style, however. Take the diary and write it more fully, more artistically, but keep the sincerity and directness. Diary as an indication of fever charts and developments’ (Fire, 110). By 1936 Nin had come to embrace her diary despite - or perhaps because of - its associations with 'fever charts' and disease. It was her romantic relationship with Rank which enabled this articulation through her gradual realisation that she must inhabit an 'uncerebral' world which was opposed to the realms of rationality and the mind which she believed that 'Dr Rank' inhabited. Therefore, on July 6, 1936 Nin wrote:

As soon as I separated from Rank I entered into my true feminine world of uncerebral perceptions. The mental exhaustion I used to feel with Rank, the

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77 Ibid., p. 156.
banquet of ideas, have vanished into smoke. I sank into a great serenity, a psychological moon life. I miss him, but I don’t want any more analysis (Fire, 104).

It was only after she broke with Rank that she could be truly at home in the ‘feminine world of uncerebral perceptions’, an anti-mental world. And although she did have analysis again, she never again had a male analyst, further demonstrating her shift towards the ‘uncerebral’ which she characterised as ‘feminine’. In 1976 Hélène Cixous wrote that ‘nearly the entire history of writing is confounded with the history of reason’. 78 She argues for an ‘Écriture Féminine’ which would stand in opposition to this rationality. Nin’s diaries, and The Novel of the Future, which preceded Cixous’s article by a number of years, were also an attempt to develop and explain a form of writing which transcended and disregarded this supposedly masculine tradition of the dominance of reason and the mind. In Nin’s theory of diary-writing, the diary emerges as a deeply and essentially anti-mental and anti-rational form which is simultaneously, playfully, and intriguingly highly aware of its own self construction as a text distinct from reality, thus implicitly challenging the theory it sets out to articulate.

**Beyond Psychology**

Nin did not see Rank again after 1936. After she broke with Rank she felt that she was truly able to enter her world of uncerebral perceptions, and developed a corresponding theory of diary-writing. However, Nin never came to know the Rank who had also been transformed by his relationship with her, and who himself had also attempted to also make the move into ‘uncerebral’ modes of existence. This was expressed in Beyond Psychology which was written in 1939, the year of Rank’s death, although it was not published until 1941. In this book Rank articulates an anti-mentality which surpasses that of his earlier works. This book expresses an admiration for living - seen as fundamentally distinct from writing - above all else. Therefore, the book renounces all systems of knowledge and all forms of writing. This was the only book that Rank wrote after his relationship with Nin, and was also his first book in English and although his death was unexpected and premature (he died aged 55) this was intended to be his final

work. An anonymous foreword to the book informs us that ‘the author had always intended [this book] to be his last’. 79 This turn away from writing is itself indicative of the argument made in Beyond Psychology. Yet, like Nin in her diaries, Rank complicates his valorisation of instinct and irrationality by using a psychological text in which to make his case for a move away from psychology and writing.

In Nin’s diaries, she included statements and stuck in notes from Rank in which he declares his great admiration for her because she had seemingly lived out in reality what he had only expressed in writing. This adulation of life over text, and the influence which Rank’s relationship with Nin clearly had on him in this respect, is apparent in Beyond Psychology. It is here that Rank turns fully towards instinct and life, a turn which leads him to reject all systems of psychology and even all forms of modern art. Although Rank had previously tried to cure Nin of the diary because it was not mental or objective enough, the Rank of Beyond Psychology came to renounce the forms of apparently objective modern art which in 1933 he had encouraged Nin to produce in favour of her diary.

