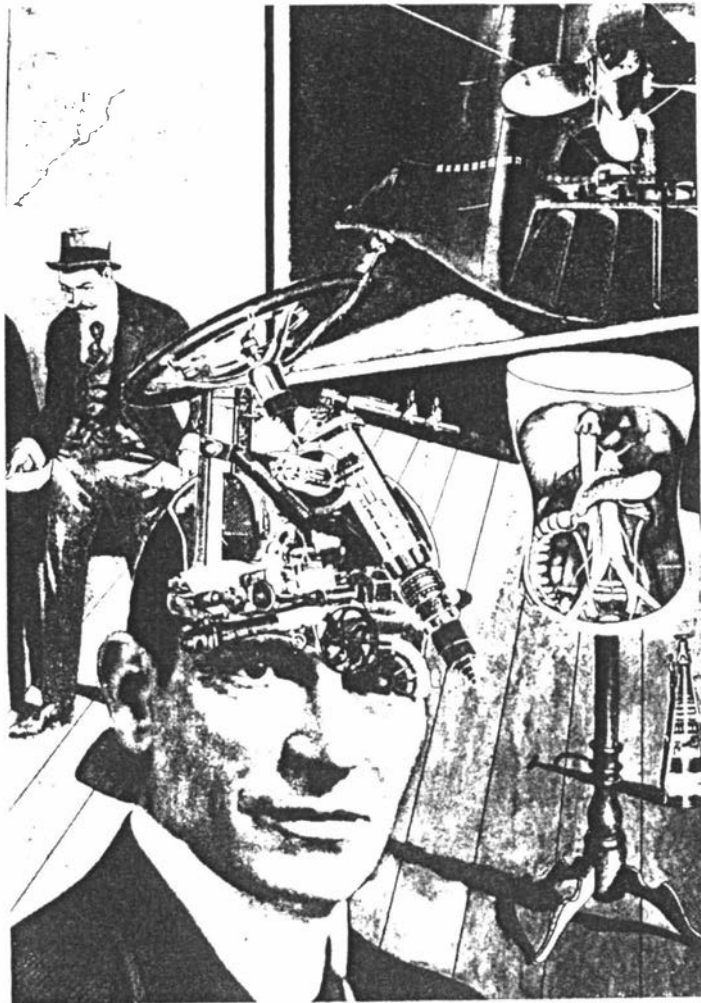


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***Narratives of Conquest
and Destruction:
The Automobile in the Major Fiction of
E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald
1910 - 1925***



Paul L. Ryder

Narratives of Conquest and Destruction:
The Automobile in the Major Fiction of
E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald 1910 – 1925

By Paul L. Ryder

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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For Anna

And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub: ... And as for their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel.

(Holy Bible: Ezekiel 12, v. 9-10)

Everything in life is somewhere else, and you get there in a car.

(E. B. White)

Narratives of Conquest and Destruction:

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E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald 1910 - 1925

N*arratives of Conquest and Destruction* argues that the automobile is the mechanistic oxymoron of the modern era. The motor-car uniquely encapsulates the ambivalence which lies at the heart of modern consciousness in that it is at once object and abstraction, icon of romance and of brutality, and symbol of social collocation and cultural dislocation. As the two parts of *Narratives of Conquest and Destruction* argue, in the works of Fitzgerald and Forster the motor-car is applauded and condemned as: emblem of 'home' and token of quintessential rootlessness, as mechanism for systematised capitalist compliance and for uncheckable transgression, as sign of Weberian instrumental rationality but sign also of romantic consciousness, principal means of self-actualisation (whereby one might be set free) and of annihilation. The motor-car is, furthermore, seen as an index of privilege and powerlessness, art and commodity, symbol of imagination and bland homogeneity, fashion accessory and utilitarian necessity, exponent of virility and icon of impotency, emblem of raw power and of lost aboriginal strength. In short, the motor-car is represented in the literature of Forster and Fitzgerald as both idol and iconoclast: enslaver of all who it liberates; destroyer of all that it conquers.

Whilst such oppositions merit close examination, an even more fundamental tension emerges: that the automobile is at once a principal sign of and *modus operandi* for modernist sensibility. The automobile, then, is not merely epi-phenomenal; not simply the object of more or less abstracted semiological significance but rather erupts through the fictions of Fitzgerald and Forster as a powerful narrative engine: a causative, generative, and transformational necessity thereby becoming not merely a sign but something of a textual *agent provocateur*. To this extent, and to the extent that the motor-car is not unequivocally condemned by the two authors, the structuralism that underpins Part One and Part Two of the thesis is occasionally abandoned in favour of a surface reading that considers narrative texture, thus foregrounding a more complex view of the automobile.

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| 27. | Henry Ford and the 'Model 999' | OFW: 129: 2,562 |

List of Abbreviations for Texts

Dowling, D:	BA	<i>Bloomsbury Aesthetics and the Novels of Forster and Woolf</i>
	MD	<i>Mrs Dalloway: Mapping Streams of Consciousness</i>
Eagleton, T:	IA	<i>The Ideology of the Aesthetic</i>
	CI	<i>Criticism and Ideology</i>
Fitzgerald, F. S.	BD	<i>The Beautiful and Damned</i>
	GG	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>
	SP	<i>This Side of Paradise</i>
	SS	<i>The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald</i>
Forster, E. M.	HE	<i>Howards End</i>
	LJ	<i>The Longest Journey</i>
	PI	<i>A Passage to India</i>
	SS	<i>Collected Short Stories of E. M. Forster</i>
Heidegger, M.	PT	<i>Poetry, Language, Thought</i>
	QT	<i>The Question Concerning Technology</i>
Lawrence, D. H.	LC	<i>Lady Chatterly's Lover</i>
	PS	<i>The Plumed Serpent</i>
	SL	<i>Sons and Lovers</i>
	Tales	<i>The Tales of D. H. Lawrence</i>
	TR	<i>The Rainbow</i>
	TT	<i>The Trespasser</i>
	WL	<i>Women in Love</i>
Lawrence, T. E.	OA	<i>Oriental Assembly</i>
	SP	<i>Seven Pillars of Wisdom</i>
Leavis, F. R.	CP	<i>The Common Pursuit</i>
	LP	<i>The Living Principle</i>
Marx, L.	MG	<i>The Machine in the Garden</i>
	PU	<i>The Puzzle of Anti-Urbanism in Classic American Literature</i>
Mumford, L.	CH	<i>The City in History</i>
	MM	<i>The Myth of the Machine</i>
Shaw, B.	CP	<i>The Complete Prefaces of Bernard Shaw</i>
	MS	<i>Man and Superman</i>
	P	<i>Pygmalion</i>
Woolf	CR	<i>The Common Reader</i>
	MD	<i>Mrs Dalloway</i>
	JR	<i>Jacob's Room</i>

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Paul Ryder
November, 1997.

Introduction

History is all about selecting, recording, and interpreting political voices - from the moment they first rise above common murmurings, through their time of cultural ascendancy, and, finally, through the period of their decline and dissolution. In so selecting, recording, and interpreting, historians are by definition charged with distinguishing between discourses that are culturally significant and those that contribute to the creation of background noise – that is, clamour which resists being coerced into meaning but which is nonetheless crucial to cultural definition since it acts as an ideological backdrop. History is therefore defined differentially and so, paradoxically, those voices that constitute cultural background are neither parasitic nor secondary to the strident voices of social change.

Novelists too, create cultural backdrops for their ideas, and it is our task as readers to distinguish between semantically significant elements (figures, motifs, and images) and those background facets of a text that contribute to *vraisemblance* or the process of actualisation where the reader reconciles fiction with real world phenomena. This background that is developed may therefore be referred to as the cultural noise of a novel: a well-recognised matrix of phenomena against which readers may authenticate a decoded set of elements or motifs deemed semantically significant. ‘Actualisation’ - that is to say, the business of naturalising a text – is, then, ‘the most elementary operation that the reader performs’. (Malmgren: 52) However, whilst elementary enough, the process is nonetheless crucial since without it our belief in the novelist’s world would be seriously undermined. Thus, in the fiction of the early twentieth century, the occasional roar of a passing aeroplane or the throb of an idling motor-car might contribute to an impression of cultural authenticity. After all, by then, aeroplanes and motor-cars had become fundamental components of modern life; so much so they were then, as now, ironically accepted as natural aspects of our milieu.

