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"The Present is Art": Vorticist and Futurist Temporalities

Rosalind Mckeever

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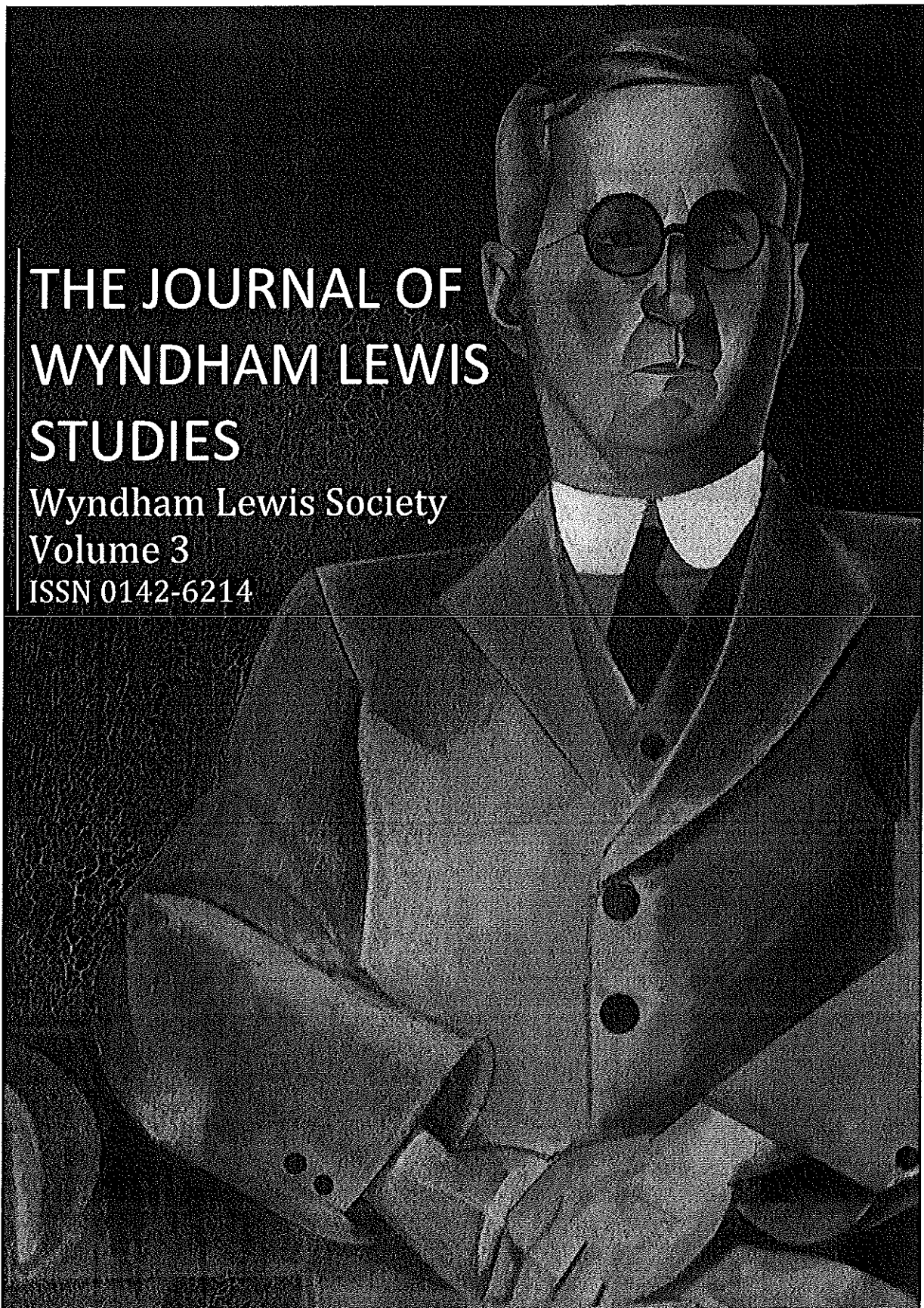
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‘The Present is Art’: Vorticist and Futurist Temporalities

Rosalind McKeever

‘The inevitable paradox has occurred. Futurism is a thing of the past. Vorticism has come.’¹ This is how *The New York Times* introduced Vorticism to its readers; the statement certainly does proud the Vorticist aim of being the new avant-garde to supersede Futurism. When the Vorticist manifestoes published in the first volume of *BLAST* in 1914 sought to secure the independence of their London-based avant-garde from the Milanese Futurists, they did so by opposing Vorticist and Futurist temporalities. While the Vorticists mocked the Futurists’ hostility to the past and their love of the future, the Vorticists shared with the Futurists a position as an avant-garde movement, claiming to create an art of their own time which appropriated a so-called ‘primitive’ aesthetic. Is it possible that Vorticism and Futurism shared temporal affinities while having entirely contrary attitudes to the past, present, and future? The development of both movements and their inter-relationships have been well documented. However, in this article I take a closer look at the temporal rift between Vorticism and Futurism, charting their convergences and divergences on the question of time, to attain a more nuanced understanding of their respective attitudes to temporality.

Vorticism may appear to be more concerned with space than with time, but by negating time, and by stressing the importance of living in the present, the movement has a particularly interesting relationship with time. Futurism is thought to have a clear sense of temporality, repudiating the past and idolizing the future. However, the movement’s temporal ambivalences are clearly evident upon closer inspection of its rhetoric.² In order to compare Vorticist and Futurist temporalities I will schematize them into five aspects: their relationship with time in general; their specific relationships with the past, the present, and the future; and their relationships with the ‘primitive’, which I conceive here as an atemporal mode. In addition to considering statements about time

made by the Vorticists and by the Futurists, it is necessary to outline the temporalities of the artistic and wider cultures from which they emerged. No less important is the question of avant-garde temporality itself and its ideas of the advanced and the belated. By exploring each movement's specific temporal practices and theories, and by then tracing their interconnections with each other, it is possible to contribute to avant-garde studies' on-going project of identifying the heterogeneity of avant-gardism and its international links.

In order to tackle the broad theme of time, in this article I restrict my attention to the published rhetoric of these movements in their formative years. By focusing on the rhetoric, rather than on the artworks and poetry, I am consciously avoiding the vexed issue of the varying degrees of success with which Vorticist and Futurist ideas were poetically and aesthetically realized. However, addressing the rhetoric of these movements does not prevent complexities, as neither Vorticism nor Futurism can be considered as homogeneous, or as synonymous with the ideas of their respective leaders, Wyndham Lewis and F. T. Marinetti. Vorticism emphasized individualism and did not demand that its adherents give up their own artistic ideas to subscribe to the group. Futurism spread across, as well as beyond, the Italian peninsula after its launch, and developed a multiplicity of artistic styles and interpretations of its manifestoes. On the other hand, Lewis's much-refuted 1956 statement that 'Vorticism, in fact, was what I, personally, did, and said, at a certain period' (*WLA* [451]) holds some truth. The fact that Futurism is considered to have continued until Marinetti's death in 1944 encourages the idea that the movement was synonymous with its impresario.³ In their manifestoes both Lewis and Marinetti wrote in the first person plural, but this imagined 'we' does not necessarily indicate the consensus of their colleagues.

