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The term ‘experimental’ might be deeply contentious, but it remains a fairly easy task to identify the site of twentieth century experimentation: the polyglot cities. Indeed, many have argued that modernism is itself a set of metropolitan movements - that modernism met its double, not just in the Great War, but also in the metropolis. The city’s stranglehold on poetic production, in fact, continues up to the present moment: even today, when a fair amount of contemporary poetry is micro-published by small presses, the steady gathering of poetry and critical writing around cities can hardly be ignored. Cambridge, London, Newcastle, Brighton (recently), Manchester - to offer a partial listing - perhaps marks the contours of British ‘innovative’ poetry as it is practised in the present moment. Our histories of modernism have privileged the *city*, leading to a critical tendency to overlook the non-metropolitan archive, the sea-side museum, the arts pavilion, and the university as important institutions of modernism. So the question that comes to my mind is this: how much does the setting for our encounter with art actually contribute to how we respond to art?

*Virus of Hate: Responses to Fascism in Psychoanalysis, Surrealism, and Modernism* (produced through a partnership between the De La Warr Pavilion, the Centre for Modernist Studies and Centre for Life History and Life Writing Research at the University of Sussex) took place in January 2019 at the De La Warr Pavilion at Bexhill-on-Sea: a seaside arts pavilion that was commissioned by a socialist Earl and built by Russian and Jewish émigrés in 1935. Aligning itself to the likes of The Black Mountain College and The Bauhaus, the streamline of the Pavilion reads in upper case Galano: “Est. 1935. Modern ever since”. Interestingly, 1935 is also the year when the psychoanalytic and surrealist artists Grace Pailthorpe and Reuben Mednikoff met. It therefore feels significant, and perhaps also fitting, that the De La Warr Pavilion should provide the venue both for an exhibition of Pailthorpe and Mednikoff’s work, and for this symposium, placing a substantial body of relatively unknown artwork into an expanded conversation about psychoanalysis, affect, and fascism.

Chaired by Helen Tyson, the first panel, ‘The Origins of Hate’ did a truly commendable job of exploring the origins of hate and broadening out to restore the importance of social and political contexts in thinking about hatred. The discussions that emerged read ‘hate’ closely but expansively. I couldn’t help notice how the concept of ‘freedom’ came under unique exegetical pressure in Sally Alexander’s paper, which was further taken

up by Shaul Bar-Haim, who expanded on yet another concept that has also come to serve as the symbol for the crisis of modernity: weaning. Sally Alexander's paper on Donald Winnicott's thoughts on destructiveness and hate also entered into creative dialogue with the work of Nidesh Lawtoo, whose paper examined the role of affect in generating contagious forms of imitation that can be put to hyper-nationalist, racist, and militarist use. What seemed particularly striking about all three papers is that they surveyed 'hate' in movement: across cartographic demarcations, across time, and as blurring the boundaries between old and new movements, be it social, aesthetic, or political.

Chaired by Nicholas Royle, the second panel turned its attention to the fraught relation between creativity and 'un-creativity', poetic 'method', and the liminal states that could prove to be fertile grounds of artistic and literary exploration. Carolyn Laubender took up the conjunction between creativity and reparation in Melanie Klein's interwar and wartime psychoanalytic theory. The paper examined not just the political historicity of the term 'reparation' but also had a sustained focus on how 'reparation' principally uses a political language, one that positions 'justice' as necessary and as a term that is perhaps best thought through the emergent language of human rights. But 'reparation' is also an aesthetic term, one that foregrounds how categories of the 'aesthetic' and the 'political' inter-illuminate and interpenetrate each other's discursive fabrics. The engagement with capitalist modernity continued in Helen Tyson's paper, which examined the status of influence, custom, and tradition in the work of British life-writer, artist and (later) psychoanalyst, Marion Milner. The discussion began with Milner's 1934 book, *A Life of One's Own*, a psychological experiment in which Milner seeks to understand what she really 'wants': connotations of the word 'want' had seemingly changed for Milner in 1937, as the paper suggested. The paper read the term 'want' in the context of rising fascism across Europe, highlighting Milner's urgency in understanding 'desire', her frustration with political inaction, and her insistence on self-analysis as a crucial form of personal resistance. Alicia Kent's paper also looked at the advent of fascism across Europe and how it marked the turning point for surrealism. The paper examined British and Mexican surrealist writer Leonora Carrington's work *Down Below* as an experiment in thinking about one particular liminal state that exists between sanity and madness, and the liminal state we occupy between structures of meaning. Keeping with the tone of Tyson's paper, the paper discussed the telescoping of the individual into the collective, a thematic that had earned the attention of both Carrington and Lacan. Keston Sutherland's highly engaging paper on 'free speech/poetic disinhibition' focused on the hateful discourse of today's far right and the figure of the 'snowflake' as a threat to free speech. The paper delineated how hatred is not merely justified in the name of 'free speech', but is also treated as the precondition of any speech that would truly be 'free'. 'Reflecting on the poetic stakes of hate speech,

Sutherland made cogent and necessary associations between the poetic and the political. As the panel drew to a close, Sutherland challenged the facile mis-uses of the concept of 'freedom' as deployed by the far right of today.'

The afternoon panel of 'readings', focusing on specific examples of forms of fascism and anti-fascism, held up a concept that 'freedom' is tethered with: complicity. Chaired by Phoebe Cripps, the various readings explored fascism as something we are all potentially complicit in. Jeanette Baxter read Hugh Sykes Davies' *Petron* (1935) as an anti-fascist novel, Freya Marshall Payne read Woolf's *The Waves* (1931), while Rachel Franklin presented the fascism of Salvador Dali in *Hidden Faces* (1944). Claudia Treacher's paper theorised from the personal, as she talked about her great uncle Don Treacher's 'Before the End'. Alistair Davies's paper on W.H. Auden showed how a sedimentation of thinking about fascism emerges in Auden's 'September 1st 1939'. The panel collectively produced an urgent questioning of the curious other-ing of Fascism: a thematic which was also picked up by Jacqueline Rose in her closing remarks about the origins of negative affect. In her response, Rose aptly summarised the conference's response to hate: that which ranged from surrender to hatred to a slow smothering of hatred.

The afternoon featured a tour of the exhibition, 'A Tale of Mother's Bones: Grace Pailthorpe, Reuben Mednikoff and the Birth of Psychorealism'. Led and facilitated by the curator, Hope Wolf, the exhibition tour expanded on the theme of the symposium by introducing the lesser-known works of Mednikoff and Pailthorpe. 'Virus of Hate' was a section of the exhibition that described the artists' thinking about the origins of hatred and the causes of Fascism. Their interpretations of their own works resonated with many of the themes discussed throughout the day: weaning, affect, fascism, fragmentation, desire, and lack. What seemed particularly interesting was that while some of the artwork on display seemed to rigorously interpret fascism, there were others that seemed to resist interpretation: the telos, for such artwork, was not interpretation, but the act of foregrounding kinesis, energy, and movement. The day concluded with audience-members being invited to offer their own responses to works by Pailthorpe and Mednikoff, opening this little-studied body of work out to alternative and multiple interpretations.

Organised by Dr. Helen Tyson and Dr. Hope Wolf, co-Directors of the Centre for Modernist Studies at the University of Sussex, the conference was an attempt to restore the importance of collectively thinking about the political antagonisms of the period, without sacrificing sensitivity to the aesthetic: an objective it met entirely.