But our habitualised perception has blinded us to the meanings of technology and so the motor-car, in particular, has come to be regarded as a mere part of the cultural noise of the novel – a fact that explains the complete absence of secondary texts dedicated to an examination of the automobile in fiction. Yet even the most cursory consideration of novels and stories written between 1900 and 1925 (when the motor-car was a comparatively new technology) reveals that the machine was regarded as something more than a reified end product. Rather, it was seen ‘as praxis *and* production’; as a symbol of profound significance. (Jameson: 43) Thus, Kenneth Grahame, E. M. Forster, William Carlos Williams, D. H. Lawrence, F. Scott Fitzgerald and others encourage an interpretation of the motor-car that takes us well beyond the primary sphere of actualisation and *vraisemblance*. For them, the automobile is much more than cultural noise; it is a cultural icon: a material representation of powerful and enduring ideas. E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald, in particular, display an acute recognition of the duality of the motor-car. Accordingly, in their fictions, as in those of D. H. Lawrence and others, the automobile is represented as something of a paradox: on one hand a vehicle of agency and conquest and on the other a machine of death and destruction.

A soft structuralism, then, provides us with a particularly effective model with which to undertake a cultural study of the automobile and through which we might reflect on the representation of motor-cars in E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald’s writing, 1910 to 1925. Such an approach is all the more relevant given that the literary-critical climate in the English-speaking world throughout the modernist era – say, the half-century from 1920 - made a sympathetic view of the automobile difficult, if not impossible. So, by adopting structuralism, the positive view of the motor-car may be restored – something that is attempted in the first half of this thesis. As will be seen, the automobile suggests agency since it banishes remoteness and multiplies the capacities of the driver. Moreover, the motor-car speaks permanently of elsewhere and therefore communicates potential: freedom from fixed schedules and prescribed routes, transcendence over time and space; triumph over the limitations of gender, race, and class. In addition, the fictions of Forster and Fitzgerald foreground the social non-conformity, transgression, and non-accountability made possible by the

phenomenon of automobility. At the same time, the motor-car offers to the voyeur new perspectives and, since it speaks of other milieux, offers the tourist enhanced opportunity for escape. To the would-be scholar, the motor-car offers an education 'on the road' whilst to the hero it promises a super-agency by redefining horizons and facilitating an extraordinary range of social and romantic liaisons. Moreover, and despite its status as a simple commodity, the motor-car bespeaks the power of the industrial and technological orders. In short, the automobile is the natural vehicle of the superman and is so represented in the fictions of E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

However, as is argued in the second half of this thesis (still following the structuralist model), the automobile, an untamed artefact, is ambivalently received. Both Forster and Fitzgerald see that the motor-car, produced to magnify human powers, actually compromises these. For example, whilst promising freedom from schedules and responsibilities, the prohibitive costs of owning and maintaining an automobile may leave us ironically stranded – or even destitute. Furthermore, even if economic wellbeing is preserved it is at the cost of the autoist's fundamental consciousness which, according to both Forster and Fitzgerald, at best becomes horribly deracinated and at worst machine-like. So, whilst communicating the power of capitalism, every inch of the automobile in Forster and Fitzgerald's fictions speaks of crippling rationalities. Moreover, just as the motor-car whispers beguilingly to us of subtle arts and originality, it becomes a base, mass-produced commodity – compromising our ability to value authenticity.

In addition to this, whilst promising to effect all sorts of connections, the automobile actually bespeaks cultural breakdown: the shattering of natural linkages; the wreckage of human and spiritual relationships. Both Forster and Fitzgerald are aware then that the motor-car (more than any other technical construct) confirms humanity's propensity to worship the mechanical thing. But it bespeaks the breakdown of our connection with the land too. It is one of the great ironies of automobility that a machine that allows us to escape the impurities of the urban world, tears past the rural milieu making our apprehension of it quite impossible. Moreover, the motor-car destroys the beauty of the very garden it accesses, its terrible noise a

profanation to the peace and tranquillity of the countryside and its dusty wake a veritable plague to vegetation. And as if all this were not enough to condemn the motor-car, both Forster and Fitzgerald highlight that whilst the machine magnifies force by unleashing the power of many horses, it ironically robs us of our aboriginal strength whilst contemporaneously encouraging an over-reaching of the ego – an event that ultimately leads to catastrophe.

It must be observed, therefore, that E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald ‘cognise’: that is, they appreciate that things are not what they seem. Both writers, then, criticise the manifest in order to reveal essence and see that if we accept the machine as only a machine, we may understand its ostensible power whilst wholly failing to appreciate its implicit power. When this apperception is applied to automobility, it may be shown that the motor-car affords us increased agency by widening our scope for choice, but that there is a commensurate increase in our exposure to consequence. Put another way, in enlarging our capacity to conquer, the automobile also redoubles our tendency to destroy and so it is that the machine is represented as something of a paradox in the fictions of E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald where it erupts through the narratives as both sign of conquest and emblem of destruction.

It is a crucial paradox that will be considered not just in the major fictions of the above writers, but also in popular magazines, film, and music. Where appropriate, reference will also be made to the novels, stories, and essays of other writers. Whilst novelists’ representations of the motor-car remains the main subject of this thesis then, a wider frame of reference indubitably reinforces some central claims that are made. Moreover, such acknowledgement of the intertext highlights that the automobile was (and still is) considered common cultural and intellectual property. Finally, then, whilst my main theoretical approach may be described as structuralist, as suggested above, emergent oppositions occasionally dissolve into paradoxes of such complexity that deconstruction must be employed. Thus, readers looking for an unequivocal attitude to the automobile and to automobility may, perhaps, find themselves disappointed.

PART ONE:

CONQUEST

Superiority

Toad went up to town by an early train this morning. And he has ordered a large and very expensive motor-car.

Kenneth Grahame - *The Wind in the Willows*

The roots of desire

Measures of social status have evolved in all cultures, the totems of rank valued most by primitive societies being the display of booty; that which was taken from one's enemies in battle. These trophies were particularly esteemed since they stand for conquest and therefore reflected their owners' capacities as tribal agents. All the better if the vanquisher could return from battle with a part of his enemy's anatomy since even greater honours would thereby be due. Moreover, the elevation of conqueror and humiliation of loser was complete when the latter's tribe was forced into servitude and his women taken as *prima facie* evidence of successful aggression and pre-eminent force.¹ Inevitably though, such tangible signs of conquest invited invidious comparisons and the urge to emulate or exceed such triumphs became structural imperatives of these, as in one form or another, all cultures.

However, as tribalism and savagery gave way to what Thorstein Veblen contemptuously calls 'a predatory phase of life', the conditions pertaining to the gaining of booty also altered. The forcible seizure of property, parts of persons, or persons proper was now deemed unsatisfactory by an emergent trading society. Given this rejection of its forbears' barbaric activities, the new civilisation had to find other, more socially acceptable means by which to display superiority and

success. It was thus that accumulated property in a new commodity culture replaced heroic or signal achievement as evidence of triumph. Besides, the sublimation of the will to conquer and destroy was made easier through an ever widening scope for ownership and display as new products entered Western markets. Motivations then, had not changed. As Veblen observes: 'Tangible evidence of prowess [still finds] a place in men's...thought as an essential feature of the paraphernalia of life.' (Veblen: 7) What did change was that competition for status became both easier and more habitual: the new battleground was the market place and all one needed to be pre-eminent in it was money.