In the preface to the book, Rank explains that the ‘beyond’ in the title refers to the irrational, or you might say, the anti-mental. Therefore, he criticises the rational basis of psychology:

My main thesis which was derived from a crisis in psychology appears quite applicable to our present general bewilderment, inasmuch as it lays bare the irrational roots of human behaviour which psychology tries to explain rationally in order to make it intelligible, that is, acceptable. When I first realised that people, though they may think and talk rationally – and even behave so – yet live irrationally, I thought that “beyond” individual psychology simply meant social or collective psychology until I discovered that this too is generally conceived of in the same rational terms. [...] In this sense the “beyond” individual psychology meant not, as I first thought, a resorting to collective ideologies as the subject of social psychology; it actually meant the irrational basis of human nature which lies beyond any psychology, individual or collective. 80

Here we are reminded of Nin who also dismissed psychoanalysis and psychology for attempting to rationalise the irrational by bottling the oceanic life. She also

80 Otto Rank, Beyond Psychology (1941) (New York: Dover, 1958), pp. 11-12. All quotations are from this edition and will be listed in the text in parentheses as Beyond with the page number.
felt that the irrational basis of humanity existed beyond all psychology and could not be encapsulated by any ideology. Rank seems to have taken Nin’s approach on board in his rejection of all rational or scientific attempts to explain what he describes as ‘the irrational roots of human behaviour’.

Rank writes that although psychoanalysis was an attempt to express and incorporate these irrational roots, it was ultimately and necessarily doomed to failure as it was a rational discourse:

> It is at this point that the whole psychoanalytic movement appears in a deeper sense as a direct attack of man’s over-rated intellectual self upon the irrational, an attempt which through man’s fear of it was diverted into a rational explanation and a mechanistic conception of it (Beyond, 276).

As Nin had said many years earlier, and Rank wrote here, the irrational basis of human nature lies beyond psychology, psychoanalytic or otherwise. It is anti-mental and therefore a so-called discourse of the mind such as psychology is inadequate to deal with it.

This leads Rank to conclude, with the modernists, that a new language is needed. He writes that ‘what we need is an irrational language with a new vocabulary, something like what modern art is trying to find for the expression of the “sub-conscious”’ (Beyond, 13). However, Rank argues that the modernist project has failed and that it, like psychoanalysis, is always already condemned to fail as it too remains a rational, textual discourse of the mind and is therefore necessarily unable to truly convey the anti-mental:

> modern art in its various “isms” has not – in spite of all protestations of its theorists – succeeded in expressing the irrational directly. In their extremely conscious effort to reproduce what they call the “unconscious” modern painters and writers have followed modern psychology in attempting the impossible, namely to rationalise the irrational (Beyond, 13).

Throughout this thesis I have focused on writers and scientists who have valorised the anti-mental, and who textually mastered and expressed it in order to place it at the centre of their account of the self. Here, Rank argues that these attempts are all necessarily failures because in attempting to express the irrational anti-mental, they in fact ended up attempting to ‘master life rationally’ (Beyond, 13).

Nin’s descriptions of her diaries portray them as texts which might transcend Rank’s criticism of textual expression because she conceived of them
not as an attempt to master life rationally or to rationalise the irrational but as
texts which express irrationality and instinct directly. However, as I have
described, Nin’s descriptions of her diary cannot be taken at face value, and in
many ways her conversion of her entire apparently instinctual life into textual
form is the ultimate attempt to ‘master life rationally’ (*Beyond*, 13). If language
itself is a distortion of the irrational or anti-mental - as Rank suggests - then his
rejection of attempts to express the anti-mental must necessarily also include
Nin’s diary. In attempting to merge life and text, Nin’s diary in fact serves to draw
attention to the rupture between them. In *Beyond Psychology* Rank writes:

> it is not sufficient to see the importance of the irrational element in human life
> and point it out in rational terms! On the contrary, it is necessary actually to live it and of this only a few individuals in every epoch seem to be capable (*Beyond*, 14).