In order not to present Lewis's temporality in the place of Vorticism's, or Marinetti's in the place of Futurism's, this article will also consider temporal ideas proffered by their associates, namely the Vorticist theorist and poet Ezra Pound; the Futurist painter, sculptor and aesthetic theorist Umberto Boccioni; and the Futurist painter who gained the most popularity in England, Gino Severini. By making clear which of these protagonists made the temporal statements analysed in this article, the multi-faceted nature of Vorticism and Futurism, and their respective temporalities, will become evident.

Futurism's 'formative years' were 1909 and 1910. This period includes Marinetti's 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism' (which was published on the front page of *Le Figaro* on the 20th of February 1909), his 'Futurist Speech to the English' (declaimed at the Lyceum Theatre on the 2nd of April 1910), and the artists' 'Manifesto of Futurist Painters' and 'Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto' (published as leaflets in February and April 1910).⁴ As Luca Sornigli has noted, excerpts from Marinetti's 'Founding and Manifesto' and 'Against Passéisme Venice' were coincidentally published in the same August 1910 issue of *The Tramp* as Lewis's second published story 'A Breton Innkeeper', and so Lewis would have had an awareness of the movement from this point onwards.⁵ With respect to Vorticism, my focus is on the first issue of *BLAST* in 1914. This issue introduced Vorticism, mainly through Lewis's writings, defining the movement in opposition to other avant-gardes, in particular Futurism. The 1915 'War Number' of *BLAST* is less instructive for my purposes as it was more concerned with sustaining modernism and avant-gardism at large by opposing them to German *passatismo*.⁶ I will also be considering Pound's writings on the nature of Vorticism in the periodical press in 1914, as these are relevant to the issue at hand. However, the Vorticists also read Futurist manifestoes and heard several of Marinetti's declamations made after 1910, against which they reacted, and so this article will also analyse the manifesto Marinetti co-wrote with C. R. W. Nevinson in 1914, 'Vital English Art', as well as the artists' catalogue statements from the 1912 Sackville Gallery exhibition and Severini's 1913 solo show at the Marlborough Gallery. Difficulties arise in this comparative analysis between the British and Italian avant-gardes as Marinetti (who it is worth noting is always considered Italian, even though he was born in Egypt and educated in France) referred only to England and not to Britain in his statements, and the American Ezra Pound represented the British avant-garde. This difficulty will be addressed, if not necessarily overcome, by focusing on London and Milan and their relationship to the wider British/Anglophone and Italian contexts.

Prior to commencing this discussion, it is important to note that both Lewis and Marinetti considered contradiction a central part of their ideologies; this could also be seen as a side effect of the heterogeneity of these movements. Lewis claimed: 'We fight first on one side, then on the other, but always for the SAME cause, which is neither side or both sides and ours' (*B1* 30); and Marinetti, in his 'Futurist Speech to the

English', said that 'to contradict oneself is to live.'⁷ As will be seen in the course of this article, both Vorticism and Futurism were internally contradictory. Their contradictions and ambivalences, as well as being programmatic for both movements, are particularly useful when trying to unpack their temporalities. Both Lewis and Marinetti made apparently contradictory statements about time. Through a close reading of these statements it is possible to move closer to a comprehension of how Lewis and Marinetti, as well as Vorticism and Futurism, related to time, and how their respective temporalities relate to each other. Due to inconsistencies within the movements' temporalities this article does not seek to offer a cohesive conclusion, but a survey of the interrelated issues arising from their temporal statements.

New Time and Bergson

From the names of the two movements under consideration, it is clear that one was far more concerned with time than the other. By naming his movement 'Futurism', rather than one of the other considered options (such as Dynamism or Electricism), Marinetti made a distinctly temporal statement, and gave his movement a clear enemy: *passatismo*. The term 'Vorticism', on the other hand, was coined by Pound and was adopted for *BLAST* by Lewis not long after the soon-to-be Vorticists (briefly the 'anti-Futurists') distanced themselves from Nevinson and Marinetti. 'Vorticism' was chosen as a name for the movement for its combination of dynamism and stillness – as such it is more concerned with space than with time.

The relationship of space and time was under strain at the turn of the twentieth century in a number of fields, and changing attitudes to temporality were related to the very notion of modernity and the identity of modernism. A brief summary of the key themes in the changing understanding of time is a useful starting point for this article's consideration of Vorticist and Futurist temporalities: both movements contributed to, as well as drew on, a changing relationship with time. As Peter Osborne has shown, both the late eighteenth-century German coinage of *Neuzeit*, new time, and Charles Baudelaire's mid-nineteenth-century coinage of *modernité*, relied on the modern having a distinct temporality, in which its distinctness from the past is experienced.⁸

Vorticist and Futurist Temporalities

In 1884 the introduction of world time zones standardized the relationship between space and time; London, specifically Greenwich, was fundamental to this innovation. An increasingly regimented approach to time was pervasive; factory work demanded that employees clocked in and out, and Taylorist processes eventually came to control even the movements of workers in an attempt to ensure maximum efficiency. Speed became an essential criterion; it was accelerated by developments in transport and telecommunications, and became increasingly measurable due to the standardized space-time relationship. These developments led to simultaneity becoming an important feature in temporal perception, as wireless telegraphy allowed the news to be broadcast to different countries simultaneously, and the telephone allowed people in different time zones to interact.⁹

Physics also played a crucial role in the changing perceptions of simultaneity and time in general. As Michael H. Whitworth has noted, Camille Flammarion's 1872 thought experiment, which demonstrated that an observer from a suitably distant planet would be able to see the battle of Waterloo happening 'now', was hugely influential on other scientists and popular writers.¹⁰ Standardized time and simultaneity were shaken in 1905 by Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity, which demonstrated that there was no absolute simultaneity. Moreover, Einstein exploded Newton's absolute physics by demonstrating that time and space were not absolute but relative, positing that a clock moving at speed would tick more slowly than a static clock. Three years later Hermann Minkowski claimed that space and time could no longer be considered separately.¹¹ Einstein's theorem was taken on board more quickly in the UK than in Italy, with scientists taking an interest within five years of publication, and the wider public within ten; in Italy it took much longer, with Minkowski's research being more prominently referenced in these years.

The interest in time was not restricted to the fields of science and technology. In metaphysical philosophy J. M. E. McTaggart and, as I will come to address in more detail, Henri Bergson were also questioning the nature of time and the illusory nature of our perceptions of it. Scientific and philosophic ideas were not restricted within their respective milieux; through populist magazines a wealth of new ideas were available to, and arguably appropriated by, culture and the arts. These heterogeneous and changing temporalities are evident in literature from H. G. Wells to Marcel Proust, James Joyce to Virginia Woolf.¹²

Furthermore, as I will come to discuss, these new temporalities were essential to how modernists and avant-gardists conceived their identities.