What instruments, then, enabled the wealthy to trumpet their social and economic triumphs? There were, of course, houses. But the problem with houses is that they are ineluctably part of a local milieu and so, in order to be objects of envy or approbation, one has to have one's emotions aroused by being invited to the estate in order to see both it and the artefacts within and without. This certainly imposes quite profound limitations on the privileged one's capacity to have his privilege asserted over many miles. Clearly, what was needed was a means by which the wealthy might have their power assessed where ever they were - a desire that was fulfilled, initially at least, through the ownership and display of fine horseflesh.²

Despite certain natural proscriptions then, horses were nonetheless able to access relatively remote milieux. In this respect, the possession of a fine and fit animal meant that a measure of cultural ascension was possible over several horizons. To be sure, one's ability to ride well was also a litmus of one's social competence, but so too was the quality of the animal itself and an entire vocabulary was therefore built up around the graduated appreciation of horses. In 1899 Veblen wrote that: '...a person of decorous tastes in horsemanship today rides a punch with docked tail, in an uncomfortable posture and at a distressing gait.' (Veblen: 61) Lesser animals in the nineteenth century, however, may have been condemned as 'tired nags' whilst certain stud-raised steeds may have won the accolade 'fine goers', or, better still, 'roarers' - animals of tremendous power. Bone-setters', on the other hand, were refined beasts capable of a stirring performance whilst the

adjective ‘stout’ suggested a passable soundness. But the leisure-class canon of respectability was not confined to an appreciation of horses and riding ability.³ There were also trappings, and, in particular, carriages to consider.

Late in the sixteenth century the coach arrived in England to supplant the older sedan chair. An anonymously penned pamphlet of 1636, entitled **Coach and Sedan**, humorously records a debate between the two conveyance technologies and their respective supporters. Central to Coach’s claim that he should rule the road is that he is the preferred conveyance for ‘Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, Barons, Knights, and Gentlemen...’ (Coach & Sedan: B2) As measures of status then, the wealthy kept coaches from simple, pared-down racing models to the most refined and ornate ‘calling’ carriages. These commonly had initials or coats of arms emblazoned on the doors. The coach, even more than the horse then, was the new sign of social prowess.

There were, in fact, a bewildering variety of coach styles: the gig (not a generic term as is often supposed), the public stage coach, the mail-coach, the hackney coach, the curricle, the chaise, the post-chaise, the plain phaeton, the perch phaeton, the sporting phaeton with double perches, the landaulet, the tilbury, and the barouche to name a few. These were subject to exhaustive comparisons wherein the standard of chassis construction, exterior form, and interior detailing would be commented on in minutiae. Whilst adjectives such as ‘plain’ or ‘dull’ might be applied to a plebeian (public) coach, approbation was expressed in terms like ‘elegant’ or ‘grand’. And so a ‘curricle pulled by four’ was the nineteenth century equivalent of the modern sports-car. Indeed, a curricle coach pulled by a team of four ‘well-matched, quick-actioned beasts’ was a far swifter and classier proposition than a ‘dull gig’ pulled by a ‘badly-matched team of tired nags’. The post-chaise was well admired too, James Boswell recalling with great satisfaction ‘Dr. Taylor’s large, roomy post-chaise, drawn by four stout plump horses, and driven by two steady jolly postillions...’ (Boswell: 295) But of course, it was not enough to own horse and coach if these were required for purposes other than the social call, and so Jane Austen’s Mr Bennet cannot spare his daughter his coach and beasts whilst the

well-heeled Mr Bingley has a fine chaise and horses standing by at all times.⁴

Although horse and coach then meant independent mobility whilst fulfilling the desire to have one's pecuniary prowess recognised over multiple horizons, inherent physical restrictions still meant that desires for a superior technological contrivance remained intact. Whilst Wolfgang Sachs points out that the bicycle followed as an imperfect mechanism for social agency (it still depended on animal energy for its motive power and therefore had a limited range) his feeling that it mobilised demand for the automobile seems unlikely, despite the fact that the motor industry has its immediate roots in bicycle manufacture. In fact, dreams of mechanised conveyances which could run independent of animal energy had been around for a very long time:

‘There is in this city a certain Englishman, son of a Frenchman, who proposes to construct coaches which will go from Paris to Fontainebleau and return within the same day, without horses, by means of wonderful springs. ... If this plan succeeds, it will save both hay and oats...’

(in *OFW*: 135: 1)

So wrote Parisian Gui Patin in January 1645, but in order to find the earliest literary reference to the automobile, we must turn the clock back still further.

There is an automobile of sorts in Homer's *Iliad* where Hephaestus, Greek fire god and divine craftsman, runs a celestial factory in which he builds a set of twenty vehicles fitted with golden wheels. His creations, ‘self moved’ and ‘obedient to the beck of the gods’, run entirely unaided to a meeting of amazed deities. (Homer: *Iliad*: 18. 373-377) There is also a slighting reference to a sail-carriage in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, a probable allusion to the technological dead-end pursued in the early seventeenth century by Dutchman Simon Stevin who actually constructed a massive two-masted flying chariot for Prince Maurice of Orange-Nassau. Finally, in

1769, in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, the author records a conversation between the doctor and one Mr. Ferguson wherein the latter mentioned 'a new-invented (hand-cranked) machine which went without horses.' (Boswell: 171)

But, as the extract from Homer suggests, men had dreamed of automobiles well before the sail-carriage and crude hand-crank experiments of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Italians, for example, have long had a passion for automobility; a passion quite possibly inspired by the fifteenth century experimentation of countryman Francesco di Martini. Martini designed an extraordinary but hopelessly impractical carriage mounted on four wheels each of which was individually propelled by a complicated hand-turned capstan arrangement. But Martini, exhibiting a characteristically Italian optimism, nonetheless claimed to have invented the world's first automobile - a word he coined from 'autos', Greek for 'self', and the Latin 'mobilis'; 'moving'.

However, the inventor of the world's first automobile, not to be confused with the motor-car, may never be known. Three thousand years ago it is rumoured an anonymous Chou Dynasty inventor developed a fire-cart with separate chassis and independent steering. Accounts of the machine entered Europe via Persian translators among whom was Roger Bacon. In a letter written in 1270, Bacon writes of the early automobiles running under their own power 'being neither pushed nor pulled by animals: *'cum impetu inestimabili'*. However, by 1277 Bacon had fallen silent, but not before writing that 'a chariot can be constructed, that will move with incalculable speed without any draught animal...' (Bacon in Gimpel: 144) Bacon's account, moreover, inspired Leonardo da Vinci who mentions him in one of his note books. Much later, in the seventeenth century, astronomer and Jesuit priest Father Ferdinand Verbiest, himself an inventor of steam-carts, complained to the Chinese Emperor Kang-Hi about Bacon's gullibility. Verbiest earned a sharp rebuke from the Emperor who pointed out that records of the matter reside, as they do, in the Chinese Imperial Library.

The automobile arrives

By 1769, however, Captain Nicholas Cugnot showed off what could, with some accuracy, be called the first automobile; an ungainly, steam-driven, three-wheeled contraption which boasted a top speed of two miles an hour - provided a stop was afforded it every twenty minutes so that a good head of steam could be built up. Unlike the Chinese fire-carts, which, according to imperial records, were destroyed along with their inventor, evidence of Cugnot's inventiveness can be viewed today in the Conservatoire des Arts et Metiers.⁵ However, as Karl Marx observes, 'Not till the invention of Watt's second and so-called double-acting steam-engine was a prime mover found that begot its own force by the consumption of coal and water; whose power was entirely under man's control; that was mobile and a means of locomotion...' (K. Marx: 184)

But the history of steam-vehicles will not be considered here. Suffice to say there were significant developments, most notably the advent of the 'flash-boiler'. In America, despite construction difficulties and quite prohibitive maintenance bills, the steam-car remained popular until the early twentieth century. There is a reference to one in Shaw's *Man and Superman*. In general terms though, by the mid 1880s attention had turned away from steam as a source of motive power. Electricity was now the thing.⁶ But, as with the steam-car, there were problems with electric automobiles. Short battery life, limited range, and, once again, heavy running costs ensured that such vehicles would not survive long as a means of personal conveyance. Indeed, **On Four Wheels** reports that, at the turn of the century, running costs often reached a staggering seven-hundred pounds per annum - a small fortune.⁷ It was not surprising therefore that the electric was widely regarded as a play thing for America's richest. However, notwithstanding the inherent limitations, in both steam and electric cars, men's fantasies were realised.