During his relationship with Nin, Rank wrote that she was one of these few
people who managed ‘actually to live it’, and Nin herself was also constantly
expressing as much about herself as well. But Nin did not just live it, she also
wrote it. Despite Nin’s claims that the diary was an irrational text it in fact
remains a text in which she points out ‘the importance of the irrational element in
human life [...]in rational terms’

Rank concludes his book, with an anti-intellectual embrace of the
‘primitivity’ of selfhood:

> The only remedy is an acceptance of the fundamental irrationality of the human
> being and life in general, an acceptance which means not merely a recognition or
> even admittance of our basic “primitivity,” not in the sophisticated vein of our
> typical intellectuals, but a real allowance for its dynamic functioning in human
> behaviour, which would not be lifelike without it (*Beyond*, 289).

His turn away from psychology, the mind and intellect towards the ‘dynamic
functioning in human behaviour’ and irrationality shows him, like Hughlings
Jackson, Ellis and Head (although all vastly different doctors and thinkers) placing
these elements at the core of selfhood. Yet, unlike these earlier doctors, Rank -
whose PhD was about literature - came to challenge the very textual discourses of
modernism, neurology and psychology through which anti-mentality had been
brought to the fore. Like Lawrence, H.D., Woolf and Nin he embraced anti-mental
states, but unlike these writers he lost faith in language and new forms of textuality as a means through which they could be expressed.

When Rank first met Nin he tried to cure her of her diary-writing. However, through her relationship with Rank, Nin came to fully embrace and express her anti-mental form of diary-writing and remained deeply committed to this writing as a means of expressing anti-mental life processes. Rank went one step further and renounced writing altogether. *Beyond Psychology* was Rank’s defiant swansong, intended to announce his retreat from writing into the irrational, primitive, anti-mental elements of a purely lived experience. Rank died before he could embark on his project of not-writing. His attempt to move into a realm of pure life - unhampered by the text - would have perhaps been a truer embodiment of Nin’s philosophy of the anti-mental, although perhaps it too would have necessarily been doomed to failure (what is a purely lived experience after all?). Due to Nin’s ongoing commitment (or addiction) to diary-writing and textuality she would never achieve, nor would she aspire to achieve, such a state of non-textual existence. Nin’s worship of anti-mentality was forever confined to representations. Some of these representations portray a 'Dr Rank' whose mentality was in fact rejected by himself in his final work.
Conclusion: Dancing in Harlem

In January 1937 Nin wrote that that ‘[l]ife, for me, is a profound, a sacred, a mysterious, a soulful dance. But it is a dance’ (DV2, 152). Therefore it is not surprising that when Nin wanted to tempt Rank away from ideas and into life she took him dancing. I have argued that Rank’s turn towards life and away from ideas was influenced by Nin. Certainly Nin portrayed herself as the one who showed Rank how to really live, and from the outset this was connected to dancing. On August 22 1934, before Nin and Rank had actually danced together, Nin wrote about a conversation between herself and Rank in which he apparently said to her:

“I denied myself life before, or it was denied me – first by my parents, then Freud, then my wife.” His entrance into life is a beautiful spectacle. Suddenly we are talking about dancing – Salome – which he would prefer to see me do rather than analysis, because it is closer to life. […] Rank talks about dancing, dancing (Incest, 370).

But talking about dancing was not enough. Of course, it was necessary to actually live it out (and then write about it). And so, during winter 1934, Nin took Rank dancing in Harlem and wrote this scene:

At six o’clock all work ends. We go to a restaurant. We talk about the patients. Rank cannot help teaching all the time, for his interpretive mind is constantly at work. I tire of abstractions after a while, so I suggest Harlem.

Harlem. The Savoy. Music which makes the floor tremble, a vast place, with creamy drinks, dusky lights, and genuine gaiety, with the Negroes dancing like people possessed. The rhythm unleashes everyone as you step on the floor.

Rank said he could not dance. “A new world, a new world,” he murmured, astonished and bewildered. I never imagined that he could not dance, that he had led such a serious life that he could not dance. I said: “Dance with me.” At first he was stiff, he tripped, he was confused and dizzy. But at the end of the first dance he began to forget himself and dance. It gave him joy. All around us the Negroes danced wildly and gracefully. And Rank sauntered as if he were learning to walk. I danced, and he danced along with me. I would have liked to dance with the Negroes, who dance so spontaneously and elegantly, but I felt I should give Rank the pleasure of discovering freedom of physical motion when he had given me emotional freedom. Give back pleasure, music, self-forgetting for all that he gave me.