The connection between the physics and philosophy of this period can be seen through the microcosm of one of Futurism's founding temporal statements, and Lewis's reaction to it: in the 1909 'Founding and Manifesto of Futurism' Marinetti stated that 'Time and Space died yesterday', which I argue can be related to Minkowski's claim cited above.¹³ According to Michael Durman and Alan Munton, Lewis objected to Marinetti's assertion because he saw it as 'a visual metaphor of Bergsonist flux.'¹⁴

For the avant-gardists in London and Milan, Henri Bergson was a central figure. However, Bergson also marks a major difference of opinion between the Vorticists and the Futurists, as he was highly praised by the former and 'blasted' by the latter (see *B1* 21). Bergson's pre-war writings, beginning with his doctoral thesis *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (1889) and continuing through *Matière et Mémoire* (1896), *Le Rire* (1900), *Introduction à la métaphysique* (1903), and *L'Évolution Créatrice* (1907), opposed rationalism to vitalism, and divided perceived experience from science, thus prioritizing intuition over intellect. Bergson's *oeuvre* has been adopted by such a wide range of artists that it has become clear that they often used his thought to support their own principles, but a brief summary of his ideas on time and the Vorticists' and Futurists' relationship with him is instructive for this article's argument.

Bergson applied his preference for the instinctual to the topic of time, demanding that time should not be thought of in terms of space, as this subjugates its temporal qualities. He opposed *durée* (phenomenological time) to the Newtonian, mechanized, spatialized, and homogenized time discussed above. For Bergson time was not about the ticking clock, but about the human experience of time; in fact, the idea of flux was preferred to division of any kind.

It is widely acknowledged that the Futurists' aesthetic was based on Bergsonian principles. However, this was not case amongst all of the Futurists all of the time. It should be noted that Giacomo Balla's vision of movement was quite different to Boccioni's, less Bergsonian flux, and more cinematographic in its arcs of repeated limbs. Moreover, as Paul Edwards has claimed, 'Futurism is Bergsonism stood on its head', since the machines the Futurists idolized were more associated with the

Newtonian understanding of time that Bergson sought to overcome.¹⁵ However, for Boccioni, Severini, and Marinetti, Bergson was of central importance. In paintings by Boccioni and Severini, a Bergsonian, dynamic, flux-based perception is clearly apparent as figures merge with their environments, objects appear out of place, and movements are synchronic to the point of abstraction. Their work often depicted periods of time in 'simultaneous visions', to use a title of a Boccioni painting. Notes from an Italian anthology of Bergson's writings can be found in Boccioni's notebooks, and, as Brian Petrie has claimed, 'Bergson's philosophy occupies a central, not a peripheral place in Boccioni's thinking about art.'¹⁶ According to Mark Antliff, Severini admitted that his *Memories of a Journey* (1910-11) was painted in response to reading Bergson's *Introduction to Metaphysics*.¹⁷ The Bergsonian temporality prevalent, if not exclusive, amongst the Futurist artists is clearly evident in the statement 'the picture must be the synthesis of *what one remembers* and of *what one sees*.'¹⁸ This echoes Bergson's claim that 'practically we perceive only the past' since every perceptual act is accompanied by a whole history of prior perceptions and memories; for Bergson, 'we mix up with that which is given to our perception thousands of details of our past.'¹⁹ This is of course problematic for the Futurist repudiation of the past and love of the future (a point to which I will return), as this Bergsonian simultaneity would make the necessary division of past, present, and future impossible – a central contradiction of the Futurist temporality.

'The picture must be the sythesis' was included in 'The Exhibitors to the Public' in the catalogue for the Futurists' 1912 Sackville Gallery exhibition in London; as such it could well have been known to the Vorticists and identified as Bergsonian. Even though Lewis, unlike any of the Futurists, had heard Bergson lecture at the Collège de France, Vorticism in general was critical of the French philosopher's ideas, as indicated by the fact that he was blasted in *BLAST* (see B1 21).²⁰ When bemoaning Bergson's 'Doctrine of Time' as 'the creative source of the time-philosophy' (*TWM* 158) in 1927, Lewis called Marinetti a '*pur-sang bergsonian*' (*TWM* 201). Notably Lewis tended to elide Einstein and Bergson in his dismissal of his contemporaries' obsessions with time, despite the distinctness of their approaches.²¹ Edwards has argued that 'Lewis's work of 1912 in a sense illustrates Bergson's idea about energy, matter and creation,' but when Lewis came to define Vorticism two years later he not only blasted Bergson, but positioned the movement's

temporality to be at odds with Bergsonian Futurism.²² In 'Long Live the Vortex' Lewis claims that 'BLAST' is created for this timeless, fundamental Artist that exists in everybody' (B1 7). Lewis also resisted Bergson's prioritization of time over space; Andrew Wilson's claim that Lewis's Vorticist art 'did not exist in time but was held stable in space' is based on Lewis's aversion to the Bergsonian and Futurist interest in time.²³

Bergson's ideas were ubiquitous in Europe in the mid-1910s. T. E. Hulme had initially been an admirer and a translator of the French philosopher's work. Poet, art critic, and amateur philosopher, Hulme played an important role in English modernism before his death in the First World War, though his involvement with Vorticism was complex, largely due to his antagonistic relationship with Lewis. Hulme had been one of the 'anti-futurists' who laid siege to Marinetti's and Nevinson's talk at the Doré Galleries on the 12th of June 1914. However, by the 20th of June of the same year, he was not listed as one of the signatories of *BLAST*. Robert Ferguson has surmised from this that the infamous Frith Street incident, when Lewis violently bounded into Hulme's studio, only to end up hung from the Soho Square railings by his trouser turn-ups, must have occurred between these dates.²⁴ Lewis was most likely threatened by Hulme artistically, due to the critic-philosopher's interest in the work of Jacob Epstein (leading to Lewis's mantra 'Epstein is Hulme, Hulme is Epstein'); financially, due to Hulme's relationship with Kate Lechmere, the Rebel Art Centre's main supporter; and emotionally, Lechmere's relationship with Hulme being the cause of the aforementioned altercation.²⁵

However, despite this fraught relationship, in *Blasting and Bombardiering* Lewis went on to claim that 'All the best things Hulme said about the theory of art were said about my art. [...] We happened, that is all, to be made for each other, as critic and "creator"' (BB 100). The chapter on Hulme was not wholly complimentary; Lewis stresses that Hulme was a critic rather than a thinker, and that his admiration for Epstein is described by Lewis as 'doglike devotion' (BB 101). Lewis also highlighted Hulme's debt to Bergson (BB 99), who undoubtedly played a major role in Hulme's formative years. Between 1909 and 1912 Hulme wrote extensively on Bergson for *The New Age*, and in 1912 translated *Introduction to Metaphysics* into English. However, from this point on his interest shifted towards the idea of Original Sin, the fallacy of the idea of progress, and another figure relevant to this article, Wilhelm Worri-

ger.²⁶ While Boccioni found support for his ephemeral style of movement in Bergson's ideas about the flux, Hulme used Worrringer's endorsement of flatness and stylization – discussed in his book *Abstraktion und Einfühlung: ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie* (*Abstraction and Empathy: Essays in the Psychology of Style*) (1908) – to defend Epstein and to oppose Bergsonian vitalism. I will return to the impact Hulme's interest in Worrringer had on the primitivism of Vorticism later in this article.