But in 1885 all eyes looked to Karl Benz's frail, awkward-looking three-wheeled buggy; a machine which nonetheless boasted the

essential components of what came to be known as the internal combustion engine: electric ignition, mechanical valves, and a carburettor. It was the world's first motor-car, patented as a 'carriage with gas engine'. (Pizer: 29) It was a machine soon to confirm a social aesthetic that had hitherto been only partially realised: a reasonably simple to operate mechanism that would allow almost unfettered independence; a self-propelled machine that would conquer both time and space. The potential of the motor-car was quickly appreciated and developments were equally rapid. Just two years after Benz's machine took to the road, Gottlieb Daimler produced his first motor-car. It had four wheels and worked at higher revs than Benz's. It went faster too. H. G. Wells' mechanical prophecies, published as *Anticipations* in 1901, but written much earlier, were soon reality.

'There will first', wrote Wells, 'be the motor truck for heavy traffic [and] in the next place...there will develop the hired or privately owned motor carriage.' 'This', Wells added, 'will add a fine sense of personal independence...[and will] be capable of a day's journey of three hundred miles or more...one will be free to dine where one chooses, travel asleep or awake, stop and pick flowers...'. (Wells: *Anticipations*: 14-15) The motor-car then promised to permit conquest in the old sense and horses were doomed. Automobiles were the new totems of cultural achievement.

The demise of the horse

When assessing the impact that motor-cars had on older transit technologies, it is instructive to look at military photographs from the Great War. In 1914, horses clearly dominate, but by 1918 there is not a beast to be seen. However, the disappearance of the horse is foreshadowed in popular and special interest magazines of the period 1895 - 1910. An 1896 edition of *The Autocar*, for example, played up the new technology by condemning the wasteful inefficiency of the old. In the event of inclement weather, a staff-writer argues that the owner of a motor-car might simply sit back and not have to fret about his horse 'eating its head off in the stable, requiring constant feeding and

grooming, and getting out of condition for want of exercise...' (*The Autocar*: November 14 1896: 1-2)

The following year, there appeared in a European newspaper an advertisement for Daimler which comically disposed of the horse as a means of personal transport:

A Daimler is a worthy beast,
Pulls like an ox, seen west and east.
It doesn't feed whilst in the stall,
And only drinks when work's the call.
It threshes, saws, and stands your loan,
When you fall short, a common moan.
Ne'er ill in foot and mouth and bite,
And never up and goes on strike.
It doesn't scorn, attack with horn,
Does not consume your hard-grown corn.
So buy yourself just one such beast,
Forevermore you'll lack the least.

(in Sachs: 7)

By 1899 the writing was on the wall for the horse. In that year Akron police abandoned their horse-drawn paddy wagon in favour of a brand new motorised truck and a percipient Boston resident lodged an advertisement offering 'a stable for renting, sale, storage, and repair of motor vehicles.' (Pizer: 70) This was probably America's first garage and a sure sign that the horse and coach had had its day - a fact confirmed by various manufacturers' advertisements and the observations of more than a few social commentators.

A turn of the century advertisement for automobile manufactures Orio and Marchand, for example, was one of the first to condemn the horse. In it, a man gazes rapturously at a billboard heralding the arrival of the motorised machine. To this figure's right, with its head drooped in a gesture of submission, is a blinkered, rather tired old draught-horse. Whilst the car depicted to the left looks ghostly enough, its large, wide-open lantern-lamps and the fact that it is pointing in the opposite

direction of the horse suggests the passing of an era.⁸ In 1901, H. G. Wells added his voice to the gathering chorus of condemnation. ‘The horse’, he semi-whimsically complained, ‘refuses most resolutely to trot faster than fifty miles an hour, and shies and threatens catastrophe at every point and curve.’⁹ (Wells: *Anticipations*: 13) Wolfgang Sachs observes that the same general sentiments were expressed by one L. Baundry de Saunier, a French authority on automobilism, who, in 1902, wrote: ‘It can...be said with certainty that the horse - a weak, dangerous, costly, and dirty motor, easily broken and hard to repair ... is destined to disappear.’ (Saunier in Sachs: 5-6) Saunier’s critique of the horse’s frailties did not stop there. As Sachs points out, also berated were the animal’s sluggishness, its propensity to fall ill, its proclivity to consume vast amounts of oats, and its aptness to tire. By 1910 a hand-drawn picture appeared in *Auto Week* showing a small child looking over her shoulder at a dray from the back seat of a chauffeur-driven motor-car. She is exclaiming to her mother: ‘Look Mamma, there’s a horse!’ Again, the beast’s head is down in what has now become a familiar sign of submission to the machine whilst all around it can be observed the silhouettes of marauding automobiles.¹⁰ But it still took time for the new technology to separate itself from its cultural legacy, something it has not fully achieved to this day.

As noted above, the world’s first motor-car was patented as ‘a carriage with gas engine’ and, as we will see, a good many early automobiles took their names directly from coaching vocabulary. In contemplating his company’s car, C. S. Rolls referred to the ‘Rolls-Royce landaulet’ and as late as 1925 the fabulous Hispano-Suiza was badged the ‘H6B Double Phaeton’. References to ‘horse-power’ are still made to this day although ‘coach-work’ is a term which has now dropped out of popular usage - except as applied to public buses. There were also certain physical characteristics of the early motor-cars which betrayed their parentage. Most significantly, it took designers quite some time to move the engine to the front of their vehicles and so replace the ungainly structures contrived to look like beasts.¹¹ H. G. Wells’ assertion that ‘before every engine...trots the ghost of a superseded horse’ is then quite literally true. (Wells: *Anticipations*: 13) But whilst motor-car architecture itself confirmed the dawning of a new era, the passing of the horse age is also observed in high culture.

In E. M. Forster's *Howards End*, a novel which might broadly be said to deal with the clash of cultures in Edwardian England, there is a poignant moment when Margaret Schlegel asks Mrs Wilcox the fate their pony now that a garage has been built in its paddock. The latter's abstracted reply: 'The pony? Oh, dead, ever so long ago', foregrounds the woman's subjection to the imperatives of capitalist culture whilst the question itself makes a statement about the romantic Schlegel sensibility. (82) And so Mrs Wilcox, Margaret, and her romantically inclined brother Tibby are identified with the 'pony-cart' rather than with the motor-car. Even Margaret's admiration of Henry Wilcox's new automobile which she describes as a '...new and fairer creature...' than its predecessor gives away her old world values. Later in the novel Henry Wilcox's machine '[passes] by the stables of Buckingham Palace' in what appears to be a Foresterian comment on the landed, aristocratic order's propensity to cling to the past - something the author believes to be a good thing vis-à-vis the new capitalist's drive for commercial and technological advancement.