Driving home the radio in the taxi continues to jazz mood. New York seems conducted by jazz, animated by it. It is essentially a city of rhythm.

Rank could not forget Harlem. He was eager to return to it. He could hardly wait to come to the end of his hard day’s work. He said: “I am tempted
to prescribe it to my patients. Go to Harlem. But they would have to go with you” (DV2, 6).

Nin proposes dancing in Harlem as an alternative to the 'interpretive mind' and its 'abstractions'. This is because this entails 'music which makes the floor tremble', 'Negroes dancing like people possessed' and a 'rhythm' which 'unleashes everyone'. Here we are reminded of Turner's 1926 review of Les Noces in which it was the rhythmic nature of Stravinsky's ballet which affected his nerves but not his mind. The word 'unleashed' also evokes Hughlings Jackson's model of the nervous system in which the higher nervous centres (which have concomitant mental states) keep the anti-mental nerves in check in health; they are only unleashed during disease. Nin's portrayal of dancing in Harlem depicts the unleashing of the anti-mental in positive and health-giving terms. The Negroes in Harlem, 'who danced so spontaneously', are connected to the 'jazz mood' and 'rhythm' of New York; the anti-mentality of dancing is connected, through these Negroes, to modernist discourses of primitivism, and Nin's views here were very much in keeping with the vogue for primitivism in art and society during this time. Marianna Torgovnick notes that during this period, 'jazz was hailed for having captured an authentic primitive beat'. This beat seemed to tap into the primitive lower levels of the civilised self, hidden away from the mind in the depths of the nervous system and the body.

In the passage above, Rank tells Nin that dancing in Harlem with her would be a good cure for his patients, suggesting that these patients - like Rank himself- are in need of a cure for their 'interpretive minds'. In the late-nineteenth century Hughlings Jackson pathologised the anti-mental. By the 1930s, after modernists such as Lawrence and H.D. had taken on the anti-mental and incorporated it into a modernist aesthetics of self-expression in which it was celebrated, we see Rank/Nin pathologising the precise opposite: too much mind. The ultimate anti-mental experience - dancing in Harlem with Negroes - is suggested here as a cure for the dominance of the rational mind which aspects of modernist self expression had been working to undo. The modernist tradition of anti-mentality which emerged from Hughlings Jackson's

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neurology has been turned on its head; that which had been disease has become a cure.

However, the centrality given to anti-mentality in this scene of dancing in Harlem is disrupted by its very textuality. Mentality haunts all the textual depictions of the anti-mental I have considered in this thesis due to their very status as texts. In 1937 Nin wrote that when writing her diary 'I touch real flesh, real tears; I hear real words. [...] It is warm, wet, it writhes, it exhales odours like flesh itself' (*Fire*, 376). And yet, despite this, she admits that 'no creation can create the same warmth as the feeling, a soul loving, a flesh loving in immediacy' (*Fire*, 376). Despite being the closest to real flesh that Nin can achieve in textual form, the diary will never, she admits, become or adequately capture the body itself. Through its emphasis on instinct and the body Nin's diary must acknowledge that language itself is necessarily a limited means of expressing modernist anti-mentality: 'I must remember this *silence* and *nearness* which the mind has nothing to do with, a *nearness* which is deeper than understanding [...] If we talk [...] it only proves the falsity of *words*, of *thoughts*, of *expressions*' (*Fire*, 154, original italics). Here she is referring to the sexual relationship between herself and Henry Miller which is, she says, 'beyond all words' and 'can only be said with the fingers, the lips, the penis, the legs, the touch of skin, the smell of bodies, the voices when they utter only moans, sounds like the animals', the touch of hair, the divine language of the body' (*Fire*, 154). However, this anti-mental language of the body has also been put into words: 'Almost every caress I have written here' (*Fire*, 154), Nin writes, suggesting that the caresses are not beyond all words after all. Furthermore, the nearness which apparently proves the falsity of words and thoughts is also deeply intellectual as the bodily closeness between Nin and Miller is accompanied by 'listening to [Stravinsky's] *Le Sacre du printemps* [...and] *Black Spring* [Miller's book] pages on the desk' (*Fire*, 154). Just as Turner associated Stravinsky's music with a state which was anti-mental and yet highly imaginative and intellectual, Nin also uses it here in depicting a scene which has precisely these same contradictory qualities. The modernist anti-mental was always paradoxically cerebral.