Avant-Gardism and *Antipassatismo*

Futurist (with a capital F) temporality is infamous for its opposition to the past and its love of the future, but it has far more to say about the former than the latter. Both Marinetti's first manifesto and the 'Manifesto of Futurist Painters' failed to give much information on what the future should be like. Instead they attacked the past, or the attitude of *passatismo* – that is, their contemporaries' imitation of the art of the past as evident in the popularity of neoclassicism. Marinetti supplemented his opening manifesto with a large number of further manifestoes, and the Futurist painters swiftly followed up their initial statement with the 'Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto', which explicated the techniques the artists would use in order to differentiate themselves from their *passatista* contemporaries.

In Marinetti's 'Founding and Manifesto', Futurism, when first announced, is established in order to 'free this land [Italy] from its smelly gangrene of professors, archaeologists, *ciceroni* and antiquarians.'²⁷ Marinetti asked: 'Do you, then, wish to waste all your best powers in this eternal and futile worship of the past, from which you emerge fatally exhausted, shrunk, beaten down?'²⁸ In the same vein, the Futurist painters declared: 'We will fight with all our might the fanatical, senseless and snobbish religion of the past, a religion encouraged by the vicious existence of museums.'²⁹ The opening bullet point of their manifesto began: '1. Destroy the cult of the past.'³⁰ The Futurists are known above all for their violent iconoclasm, their threats to burn down museums and libraries.³¹ As stated above, little was said in these early manifestoes about the future, however. In fact, in Marinetti's first manifesto he demanded that in ten years' time the Futurists be thrown 'in the wastebasket like useless manuscripts'.³² The future did not belong to them, but to their successors. It is this temporality – a violent

iconoclasm directed at the past coupled with a self-obsolescing approach to the future – that has often led Futurism to be considered the paradigm of avant-gardism.

Before turning to Vorticism's relationship with the past and the future, it is worthwhile briefly questioning the temporality of avant-gardism in order better to understand Futurism's relationship with it.³³ For Nicos Hadjinicolaou, 'the major problem posed by the notion of avant-garde is the relationship it implies to *time*.'³⁴ The difficulty lies in the fact that avant-gardism requires both an evolutionary and a revolutionary approach to history. Time must be linear, and history deterministic, in order for those behind the avant-gardists to be able to follow them. However, the very revolution and prioritization of novelty with which the avant-gardist gains a front-line position is immediately threatened by other newer avant-gardists. This central paradox of avant-gardism causes a problematic relationship with the future, which often leads to an obsession with the destruction of the past.³⁵ Rather than deal with a future in which they become obsolete, 'hypnotized by his enemy [the past] – of whom he makes an infinitely cunning and terrifying monster – the avant-gardist often ends up forgetting about the future.'³⁶

Renato Poggioli, in his *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1968), equates futurism (with a small f) with *antipassatismo*, or 'down-with-the-past', which he considers common to all avant-gardes.³⁷ Futurism's (with a capital F) rhetoric against the past tends to be more concerned with the presence of the past in the present than with the past that has passed away (the Futurists tend to attack historians rather than great Italians of the past); this *antipassatismo* is better read as *anti-passatismo*, than *anti-passato-ismo*.

Vorticism was also an avant-garde movement, of course. In September 1914 Lewis demonstrated his avant-gardist repudiation of the presence of the past in the present, saying: 'The past is a murderous drug whose use should be forbidden.'³⁸ On the pages of *BLAST* Lewis admitted that the Vorticists were futurists (with a small 'f', although Lewis did not use the calligraphic differentiation I use here) since, like Poggioli, he identified this as the general characteristic of being interested in the 'renovation of art' and 'against the domination of the Past' (B1 143). The suggestion that Vorticists were in some sense futurists can be seen more as a general declaration than as an association with Marinetti's movement. Lewis's other statements about Italian

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Futurism in *BLAST* show quite clearly that he distinguished it from futurism.

Lewis's first tactic was to relegate Futurism to history, talking about it in the past tense in 'The Melodrama of Modernity' on the grounds that 'to-day there are practically no Futurists, or at least, Automobilists, left' (*B1* 143). (I will return to the Futurist/Automobilist distinction below.) Elsewhere in *BLAST*, however, Lewis referred to Futurism in the present tense, that is to say, as an ongoing movement that needed to be opposed. Marinetti 'snarls and bawls about the Past and Future with all his Italian practical directness' (*B1* 143), Lewis averred, and in 'Our Vortex' he claimed:

Our vortex is not afraid of the Past: it has forgotten it's [*sic*] existence.

Our vortex regards the Future as sentimental as the Past.

The Future is distant, like the Past, and therefore sentimental.

The mere element "Past" must be retained to sponge up and absorb our melancholy.

[...]

The Present can be intensely sentimental – especially if you exclude the mere element "Past." (*B1* 147)

Later in the same manifesto Lewis stated: 'We wish the Past and Future with us, the Past to mop up our melancholy, the Future to absorb our troublesome optimism' (*B1* 147). By condemning the past and the future on the same grounds, accusing them both of sentimentality, Vorticism sought to invalidate the Futurist temporality. And since Lewis claimed that the Vorticists did not feel threatened by the past, they didn't need Futurism's iconoclastic attitude. In fact, in 'To Suffragettes' the Vorticists opposed the slashing of Velázquez's *Rokeby Venus* (c. 1647-51) in the National Gallery, thus demonstrating their respect for the great works of art of any age (*B1* 152). This aspect of Lewis's Vorticist temporality is echoed in Pound's claim that '[t]he vorticist has not this curious tic for destroying past glories.'³⁹

Pound's writing on Vorticism demonstrates more interest in tradition than we find in Lewis's manifestoes. The American expatriate who coined the pithiest three-word exegesis of avant-gardism – 'make it new' – demonstrated some *antipassatista* feeling when he wrote: 'we will sweep

out the past century as surely as Attila swept across Europe. We can therefore be content to live in our own corner, and to await to be pleased by the deaths of survivors of an age which we detest.⁴⁰ However, a few lines later, Pound (who repeatedly mentions his favourite artists, from Dürer to Whistler, in his writings) stresses that the Vorticists respect those great artists who 'expressed the life of their times in the past'.⁴¹ Unlike the Futurists: 'We do not desire to cut ourselves off from the past. We do not desire to cut ourselves off from great art of any period, we only demand a recognition of contemporary great art, which cannot possibly be just like the great art of any other period.'⁴² Such sentiments don't necessarily belong to Vorticism alone, however. Severini, for example, wrote in his catalogue essay for the Marlborough Gallery exhibition in 1913: 'We are unfairly accused of severing all connection with tradition. The force with which we rid ourselves of the yoke of the Past and our hatred of the Past do not prevent our recognizing brethren in every great epoch through which Art has passed. Every expression of Art which possesses true depth bears a natural connection with tradition.'⁴³ These statements, in turn, may be aligned with T. S. Eliot's 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (1919), in which he claimed that the poet with a proper historical sense creates simultaneously with all his literary forebears. This idea suggests that artistic creation happens outside time, a point to which I will return. Eliot was opposed to the imitation of past models, but insisted that awareness of prior traditions is necessary for the creation of genuine art.⁴⁴

The Present and Presentism

The present was a primary concern in Lewis's Vorticism: 'The new vortex plunges to the heart of the Present' (*B1* 147). Vorticist abstraction, however, sought to engage critically with the present, something that the Italian Futurists (according to Lewis) could not achieve. The first item in the seventh part of Lewis's manifesto suggests: '1. Once this consciousness towards the new possibilities of expression in the present life has come, however, it will be more the legitimate property of Englishmen than of any other people in Europe' (*B1* 41). In 'Long Live the Vortex' Lewis stressed that Vorticism's interest in the present was opposed to any concern with the past or future: 'We stand for the

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Reality of the Present – not for the sentimental Future, or the sacripant Past' (B1 [7]). But elsewhere Lewis's statements about the present were ambiguous, and seemed at once to ally Vorticism with it and to deny it:

With our Vortex the Present is the only active thing.