Similarly, Tom Buchanan's stables and string of ponies in *Gatsby*, whilst obviously signs of the conspicuous consumption and social agency of the leisure classes, represents one of many attempts in the novel to reclaim the past. In Forster's *A Passage to India* too, the author's preferences for aboriginal cultures and technologies is expressed in the concrete image of 'the twentieth century [taking] over from the sixteenth' when the elephant cavalcade descends from the Marabar to meet the locomotive. We may observe identical preoccupations in D. H. Lawrence's fiction, most notably in his short story *St. Mawr* where the horse from which the tale takes its title is clearly identified with an older, more authentic culture. Indeed, in this story, as is often the case in *fin de siècle* fiction, the old world's encounter with the new is emblematised through the conquest of horse and cart by self-propelled transit technologies:

'The old grey horse, dreaming, as he plodded along, of his quiet paddock,...drove the cart backwards towards the deep ditch at the side of the road. It wavered an instant - then there

was a heartrending crash - and the canary-coloured cart, their pride and joy, lay on its side in the ditch, an irredeemable wreck.'
(Grahame: 27)

The arrival of the motor-car in English literature, of course, has its unparalleled expression in Kenneth Grahame's 1908 children's classic *The Wind In The Willows*. Here, the cart-car nexus is celebrated in a chapter appropriately entitled 'The Open Road' wherein the Toad of Toad Hall takes his friends Ratty and Mole out for a few days' ramble in his 'beautiful cart'. However, the quiet grandeur of the cart is to be disastrously disturbed. From far behind, the company hear 'a faint warning hum'. They glance back to see 'a small cloud of dust, with a dark centre of energy, advancing on them at incredible speed.' It is the irrepressible energy of the motor-car, a machine that is about to wreak havoc. The car horn sounds its brazen cry, the animals catch a glimpse of a glittering and rich interior and the motor-car 'immense, breath-snatching, passionate, with its pilot tense and hugging the wheel', flashes past. The party is blinded by a cloud of dust, the old horse rears, and the cart topples before smashing to the ground, 'an irredeemable wreck.' Although the two other animals are outraged, especially the Rat, Toad sits rapt in the middle of the road proclaiming that he is 'done with carting forever', that motoring is the '*only* way to travel'. (Grahame: 26 -31)

The episode is a modern metaphor: the relative ennui of the Victorian age left behind in the wake of the energy, vibrancy, and mobility of a new Edwardian era. And so in Lawrence's '**St. Mawr**', the horse shies at a furniture van whilst in '**The Captain's Doll**' Hepburn and Hannele's hired motor-car scatters a herd of horses, the machine's driver expressing a gruff indifference by complaining 'If it isn't a cow, it's a horse.' (D. H. Lawrence: *Tales*: 531) Similarly, in Katherine Mansfield's '**The Garden Party**', a man is thrown from his horse when it rears at a traction engine and in Forster's *Howards End*, on returning from their motor-tour, Henry and Evie crash into 'a wretched horse and cart' driven by 'a fool of a driver -.' (96) Here, then, is another unfortunate meeting of two cultures and two sensibilities. But there is no impasse. The new world, as so often

represented by the motor-car in the fiction of the era, merely rides rough-shod over the old. Even when the machine is made to pause in order to allow horse and cart to pass by, as Henry Wilcox requires at one point in *Howards End*, there remains always the possibility of chaos.

Power for the privileged

From 1908 and the publication of *The Wind in the Willows* through to the mid nineteen-twenties then, there are rendered, in English literature, two phases of a new consciousness; a consciousness attuned to the physical and cultural noise of the motor-car. The fiction of the first part of this era, through to the early nineteen-twenties, represents the first stage of this consciousness; one which identified automobility with wealth and social privilege. This is not at all surprising since registers of automobile owners were filled with the names of doctors, surgeons, solicitors, bankers, manufacturers, military officers, gentlemen, and nobles.¹²

Sachs writes that the motor-car was especially welcomed by those who had no claim to aristocratic status since through it they might emulate their betters.¹³ Until the 1920s then, motor-cars reflected the tastes of the professional and upper classes - social groups who were sure about what they wanted from this new icon of privilege; that it should bespeak to the world their money and their new power over both space and time. Accordingly, the automobile had to look imposing (Toad's car is inevitably large); even threatening. Wheel-bases became longer and bonnets were stretched out to accommodate more powerful motors. By 1910 closed bodies became fashionable since they communicated the conservative, establishment values of the coaching era and after the Great War, when steel was in very short supply, they were favoured by the moneyed classes as emblems of conspicuous consumption.¹⁴ In the twenties, smaller, more sporty versions of the closed car were called coupes but nonetheless emblematised profligacy and so Tom Buchanan's blue coupe in *Gatsby*, a machine which Tony Tanner misidentifies as a convertible, suggests its owner's quite extraordinary economic prowess.¹⁵

But as aesthetic considerations took over from the requirements of mere functionality, the architecture of the motor-car began to reflect the 'style' of purchasers. And as self-representations, it was inevitable that the privileged wanted their economic triumphs objectified in as much distinguishing detail as possible. Apart from those facets of design noted above, the wealthy therefore required an element of artifice in their automobiles. Specifications such as exotic leathers, expensive metal plating, ostentatious radiators, generous deployment of storage spaces, hand-built bodies, special paint and the like quickly turned what was essentially a utilitarian construct into a luxury item; an *objèt d'art*.

Of course, hand-wrought products are best for displaying pecuniary reputability. This is because machine-produced goods do not bespeak the honorific inefficiency nor exhibit the minor imperfections considered to underpin the value of hand-made objects.¹⁶ However, before mass production provided an alternative to hand labour, automobile manufacturers and buyers alike were condemned for wasting productive energy that could be applied to other, more constructive endeavours. English economic historian Richard Tawney was one such scornful commentator. However, the apparent concern expressed in his *The Acquisitive Society* is over-played; his hostility toward those who can afford such luxuries made all the more obvious by his determination to detail in minutiae the so-called cultural excesses of the rich:

'...while one-tenth of the people of England are overcrowded, a considerable part of them are engaged, not in supplying that deficiency, but in making rich men's hotels, luxurious yachts, and motor-cars like that used by the Secretary of State for War, with an interior inlaid with silver in quartered mahogany, and upholstered in fawn suede and morocco, which was recently bought by a suburban capitalist...for the trifling sum of 3,500

guineas.’

(Tawney: 193)

The diatribe continues:

‘...if the nation...desires to re-equip its industries with machinery and its railways with wagons, had it not better refrain from holding exhibitions designed to encourage rich men to re-equip themselves with motor-cars?’

(Tawney: 194)

But Tawney was not the only notable to condemn what seemed to him to be the squandering of money on automobiles. Socialist ideology had a firm foot-hold in England by 1910 and Cox and Dyson note R. C. K. Ensor’s complaint that motor-cars are ‘visible symbols of...selfishness [and] arrogant wealth’. (Cox & Dyson: 70) In America too, notable commentators were concerned.

As early as 1835 Alexis de Tocqueville saw that ‘...the desire to acquire the good things of this world is the dominant passion among Americans...’ (de Tocqueville: 287) In 1908, five years before taking office as the twenty-eighth President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson warned his fellow Americans that the motor-car had spread socialist feelings because it epitomised the arrogance of wealth. Prior to the outbreak of World War One then, there was a belief that the rich were getting richer and the poor poorer. Certainly, the significant increase in loud and costly automobiles drew to the public’s attention the fact that many had money.

But it was not that there was a massive increase in the wealth of such people; rather, the surge in demand for automobiles was, as Sir Arthur Bowley argued, the result of a re-prioritising of spending previously focused on stables, coaches, and private residences.¹⁷ In 1911, Birmingham decorators were complaining that people were ‘living more in hotels and on the roads’ and were neglecting the upkeep on their houses. (Cox & Dyson: 71) Real estate agents, moreover, were

contemporaneously observing that people were selling their large residences and with the proceeds were purchasing smaller abodes so that they could afford motor-cars as well. (ibid) However, there can be little doubt that this re-prioritising was, in part at least, a desire to compete; a response to the acquisition of automobiles by the Joneses. But whilst the getting of a motor-car might be interpreted by some as a sign of narcissism and sublimated aggression, the claim that luxury machines were and are trophies of class exploitation seems fraught with illogicality. In the first place, wages paid to highly skilled coach-builders were significantly higher than those paid to assembly line workers.¹⁸ This is, of course, the case for all specialist labour and so in terms of their habits of consumption, the fact is that the rich do not exploit. Moreover, the products that they vie for are generally demand elastic and so a rise in labour costs is more readily absorbed.