In chapter one I showed how both John Hughlings Jackson and D. H. Lawrence placed the anti-mental at the centre of their accounts of selfhood,
and offered an alternative and non-Freudian model of unconsciousness. However, whilst Hughlings Jackson pathologised the anti-mental, Lawrence celebrated it. In chapter two I showed how both Havelock Ellis and H.D. placed spiritual anti-mental experiences within the body and associated them with the primitive depths of the ocean and the primitive depths of the nervous system through their use of various oceanic metaphors and ideas. In chapter three I argued that both Henry Head and Virginia Woolf believed that the state best suited to sensory self-observation was anti-mental. This meant that psychological awareness was conceived of as strangely non-mental. All of these writers portrayed states of anti-mentality and 'the anti-mental' as a mode of being which was highly imaginative and psychological despite being specifically dissociated from the mind. They all used new forms of language, and new forms of medical science, in order to express a version of selfhood in which volitional rationality and the power of thought had been dethroned.

All these writers used language to express the falsity of thought. For Descartes, language itself was the defining marker of human reason; the fact that humans have language while animals do not, he wrote, 'show[s] that the brutes have less reason than men'.

Like Descartes, Nin and Rank, despite living in an age in which thought and the brain were understood to have evolved out of the non-mental, primitive, more brutish aspects of the nervous system, also associated language itself with the mind. Therefore, their work suggests that language - being a construction of the mind - will always and necessarily be an inadequate means of representing the anti-mental. Simultaneously, the anti-mental became a concrete yet spectral presence in all apparently mental activities (including writing) and disrupts the straightforward association between reason and language made by Descartes.

In the diary entry quoted above describing dancing in Harlem, Nin suggests that dancing might be a truer expression of anti-mentality than any writing could ever be, thus suggesting that what language fails to express might be captured by the body itself. This assertion that the body can express what language and the mind cannot, simultaneously dismantles and reasserts mind-body dualism in a way which is reminiscent of Hughlings Jackson's

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neurology. This is also the effect of all the texts I have considered here, which
assert the importance of the anti-mental for the mind itself. This thesis has
demonstrated that for modernist writers, psychologists and neurologists, the
anti-mental - a state based in the nerves and not the mind - was understood as
the foundation of the mind; after the neurological developments of the 1860s,
the anti-mental became a fundamentally important aspect of the self and the
mind. And yet, although it was understood as its foundation, the anti-mental
continued to be understood as something other than the mind. And crucially, it
was also other than language, even the new forms of language developed by
modernist writers in an attempt to express it.

Although I have demonstrated that there was a turn to the anti-mental
across modernist literary life-writing, neurology and medical psychology, and
all the figures I have considered here placed the anti-mental at the core and
foundation of selfhood, their writings, being such highly mental and
thoughtfully constructed documents, are always one step away from the anti-
mental they seek to describe. The modernist anti-mental itself - a central
aspect of early-twentieth-century literary and medical-scientific self-
representations - can be considered as an attempt to master the irrational and
primitive depths of the nervous system and express them rationally, using the
mind. Just as the anti-mental made the mind terrifyingly other than itself, this
visceral anti-mental was then transformed back again, transcending itself in
the mindful and linguistic expressions to which it was submitted by
modernism.
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