Life is the Past and the Future.

The Present is Art.

[...]

There is no Present – there is Past and Future, and there is Art.

(B1 147)

Wilson argues that by means of this statement Lewis takes Vorticist art out of time: he stresses that the past and the future are life, whereas Art is non-life.⁴⁵ The present without the past or future is atemporal, or at least synchronic and simultaneous. Lewis aligns art with the present, and opposes this pairing to the past and future. I will return to Vorticism as an atemporal mode when considering primitivism.

Pound showed his allegiance to the present in a statement which allows for his interest in the past. It sounds almost Bergsonian in its inclusion of the useful past in the present:

All experience rushes into this vortex. All the energized past, all the past that is living and worthy to live. All MOMENTUM, which is the past bearing upon us, RACE, RACE-MEMORY, instinct charging the PLACID,

NON-ENERGIZED FUTURE.

The DESIGN of the future in the grip of the human vortex. All the past that is vital, all the past that is capable of living into the future, is pregnant in the vortex, NOW. (B1 153)

I would argue that the presentism demonstrated by the Vorticists is perhaps the more correct description of the rhetoric of the Futurists. This idea has been put forward by François Hartog in *Régimes d'Historicité: Présentisme et Expériences du Temps* (2003). Hartog contends that Marinetti's 'Founding and Manifesto' demonstrates both futurist and presentist ideas.⁴⁶ For Hartog, 'futurist' means the domination of the point of view of the future; this is the order of time in the

imperative, in which history is written in the name of the future. At first glance, this emphasis seems to be what Marinetti presents, but a closer inspection of Marinetti's ideas suggests that he is more concerned with machines of the present: the motor car, the train, the bicycle, the wireless, and the factory. The notion that Futurism is presentist rather than futurist is identified in *BLAST*. Lewis complained that the Futurists in fact depicted the present rather than the future: the night cafés of Paris which Severini painted would no longer exist in the time to come – 'No cocottes for Ginos of the Future!' (*B1* 144). The 'fanciful but rather conventional' Futurists are deemed too illustrative and too naturalist to 'produce profounder visions with this faith of novelty' (*B1* 144). Hartog suggests that Marinetti's present has been futurized when, after claiming that time and space are dead, Marinetti remarks: 'We already live in the absolute, since we have created eternal, omnipresent speed.'⁴⁷ The obsession with speed ensures that Marinetti's account of Futurism isn't purely presentist, since he wishes to accelerate towards the future.

To claim that both Futurism and Vorticism are in a certain sense presentist is to agree with an idea that both put forward; namely, that art, as the Vorticist manifesto stated, 'must be organic with its Time' (*B1* 34). The Futurist artists also demonstrated their faith in this idea when they claimed: 'What was truth for the painters of yesterday is but a falsehood today.'⁴⁸ This is the primary justification for the Futurist aversion to imitation of past artists, as practised by the academy. The artist is to depict a contemporary reality, hence the emphasis on the modern city and on modes of rendering it that evoke how it is perceived from the perspective of its fast-paced modes of transport. Pound, describing Futurism as 'an accelerated kind of impressionism' (*B1* 154), made it clear that the Vorticists were above all critical of the mimetic quality of Futurist art, which they felt was outdated.⁴⁹

Belatedness and Avant-Gardism

Luca Somigli has noted that the negative reception of Futurism in London, a reception which focused on the movement's supposed lack of novelty, was due to the similarities between the language used to describe the paintings on display at the Sackville Gallery in the spring of 1912 and those seen by the public at Fry's 'Manet and the Post-

Impressionists' exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in the winter of 1910.⁵⁰ However, in *BLAST* Lewis focused on Marinetti's obsession with motorcars as symbolic of Futurism's belatedness:

AUTOMOBILISM (Marinetteism) [*sic*] bores us. We don't want to go about making a hullo-bulloo about motor cars, anymore than about knives and forks, elephants or gas-pipes.

Elephants are VERY BIG. Motor cars go quickly.

Wilde gushed twenty years ago about the beauty of machinery. Gissing, in his romantic delight with modern lodging houses was futurist in this sense.

The futurist is a sensational and sentimental mixture of the aesthete of 1890 and the realist of 1870. (B1 [8])

Lewis in these lines closes in on a temporal issue, namely that the Futurist obsession with machinery is, from his perspective, a form of belatedness. In *Blasting and Bombardiering* he recounts a conversation with Marinetti, which, if accurate, is the only recorded incident of Marinetti responding directly to Vorticism. Lewis supposedly said: 'you Wops insist too much on the Machine. You're always on about these driving-belts, you are always exploding about internal combustion. We've had machines here in England for a donkey's years. They're no novelty to us' (BB 37-38). Marinetti's response was that Lewis, or perhaps the English in general, had not yet used the machines to go fast enough; Lewis's riposte was that something moving too fast to all intents and purposes ceases to exist: 'If it goes too quickly, it is not there' (BB 34). Marinetti was unconvinced. Again in *BLAST*, Lewis implies that Marinetti's obsession with the machine makes the Futurist less modern: 'The Latins are at present, for instance, in their "discovery" of sport, their Futuristic gush over machines, aeroplanes, etc., the most romantic and sentimental "moderns" to be found' (B1 41). Lewis is accusing Marinetti of *passatismo*.

Marinetti had, however, already made the same accusation, suggesting that the English were no less guilty of their own *passatismo*. In 'Vital English Art' he attacked 'the worship of tradition and the conservatism of Academies' and 'the sham revolutionaries of the New English Art Club, who, having destroyed the prestige of the Royal Academy, now show themselves grossly hostile to the later movements

of the advance guard.⁵¹ In this manifesto, in his 'Futurist speech to the English', and in the interviews he conducted with the English press, Marinetti showed himself to be greatly enamoured of London and of England as the world's industrial and imperial powerhouse, but he continued to insult English *passatismo*. It should be remembered that 'Vital English Art' was written before the launch of Vorticism; Marinetti was not attacking Vorticism in the way that Lewis later attacked Futurism. But given that Marinetti was familiar with the Rebel Art Centre artists when he and Nevinson wrote it, it would seem that he thought Lewis and other London-based artists were insufficiently bold.