Conversely, and it is surely a great irony of industrial organisation, middle and working class purchasers of mass-produced goods effectively support the structures of exploitation since it is precisely these commodities which show inelastic demand patterns. Simply put, if prices of such rise, say as a result of increased labour costs, demand will fall off instantly as consumers switch to a competitor's product. In the case of mass-production, unlike hand-produced goods, all costs, particularly labour costs, have to be kept strictly in check. And charges that those demanding luxury automobiles redirect labour that might otherwise be useful to the country at large seem equally problematic. As is the case with all innovation, technological advancements prompted by demand for motor-cars found other industrial applications. Besides, as paint quality, rubber durability, glass clarity, and metal strength improved in direct response to clients' demands, so other industries, and therefore a wide public, benefited from the process of amelioration.

We must consider too the fact that people who are not wealthy finally do get to eat cake, or, in this case, drive automobiles. Whereas Tanner can quite properly assert in Shaw's 1902 play *Man and Superman* that 'Miserably poor people don't own motor-cars', today, as a result of economies of scale, they very often do.¹⁹ Technological innovation then benefits the poor in a more direct sense. Today, for

example, the most ordinary of new automobiles have disc brakes, power-assisted steering, and safety crumple zones - things previously reserved for luxury models only.

However, this 'trickle down' theory either did not occur to social commentators or was dismissed out of hand by them. Writers of the period, then, tended to side exclusively with an emerging socialism and considered the motor-car a simple sign of cultural and political hegemony; an emblem of the reified technological order. It was a position that was popular with the masses, right up to the time they themselves began to benefit from automobility - a fact supported by one of the world's foremost motoring aficionados and car museum trustee Sir Len Southward who argues that the acquisition of a motor-car was 'part of the ongoing contest among privileged people, who liked to outdo their neighbour in a better car.'²⁰

Prior to the twenties, when the motor-car became universal, the ownership of any machine was synonymous with wealth. George Bernard Shaw's exegesis of *Man and Superman*, for example, foregrounds the theme of maintaining one's privilege. Whilst a simple love story at the syntagmatic level of plot, Shaw argues that the play is really "a trumpery story of modern London life, a life in which, as you know, the ordinary man's business is to get means to keep up the position and habits of a gentleman." (Shaw in Valency: 211) The acquisition of a motor-car is central to this end, something Tanner ironically complains makes him a slave. But more than being a sign of social prestige and class hegemony, Shaw knew that the ownership of a luxury automobile is an expression of narcissism. After all, 'luxury', as Theodor Adorno wrote, 'is meant...to permit the wealthy to demonstrate their status to *themselves* and others...' (Adorno: 119)

C. S. Rolls knew very well that the automobile was the new *haute couture* of the privileged. In his famous article on motor-cars in the 1911 edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica, he writes: 'Its [the motor-car's] final triumph came when it began to seriously displace the horse vehicle, becoming the private carriage of the wealthier classes to be used on all occasions'. (Rolls in *EB*: 1911: 223) Despite the slow break-down of class distinctions after 1900 then, one's mode of

transport profoundly reinforced one's social status. And so, in 1908, William Beveridge exchanged an 'easy but risky 600 pounds per annum at the Morning Post for a safe and steady 600 at the Board of Trade. He celebrated the appointment by purchasing a motor-car, and when, soon afterwards, his salary was increased by 100 pounds, he engaged the services of a chauffeur.' (Cox & Dyson: 53) Whilst Beveridge wanted others to know his station, something he could not risk when at the Morning Post, he doubtless wanted to remind himself of his conquests as well. And a well badged motor-car was just the thing for that.

'There will always be snobs willing to pay ten thousand francs for the name on the bonnet of their car,' wrote automobile manufacturer Comte Pierre de la Ville-Baugé in 1905. (**On Four Wheels: Vol 10: Part 141: 129**) Three years later, in his infamous figure of the Toad, Kenneth Grahame created the ultimate motor-snob. Whilst the make of Toad's motor-car is never identified, the details do not matter. It is what his motor-car represents that does. Toad's motor-car is certainly an index of his personality. Like Toad himself, his car is loud - both visually and aurally. It is an icon of his panache, his irrepressible energy, and his liberty; a liberty which is in turn a function of his political position. This representative aristocrat sees in the automobile a unique mechanism to flaunt his extraordinary wealth and a new *modus operandi* to assert his considerable political privilege.

Like Charles Wilcox, spoiled plutocrat of E. M. Forster's *Howards End*, the Toad's father has provided him with a fortune to idly squander on whatever new fashion might stimulate his passion. And, sure enough, old obsessions become redundant as Toad contemplates his 'magnificent onset'. (Grahame: 30) His mansion, his boats, and his gorgeous canary-yellow cart are quickly eclipsed when for Toad the motor-car becomes the absolute 'totem pole of prestige'. (Packard: 1960: 119) And his boundless ego, so rooted in the tangible, temporal world, requires no off-the-shelf model, not any old trophy of his social and economic conquests, but a gentleman's machine. When Toad of Toad Hall acquires a motor-car, it is the very best: not bought but 'ordered.'

Although possible to purchase generic models by the early 1900s, the up-market early car had its body designed and hand-crafted by a specialist coach-work company; one of the great *carrossiers* of Europe. A gentleman ordered a chassis, say a Rolls Royce, selected a *carrossier*, and minutely prescribed all interior appointments. It was, then, the name of the coach-worker as much as the name of the chassis-maker, that signalled status. Among the many great companies of Europe at this time were: Zagato, Weymann, Barker, Hooper, Windsor of Hounslow, Pytchley, Coup de Ville, Grosvenor, Wensum, and Vanden Plas. Such companies crafted bodies for a wide variety of great marques and although one may still have one's car 'customised', all but a handful of these true specialists remain, their art now tending to focus on particular performance machines. However, as observed earlier, their product remains the preserve of the well to do and so the machine that Toad is hopelessly besotted by in the third chapter of *The Wind In The Willows* is undoubtedly the result of the *carrossier's* art. Its 'interior of glittering plate glass and rich morocco' might well have driven F. Scott Fitzgerald to imitate its wonders in *The Great Gatsby*.

Appropriate to a novel that deals with the sharp contrast between dream and reality and pertinent to the easy agency of its wraithlike, almost ethereal hero, Gatsby's car is a cream-yellow Rolls Royce: almost certainly a Silver Ghost. When C. S. Rolls first conceived the Rolls-Royce he wrote: 'In appearance and dimensions, the Rolls-Royce landaulet should resemble the best electric carriages in use in London...the engine should be removed as far as possible from the carriage proper..[and] should be vibrationless. The motion of the car must be absolutely silent. The car must be free from the objectionable rattling and buzzing and inconvenience of chains...The engine must be smokeless and odourless.' (Rolls in Robson: 27) The name Silver Ghost was itself coined by Claude Johnson, a partner of C. S. Rolls, the vehicle earning its name because it ran so silently and because so many of its metal parts were silver plated, the body commonly finished in shiny aluminium plate. Gatsby's machine is itself 'bright with nickel' - a very expensive plating used for the radiator of the marque. (Fitzgerald: 1926: 63)

The company's Silver Ghost model, manufactured between 1908 and 1925, was a carefully considered choice for both Fitzgerald himself and as a mode of conveyance for his most famous character. Whilst in 1922 Scott and Zelda owned a second-hand Silver Ghost which they drove between Great Neck and New York, Gatsby himself glides almost imperceptibly in and out of the narrative and is, moreover, ineluctably associated with silver. He has pursued silver for much of his life and is, on numerous occasions, specifically identified with this symbol of privilege and betrayal. Nick finds him 'regarding the silver pepper of the stars' and later the hero wears a 'silver shirt...' (81) Daisy Buchanan, so much the object of Gatsby's desires, is said to '[gleam] like silver' and, together with Jordan, is described as a 'silver idol'. (110) In this sense some argue that Daisy is objectified in Gatsby's eyes: turned, like Tom Buchanan's women, into a trophy; a mere addition to an extensive collection of enchanted objects. But whilst Fitzgerald's references to silver undoubtedly highlight the two-edged significance of the metal in Western culture, it is the more straightforward suggestion of glamour which strikes us first.

Early in the novel then, aside from the numerous and portentous foreshadowings of disasters to come, Gatsby's car is a sign of uncompromised opulence. His magnificent, cream-yellow Rolls Royce, terraced with windshields and sporting a green leather interior, is bedecked with 'triumphant hat boxes and supper boxes and tool boxes...', the syntax reinforcing the cluttered, breathless luxury of the machine. (63) The depiction seems almost unreal, but is actually entirely accurate. An *Autocar* article on the 1921 Rolls-Royce two-seater is accompanied by a closely annotated plan photograph of the machine. The extraneous fittings that are noted include: food lockers, tool cupboards, hot and cold water locker, wash-basin compartment, spares cupboard, kodak photography compartment, cooking utensil compartment, suit and dressing cases, spare accumulator compartment, and recess for spare petroleum tins.²¹ Like Toad's then, Gatsby's chimerical car is undoubtedly the creation of a *carrossier*.²² Its standard of appointment, moreover, suggests royal status and, as has already been hinted, is a profound expression of its owner's being.

This relationship between the automobile and the self-perception of the individual then did not go unnoticed by Fitzgerald. In his short story, **Dice, Brassknuckles & Guitar**, for example, the 'low, long, rakish' machines bespeaking the narcissistic preoccupations of movie stars contrast to Jim Powell's old and exhausted wreck. (Fitzgerald: **SS**: 244) In another of Fitzgerald's stories, **Bernice Bobs Her Hair**, Bernice, who is from 'the wealthiest [family] in Eau Claire' possesses her own motor-car but we are informed that 'the most significant symbol of her success [is] the grey car of the hypercritical Warren McIntyre, parked daily in front of the Harvey house.' (ibid: 40) Of course, the motor-car appears as a sign of social privilege and self love elsewhere in Scott Fitzgerald's fiction.

In *The Beautiful and Damned* Joseph Bloeckman's 'large and impressive' foreign automobile contrasts with the Patch's exhausted roadster. (190) Crouching aggressively in the drive-way of an all but defeated Anthony Patch, the machine bespeaks Bloeckman's own conquests in the film industry and is, moreover, a palpable representation of the magnate's egocentricity.²³ Later in the same novel, the motor-car appears as a token of institutional privilege when Private Patch, now in the US Army, is forced to ride jitneys whilst lieutenants take taxis and generals are chauffeured about in their government automobiles. However, Fitzgerald's contempt for military hierarchy and solipsism generally is chiefly emblematised through the private automobile. The camp colonel's arrogant, narcissistic disposition, for example, is foregrounded by his driving a large car through a compound small enough to require only the use of one's feet. This man, 'a figure so austere, so removed, so magnificent, as to be scarcely comprehensible', asserts not only his own agent value but his authority over others by his mode of transport. (290) Through its scheme of prohibitions then, the organism of the army, which ostensibly abrogates the traditional structures of privilege, in fact apes these by affording the greatest mobility to those in control. Thus, Patch's total lack of agent worth is confirmed: through its hierarchical system of prerogatives the army leaves him just as immobile and humiliated as when he entered the institution - although the significance of the absent car will be discussed in detail elsewhere.

Luxury cars are signs of economic achievement and cultural excess in Forster's fiction as well, although the machines do not receive the same detailed descriptions that they do in Fitzgerald's prose. In Forster's short fiction there are scarcely any motor-cars at all whilst in *A Passage to India*, despite their role as cultural signifiers and structural engines, they are not described in any detail and so do not especially signpost pecuniary well-being. In *Howards End* however, Charles Wilcox drives an unidentified open car, its interior metaphorically foregrounded as a 'luxurious cavern of red leather'.²⁴ (31) It is an automobile which, moreover, earns admiring glances from a railway porter but the narratorial aside, 'life is a mysterious business', accompanying this look of approbation, suggests Forster's amazement that a member of the lower classes should admire the machine whilst deploring its callous and condescending owner.²⁵ Later in the novel, as we have seen, Henry Wilcox's new car is described as a 'fair creature' and, in a moment of submission to its owner's beguiling right-wing rhetoric, Helen finds herself leaning back amidst its generous cushions. For just a few seconds she has entered his world and rides like a potentate.

To play the king

Through their advertisements, manufacturers of luxury cars commonly exploited the link between their machinery and royalty. For instance, the 1911 'Coronation Number' of **The Graphic** sported a full page advertisement for Daimler - 'The car of a hundred kings' (**The Graphic**: June 27, 1911: 6) In the same issue, newly crowned King George, 'the patron of motoring', is depicted about to enter a Daimler - the preferred means of conveyance of the royal family from 1901 to 1952. In advertisements for other marques, his face appears as an unofficial endorsement. But royals elsewhere had a proclivity for the Rolls-Royce.

Citing the case of one gentleman who had a standing order for six of any new model that might be produced, W. A. Robotham, a Rolls-Royce executive during the twenties, writes of the great rajahs of India as 'fabulous customers.' (Robotham: 15) When the first Rolls-

Royce motor-car reached Bombay it created such a sensation that the princes of the subcontinent began to vie with one another. Who had the car with the most refined standard of appointment? Machines were brought upholstered in rare leathers. Others were decorated with gold and silver. Some were equipped with jewel encrusted thrones. The central Indian government itself ordered eight Silver Ghosts and one Maharaja acquired a personal fleet of twenty-two. However, the fabulously wealthy Nizam of Hyderabad outdid them all; he had a collection of fifty. British aristocrats, too, were very good, if very demanding, clients. Robotham writes of cases where these customers demanded that only the skins of still-born calves were to be used for upholstery since these were often blemish free.²⁶

Whilst the Silver Ghost motor-cars of military man T. E. Lawrence were not so lavishly appointed, they nonetheless suggested royalty – a fact that was not lost on the great colonel who called the Rolls-Royce the greatest car ever produced. Writing of a victory in which armoured Roll-Royce Silver Ghosts provided cover for two Rolls tenders as they bore down on a Turk station, Lawrence claims to have set off with his company ‘...driving like kings splendidly in...roaring cars over the smooth plains of sand and flint, with the low pale sun behind...’ (524) The poetic description certainly communicates Lawrence’s royal feeling and bespeaks a conquest of epic proportions. Indeed, the Rolls-Royce is presented as the chariot of the warrior-king and each time Lawrence writes of the machine, a reverential tone reverberates through his prose. This is hardly surprising. Quite apart from giving the colonel unprecedented power over the desert and only letting him down once during all his campaigns, the Rolls-Royce also brought to the harsh environment a regal presence – one in which the great man himself loved to indulge.

Since the Rolls-Royce is an English car, its presence in America, where it was manufactured under licence for a time, also points to a desire to recapture something left behind. This, as all readers of Fitzgerald will know, is a major thematic thread in *The Great Gatsby*. Indeed, the relationship between this theme and representations of the motor-car is profound, but the Rolls-Royce also quite simply emblematises Gatsby’s aristocratic pretensions. Perhaps an expression

of Fitzgerald's own fantasy that he wasn't the son of his parents at all, but the son of a world-ruling king, Gatsby is said to live 'like a young rajah in all the capitals of Europe.' (Fitzgerald: *GG*: 64) Gatsby certainly lives like a king and even signs himself 'in a majestic hand.' (43) The Rolls-Royce, moreover, is certainly one of *The Great Gatsby's* many expressions of 'the classic' and therefore sits well with a carefully crafted pattern of imagery and allusion designed to reinforce the hero's feigned cultural ascendancy.²⁷ Indeed, classicism had a profound influence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a renaissance that found its way into early motoring art. An excellent example of popular culture's representation of the automobile is a mid-twenties Pirelli tyre advertisement which depicts Boadicea's horse-drawn war chariots leading on a rather static automobile. The motor-car itself is not the subject of classical imagery although the intention is clearly to imbue the machine, and presumably its tyres, with a kind of classical authority. (see Roberts: 19) Another good example from the same source is a 1918 advertisement for the luxurious Cole Aero-Eight. Clearly playing on the notion of flight, above the profiled automobile swoop a pair of bi-planes and above them again a heavenly host is drawn along by a pair of prancing steeds. (Roberts: 62) This advertisement is quite remarkable since it combines aerial, celestial, and mechanical images - a confluence suggesting a synergy between automobilism and piloting - all sanctioned, presumably, by the heavens. Imagery like this (and it is not unknown in contemporary advertisements) would have influenced Fitzgerald and through its deliberate application Gatsby's car sets the hero apart from the rest of humanity, foregrounding an alienation usually reserved for royalty.²⁸