As Vorticism and Futurism both claimed to be of their own time, and accused each other of belatedness, it is clear that the two movements had very different understandings of how this 'time' should be presented or engaged with. There was, in short, no agreed upon, or homogeneous, avant-garde 'moment' in pre-war Europe to which both Vorticism and Futurism belonged. This raises the question of the contemporaneity of the two movements. Lewis's Vorticist manifesto was published five years, four months, and one week after Marinetti's Futurist manifesto was published in *Le Figaro*. There is thus an obvious time lag here. But even if the two moments were entirely synchronous according to clock and calendar time, that is, if both manifestoes were written and published on the same day, at the same time, they would not necessarily belong to the same cultural moment. For not only did 1914 mean something different in London than it did in Milan, but modernity was different in these two locations.

England was the first nation in Western Europe to experience the Industrial Revolution, whereas Italy was one of the last. The two countries' respective experiences of industrialization were in fact quite different. Lewis was making exactly this point: what for the Italians was a novelty was commonplace for London's artists. Lewis proudly claimed that the 'The Modern World is due almost entirely to Anglo-Saxon genius [...]. / Machinery, trains, steam-ships, all that distinguishes externally our time, came far more from here than anywhere else' (B1 39). However, as Karin Orchard has argued, the appreciation of England's industrial prowess was not universal among Britons.⁵² When in the 'Futurist Discourse to the English' Marinetti insulted Ruskin and English artists' desire for a primitive pastoral life, that desire can be seen as part of the rejection of English industrialization.⁵³ Indeed, Lewis's aversion to Marinetti's automobilism is indicative of a wider trend of

ambivalence towards to the motorcar in Britain, as reflected in such texts as E. M. Forster's *Howards End* (1910).⁵⁴

In 'Vital English Art' Marinetti speaks of wishing 'to cure English Art of that most grave of all maladies – passé-ism' – but England in general had the wider problem of 'the English sickness', an apocalyptic mood brought on by the knowledge that Germany and the United States were showing signs of overtaking England economically and industrially.⁵⁵ Italy, however, was not a concern. It was seen as 'a young, untested and relatively backward country.'⁵⁶ This opinion was as valid artistically as it was economically. As Marinetti was so painfully aware, Italy was perceived as the museum of Europe, particularly in the eyes of Britain, a nation with such an entrenched Grand Tour tradition.

Generalizing about the Italian situation is difficult because of the important differences between its regions. The south of the country remained largely agricultural, but Milan was economically, industrially, and creatively flourishing before the launch of Futurism. And while the Scapigliatura artists and Divisionists working in Milan in the late nineteenth century can be seen as precursors of the avant-garde, the city was not devoid of a prestigious cultural heritage, associated primarily with Leonardo da Vinci, whom Lewis deemed the first Futurist (*B1* 132). In fact, it was the dominance of this past, which permeated every part of the newly formed Italian nation, that spurred on Marinetti's *antipassatismo*. This was not, however, a purely artistic issue. The Risorgimento, the nation's technological developments, and colonialism were all seen as imitations of, or returns to, the Roman Empire or the Renaissance. The Futurists were disappointed by such comparisons and the incompleteness of the Risorgimento, which had unified Italy on a political, but not on a social or cultural, level. It is arguable whether the Futurist programme aimed to replace or continue the Risorgimento. Despite Marinetti's desire to distance himself from Italy's reliance on the past, Giovanni Lista and Scott Sheridan have demonstrated the similarities between Marinetti's approach and that of Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi.⁵⁷ Italian avant-gardism is inseparable from its geographical and historical specificity.

The same is true in the English case. Lisa Tickner and Josephine Guy, contributing to a rich strand of scholarship, have argued for the specificity of British modernism and avant-gardism with reference to their relationship with specific British precedents and precursors.⁵⁸ Crucially for my argument, Guy maintains that every avant-gardism

manifests its *antipassatismo* differently, and that British avant-gardists' relationship with the past and tradition was unlike those in post-Revolutionary France, for whom ideas of historical rupture were more readily available. Instead, the British intellectual climate of the late nineteenth century was a product of the preference for gradualism and historical continuity which had characterized so much Victorian thinking. As such, Guy considers avant-gardism in Britain to have a different (though also rebellious) approach to the past; she suggests that it tended to draw on predecessors' work in order to subvert it.⁵⁹ The identification of precedents for English modernists and avant-gardists, highlighted by Tickner, also demonstrates that such subversion was not always thought to be necessary; continuity was not alien to avant-gardism in Britain. Somigli has suggested that Lewis's modernism was unlike that of many others (particularly in France) in its temporality, as his preference for stasis over the time-bound flux set his modernism apart from that associated with the transitory novelty of Baudelairean modernity.⁶⁰

It is interesting to note here that both the English/British and Italian cases differentiated themselves from that of revolutionary France; the Vorticists and Futurists both condemned the French as traditional. In 'The Exhibitors to the Public' (1912), the Futurists bemoaned their French contemporaries' 'obstinate attachment to the past' of Poussin, Ingres, and Corot.⁶¹ The Vorticist manifesto belittles the revolutionary natures of France and Italy because in England revolution was the normal state. Thus: 'The nearest thing in England to a great traditional French artist, is a great revolutionary English one' (B1 42). It is worth noting that the Vorticist aversion to French art could have been a side effect of Lewis's contempt for the Francophile Roger Fry. The modernities of Paris, London, and Milan were all different in 1914, and so their modernisms, the expressions of those particular modernities, were different and specific. Moreover, as tradition can be conceived of as an invention *of* modernity, it would also vary *between* modernities.⁶² As such, the *antipassatismo* of each avant-gardism would be related to the nature of the modernity (and the tradition) in which it developed.

Primitivism and Atemporality

While in its relationship with modernity avant-gardism is inherently connected to its time and place, there is an aspect of it which suggests a desire to escape from its historical and national specificity. Here I return to two issues: firstly, the idea raised by Wilson that Lewis's aversion to Bergson and Futurism was so strong that he tried to remove his art from time altogether; secondly, Futurism's and Vorticism's shared interest in primitivism.

So-called 'primitive art', particularly in accounts given before the advent of post-colonial discourse, was not necessarily seen as being produced in time; it was thought that the societies which produced it were not on the same temporal plane as modern 'Western' society.⁶³ The primitive was seen as timeless: produced outside the clock and calendar time of modernity, it was presented by some critics as existing outside historical periodization. The tendency of those societies considered 'primitive' to have oral rather than written historical (or historiographical, more properly) practices further distances their art from history itself, as well as its texts.⁶⁴ But the primitive can also be conceived in temporal terms, as denoting a beforeness, which usually refers to a time prior to the birth of 'civilization'.⁶⁵ Avant-gardism's interest in the primitive can then be seen as an attempt to escape the burden of civilization's history by turning to pre-civilized, pre-mechanized time.

Futurist and Vorticist aesthetics were concerned with the primitive, and made similar statements about it. Boccioni declared: 'We are the primitives of a new sensibility.'⁶⁶ Lewis claimed: 'We are Primitive Mercenaries in the Modern World' (B1 30). Lewis also maintained that the 'Art-Instinct is permanently primitive', and that the 'artist of the modern movement is a savage', distinguishing Vorticism from Futurism by explaining that this savage was 'in no sense an "advanced," perfected, democratic, Futurist individual of Mr. Marinetti's limited imagination' (B1 33).

The Vorticist interest in the primitive derived in part from Wilhelm Worringer's ideas, as expressed in *Abstraction and Empathy*, which were reiterated in T. E. Hulme's essay 'Modern Art and its Philosophy' (1914). Hulme, following Worringer, divided art into two kinds: the natural, vital, imitative, and empathetic Graeco-Roman art, and the angular, geometrical art referred to as 'archaic'.⁶⁷ Crucially,

Worringer had denied the idea that the abstraction of the second category was due to artistic incapacity – an inability to achieve the naturalism prized in the Graeco-Roman tradition. Abstract art, rather, answered to a different psychic need, and should be valued in its own right. Worringer thus helped to resuscitate the reputation of African, Byzantine, and Ancient Egyptian art. In short, Worringer, and subsequently Hulme, were promoting the kind of art rejected by the academy.

Hulme's interest in primitivism was related to his aversion to Romanticism and to what he saw as its dogma of progress.⁶⁸ This was echoed in Lewis's claim in *The Outlook* in September 1914: 'We have got clean out of history. We are not today living in history.'⁶⁹ Abstraction did not precede figurative art in a strict temporal sense, but was 'other' from, and synchronous with, it. The Vorticists' preference for abstraction is connected to this line of thought, as is their conviction that art is other to, and separate from, life. Richard Cork sees primitive art as providing Vorticism with a precedent, although his use of the word 'precedent' is questionable as it is firmly allied to the idea of the primitive as pre-civilized without acknowledging its atemporal and ahistorical elements.⁷⁰

The Futurists' interest in the primitive is perhaps more complex than that of Vorticism, particularly given their rhetorical devotion to the future and their tendency to depict the present, which Lewis, as we have seen, used in order to distinguish the genuinely 'savage' Vorticists from the supposedly 'advanced' Futurists. If the primitive is considered as temporally distant from the present moment, then primitivism would be the epitome of *passatismo*; if, however, it is considered to be outside of time – to be an eternally originary, generative state – then it becomes a useful analogy for the Futurists, who claimed to be creating something new. Hulme uses primitivist rhetoric to suggest that 'primitive' art offers his time the intensity it needs to break up the 'Renaissance' attitude he wants to challenge. Hulme does, however, demonstrate an interest in the future, as he does not expect art to stay archaic/primitive but rather sees the early twentieth-century interest in it as a phase through which modern art must pass. As Alan Munton puts it: 'T. E. Hulme was a man of the future. Everything in his thought is projected forwards.'⁷¹ Both Futurism and Vorticism were, in fact, using a primitive aesthetic as a protest against what Worringer referred to as the 'empathetic' tradition, which can be traced from Graeco-Roman art through the Renaissance and on to the Academy. The primitive is therefore used by both move-

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ments as something other to a canonical history of art. But it is used in a doubled sense. On the one hand, because it is placed outside time, it cannot be mapped onto 'Romantic' notions of progress but functions as an atemporal concept (and creative source) that can be shared by both Vorticist and Futurist avant-gardes. On the other hand, the primitive is also temporal, in the sense that it is originary; to turn to the primitive is to reject the established past and to create a new future in the present.

Conclusion

The convergences and contrasts between Futurist and Vorticist temporalities bring to the fore some rarely addressed aspects of these movements. While the contradictions and ambivalences inherent in each respective movement preclude any neat conclusions on this topic, a summary of the ideas discussed above is useful in stressing their interrelatedness. Each movement was dealing with the temporal specificity of their present, and there are remarkable differences between how these temporalities were conceived by these competing groups. The few years between the establishment of the two movements meant that the Futurists were positioning themselves in a field of, and against (in their opinion), *passatista* contemporaries, while five years later the Vorticists were positioning themselves in a field of, and against, Futurist contemporaries.

The Italian artists considered themselves to be avant-garde, while their rivals in London saw the Futurist celebration of modernity as belated; the English saw their nation as the epitome of modernity, while the Italians were shocked that the metropolis of London had failed to produce a viable avant-gardism, either in alliance with or in opposition to their own. As Lista and Guy have noted, the weight of the burden of the past in Italy necessitated a highly iconoclastic rhetoric, whereas in England this was not the case. Given the important role Marinetti and Futurism are given in the creation of Vorticism as a brand (the aesthetics and poetics of its protagonists being more autonomous), it can be argued that the use of avant-gardist practices, as evident both in the form, style, and content of *BLAST*, were used in the English context as a defence against Futurist domination, as well as appropriated for their own purposes.

This article has shown that equating futurism, *antipassatismo*, and avant-gardism is problematic. Firstly, the preoccupation with the future, which is often manifested in an aversion to the past, is, at bottom, a desire to be of the present, hence Hartog's and Bru's shared conviction that presentism is the most important avant-gardist trait. Secondly, in the historical period under consideration here ideas about time were shifting. As a result, not only do calendrically contemporary loci of avant-gardism have their own specificities, but they have a specificity of temporal understanding which affects how any overarching avant-gardism is manifested. The present to which each form of avant-gardism wanted to belong was different, hence the problems with any overall theory of avant-gardism. Thirdly, as avant-gardism sought to escape the aesthetic tradition of 'civilization', it saw one of its primary escape routes as an evasion of time and history, which it sought to bypass by turning to the art of so-called 'primitive' cultures that it placed outside the time and history of the 'civilization' it wanted to transform.

Vorticism and Futurism share an avant-gardist temporality based on presentism and *antipassatismo*. For the Vorticists, however, from their perspective in an 'advanced' nation, Futurism (or Automobilmism) was merely a form of *passatismo*. Its regressive temporality had to be opposed. Vorticism did not last long, of course. The brevity of the movement and the loss of many of its art works perhaps allowed it to be truer to the avant-gardist rhetoric of Futurism than the Italian movement itself, which not only continued after Marinetti's ten-year time limit but also came to be immortalized by its nemesis – the museum.

Notes

¹ 'VORTICISM THE LATEST CULT OF REBEL ARTISTS; It Goes a Step Further Than Cubism and Futurism, and Is Sponsored by Brzeska, Epstein and Others. Its Official Mouthpiece Is a Cerise Magazine Called Blast', *The New York Times* (9 August 1914): 10.

² Enrico Cesaretti, 'Back to the Future: Temporal Ambivalences in F. T. Marinetti's Writings', in Luca Somigli and Mario Moroni (eds), *Italian Modernism: Italian Culture Between Decadentism and Avant-Garde* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004): 243-66.

³ This tendency was identified and rebuked as early as 1915 by some members of the Futurist milieu in Aldo Palazzeschi, Giovanni Papini, and

Ardengo Soffici, 'Marinettismo e Futurismo', *Lacerba* 3. 7 (14 February 1915): 49-50.

⁴ 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism' was, in fact, first published in Bologna in *Gazzetta dell'Emilia* on 5th of February 1909, but the *Le Figaro* appearance is considered Futurism's official birthday.

⁵ Luca Somigli, *Legitimizing the Artist: Manifesto Writing and European Modernism, 1885-1915* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 167.

⁶ Paul Peppis, *Literature, Politics and the English Avant-Garde: Nation and Empire, 1901-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 97.

⁷ F. T. Marinetti, 'Discorso agli Inglesi' (1910), reprinted in *Teoria e Invenzione Futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 2005): 280-286, 285. All translations by the author unless otherwise stated.

⁸ Peter Osborne, 'Modernism and Philosophy', in Peter Brooker *et al.* (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 388-409, 390.

⁹ Michael H. Whitworth, *Einstein's Wake: Relativity, Metaphor, and Modernist Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): 171-2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 174.

¹¹ Hermann Minkowski, 'Space and time', in H.A. Lorentz *et al.*, *The Principle of Relativity* (New York: Dover, 1923): 73-91, 75.

¹² Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

¹³ F. T. Marinetti, 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism' (1909), reprinted in Umbro Apollonio (ed.), *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1973): 19-24, 22.

¹⁴ Michael Durman and Alan Munton, 'Wyndham Lewis and the Nature of Vorticism', in Giovanni Cianci (ed.), *Wyndham Lewis: Letteratura/Pittura* (Palermo: Sellerio, 1982): 101-118, 110.

¹⁵ Paul Edwards, *Wyndham Lewis: Painter and Writer* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2000), 104.

¹⁶ Flavio Fergonzi, 'On the Title of the Painting *Materia*', in Laura Mattioli Rossi and Emily Braun (eds), *Boccioni's Materia: A Futurist Masterpiece and the Avant-garde in Milan and Paris* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 2004): 47-53, 50; the relevant part of Boccioni's notebooks are transcribed in Umberto Boccioni, *Gli Scritti Editi e Inediti*, ed. Zeno Birilli (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1971): 441; Brian Petrie, 'Boccioni and Bergson', *The Burlington Magazine* 116 (1974): 140-47, 140.

¹⁷ Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 53. Antliff cites Denys Sutton, 'The Singularity of Gino Severini', *Apollo* (May 1973): 448-61.

¹⁸ Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini, 'The Exhibitors to the Public' (1912), reprinted in Apollonio (ed.), *Futurist Manifestos*: 45-50, 47.

¹⁹ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. W. Scott Palmer and Nancy Margaret Paul (London: Macmillan Co., 1911), 194.

²⁰ SueEllen Campbell, 'Equal Opposites: Wyndham Lewis, Henri Bergson, and Their Philosophies of Space and Time', *Twentieth Century Literature* 29 (1983): 351-69, 354; Campbell quotes a letter written by Lewis in 1949 *The Letters of Wyndham Lewis*, ed. W. K. Rose (London: Methuen, 1963), 488-89.

²¹ Lewis was not alone in seeing the similarities between the two, as H. Wildon Carr also considered Einstein in Bergsonian terms in a paper first read on the 13th of June 1913. See H. Wildon Carr, 'The Principle of Relativity and its Importance for Philosophy', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 14 (1913-14): 407-24.

²² Paul Edwards, 'Wyndham Lewis's Vorticism: A Strange Synthesis', in Mark Antliff and Vivien Greene (eds), *The Vorticists: Manifesto for a Modern World* (London: Tate Publishing, 2011): 37-39, 39. For more on the proximity of Lewis to Bergson, see SueEllen Campbell, 'Equal Opposites: Wyndham Lewis, Henri Bergson, and their Philosophies of Space and Time', *Twentieth Century Literature* 29 (1983): 351-69.

²³ Andrew Wilson, 'Rebels and Vorticists: "Our Little Gang"', in Paul Edwards (ed.), *BLAST: Vorticism 1914-1918* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000): 24-39, 36.

²⁴ Robert Ferguson, *The Short Sharp Life of T. E. Hulme* (London: Allen Lane, 2002), 179.

²⁵ Jeffrey Meyers, *The Enemy: a Biography of Wyndham Lewis* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 53.

²⁶ Ferguson, *The Short Sharp Life of T.E. Hulme*, 105; William C. Wees, *Vorticism and the English Avant-garde* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), 78.

²⁷ Marinetti, 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism', 22.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁹ Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini, 'Manifesto of the Futurist Painters', in Apollonio (ed.), *Futurist Manifestos*: 24-27, 27.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 26.

³¹ See Marinetti, 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism', 23.

³² *Ibid.*, 23.

³³ I use the term 'avant-gardism', rather than 'avant-garde', to focus my interest on the avant-garde's attitudes rather than their formation as a

group. This avant-gardism, it should also be noted, is considered as an attitude within the arts, rather than in the Saint-Simonian sense of art as an avant-garde for society as a whole. For more on this distinction see David Cottington, 'The Formation of the Avant-Garde in Paris and London, c. 1880–1915', *Art History* 35 (2012): 596–621.

³⁴ Nicos Hadjinicolaou, 'On the ideology of avant-gardism', *Praxis* 6 (1982): 39–106, 50.

³⁵ Harold Rosenberg, *The Tradition of the New* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1962), 79.

³⁶ Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 96.

³⁷ Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 52.

³⁸ Wyndham Lewis, 'A Later Arm Than Barbarity', *Outlook* 5 (September 1914): 299.

³⁹ Ezra Pound, 'Vorticism', *The Fortnightly Review* XCVI (N.S.), 573 (1 Sept 1914): [461]–71.

⁴⁰ Ezra Pound, 'Wyndham Lewis', *The Egoist* 1. 12 (15 June 1914): 233–34, 34.

⁴¹ Pound, 'Wyndham Lewis', 234.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Gino Severini, 'Introduction to *The Futurist Painter Severini exhibits his latest works*, Marlborough Gallery, London, April 1913', reprinted in Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori (eds), *Archivi del Futurismo* (Rome: De Luca, 1958), vol. 1: 113–115, 114.

⁴⁴ T. S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (1919), in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1920): 42–53, 47–49.

⁴⁵ Andrew Wilson, 'Rebels and Vorticists: "Our Little Gang"', in Paul Edwards (ed.), *Blast: Vorticism 1914–1918* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000): 24–39, 36.

⁴⁶ François Hartog, *Régimes d'Historicité: Présentisme et Expériences du Temps* (Paris: Seuil, 2003), 120.

⁴⁷ Ibid.; Marinetti, 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism', 22.

⁴⁸ Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini, 'Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto', in Apollonio (ed.), *Futurist Manifestos*: 27–31, 28.

⁴⁹ See also Luca Somigli, *Legitimizing the Artist: Manifesto Writing and European Modernism, 1885–1915* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 189.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 178–79.

- ⁵¹ F. T. Marinetti and C. R. W. Nevinson, 'Vital English Art', *The Observer*, 7 June 1914: 7.
- ⁵² Karin Orchard, 'A Laugh Like a Bomb': The History and Ideas of the Vorticists', in Edwards (ed.), *Blast: Vorticism 1914-1918*: 14-23, 14.
- ⁵³ F. T. Marinetti, 'Discorso agli Inglesi' (1910), reprinted in *Teoria e Invenzione Futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 2005): 280-286, 285.
- ⁵⁴ Andrew Thacker, *Moving Through Modernity: Space and Geography in Modernism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 65.
- ⁵⁵ Marinetti and Nevinson, 'Vital English Art', 7.
- ⁵⁶ Jonathan Black, 'Taking Heaven by Violence: Futurism and Vorticism as seen by the British Press c.1919-20', in Jonathan Black (ed.), *Blasting the Future! Vorticism in Britain 1910-1920* (London: Philip Wilson, 2004): 29-39, 29.
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- ⁶³ James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 201; Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 57.

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