The prototype for Gatsby's 'gorgeous' machine may be found in Fitzgerald's novelette, '**The Diamond as Big as the Ritz**' (1922), where a Rolls-Pierce motor-car, a fictional hybrid of the luxury marques Rolls-Royce and Pierce-Arrow, signifies the sybaritic preoccupations of the St. Midas set. When the story was collected in **Tales of the Jazz Age**, Fitzgerald said that he was 'in a mood characterised by a perfect craving for luxury...' (F: *SS*: 182) Certainly, the Rolls-Pierce is 'immense': its body 'of gleaming metal richer than nickel and lighter than silver'. Its wheel hubs are 'studded with iridescent geometric figures of green and yellow' and inside, the

automobile is upholstered with 'exquisite tapestries of silk,...jewels and embroideries set upon a background of cloth of gold.' (F: **SS**: 186)

In America, it must be understood that the Pierce-Arrow motor-car was the equivalent of the Rolls-Royce and as such was 'the chosen vehicle of every president from Taft to Roosevelt.' (**OFW**: 86: 1702) The P-A, as it was commonly called, epitomised the hand-crafting of automobiles and the manufacturer also placed substantial emphasis on chassis strength. The company's product was undoubtedly prized by aficionados, particularly the large and luxuriously appointed 12.7 litre P-A 66 A-1 of 1913, the machine which seems most likely to have inspired the dream car of **The Diamond**.²⁹ Nonetheless, demand for P-A's fell away disastrously after 1920, a situation which rapidly worsened when shareholders voted to sell to the prosperous but down-market Studebaker Corporation. Pierce-Arrow's clients objected to the marketing approach of the new owners who put the luxurious P-A's alongside the much cheaper Studebakers - a strategy felt to demean both car and buyer.

Protection from the poor

In Hermann Hesse's 1927 novel *Steppenwolf*, placards call for the blood of 'perfumed plutocrats' and for the destruction of those symbols of their social hegemony, especially 'huge and fiendishly purring automobiles.' (210) In the 'Great Automobile Hunt' that follows, it is clear that the rich have used their machines as shields against the poor just as Collector Turton's machine protects the Europeans from a crowd of angry Indians on the way to Aziz's trial in Forster's *Passage*. This sentiment that the rich cocoon themselves in their automobiles also finds expression in Scott Fitzgerald's fiction. In *The Beautiful and Damned*, Anthony and Gloria's car takes the couple 'through the chaotic unintelligible Bronx, then over a wide murky district...with suburbs of tremendous and sordid activity'. Later, Gloria complains that the settlements they pass on their way out of New York 'aren't towns...just city blocks plumped down coldly into waste acres' whilst in *Gatsby* the hero's magnificent car speeds past nineteenth century slums on the outskirts of New York.³⁰ (158) It is as if by

merely accelerating these occupants are able to erase the fact of poverty or to at least make something ugly seem less applicable to them.

American writer P. J. O'Rourke gives satiric expression to this notion in *Republican Party Reptile* where he advises Republicans to purchase large cars since '...when something bad happens in a really big car...it happens very far away - way out at the end of your fenders [where] it doesn't really concern you too much.' (O'Rourke: 131) So it doesn't really concern Gatsby too much when he learns that a member of the working classes has been 'ripped open' by his machine. All he can manage is the limp plea 'Don't tell me, old sport' before dismissing the incident to talk of Daisy's wellbeing. (Fitzgerald: *GG*: 137) This extraordinary sense of alienation from one's fellow man is also foregrounded in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* where Gerald Crich employs the motor-car as a device to cut through the common crowd of shoppers in Beldover. Moreover, at the mines themselves, his car physically cuts him off from those subordinate to him; that is from those he objectifies as part of the production process over which he presides.³¹

Provoking the poor

Motor-cars then did cause serious class tensions, especially in the country and in villages where automobilists were regarded as presumptuous trouble-makers. Some of the problems encountered by those used to a quieter life have already been adumbrated, particularly the issue of bolting horses and upturned carts, but it was the perceived arrogance of the motorists that rankled most. Sachs cites a 1906 journal entry by Rudolf Diesel who records his delight at having roared through a settlement in Piave Valley, smothering its residents in layers of limestone dust as he went.³² But there were cads outside the Continent too. George Bernard Shaw was one of them.

In the summer of 1908, having completed too short a programme of lessons with the Royal Automobile Club, Shaw took possession of a 30hp Lorraine-Dietrich which he proceeded to drive at a furious pace. By his own admission he was a bad and inconsiderate driver;

‘extraordinarily reckless - though always chivalrous to the injured and the alarmed, especially when the fault was theirs.’ (Holroyd: 206) The dramatist confessed to *The Motor* that the authorities ought to have revoked his licence and one Mrs Reeves, a neighbour of Shaw’s, thought him ‘...a rum one - a *very* rum one’ since he made no apologies for careering through the village at over twenty miles an hour. (Reeves in Holroyd: 210)

Of course, one would expect arrogant behaviour such as Diesel’s and Shaw’s to find representations in the fiction of the era, and so it does - particularly in Forster’s narratives. In *Howards End* for instance, on his way from the train station to his family’s country estate (with a terrified Juley Munt on board as his passenger), Charles Wilcox drives his motor-car ‘as quickly as he dare[s]’ through a local village before looking back with pride ‘at the cloud of dust that they had raised in their passage...’. (32) Much of this dust, the narrator informs us, settles on gardens but a proportion ‘enter[s] the lungs of the villagers.’ (33) It is scarcely surprising then that Margaret later comes to see the Wilcox family as ‘conquering hero[s]’ who leave in their wake ‘a little dust and a little money...’. (246) The same sentiment is expressed years later by Zelda Fitzgerald who wrote of the motor-car as ‘the first prize, puffing the power of money out on the summer air...’ (Z. Fitzgerald: *CW*: 173) Whilst the impact of the machine in the garden will be explored in a later chapter, both F. Scott Fitzgerald and E. M. Forster then foreground the motor-car as a sign of cultural excess.

Impertinent servants

Naturally, if one had a chauffeur, one’s privilege was confirmed. There can be little doubt that the chauffeur, in the popular consciousness at least, remains to this day a symbol of gross inefficiency since the employment of same would suggest one’s capacity to withstand conspicuous waste.³³ Thornstein Veblen, that indefatigable commentator on the cultural excesses of the leisure class, writes that in modern societies ‘...the possession and exploitation of servants as a means of showing superfluity undergoes refinement’ adding that ‘there arises a class of servants...whose sole office is

fatuously to wait upon the person of their owner, and so put in evidence his ability unproductively to consume a large amount of service...'. (Veblen: 27) However, in many aristocratic households at the start of the twentieth century, chauffeurs were employed simply because 'early cars were difficult to drive and particularly difficult to maintain.'³⁴ Moreover, and quite unlike other servants, drivers enjoyed good wages and long employment tenure since they were in very short supply. It is scarcely surprising then that chauffeurs seemed to undercut the very agency that employers like William Beveridge were attempting to assert.³⁵

'In the character of Henry Straker [Shaw] introduced a new type of working man who understood and delighted in modern machinery and was destined to be more important in the technological age then approaching than the landed aristocracy who had for centuries been the ruling class.' So writes A. C. Ward in his General Introduction to the 1967 Longmans edition of *Man and Superman*. Chauffeurs, of course, also make appearances in the fictions of both Fitzgerald and Forster where their characteristic impertinence foregrounds this quite special status that Ward alludes to. In *Howards End* Margaret observes that whilst 'other servants [pass] like water,...the chauffeur remain[s]...', a permanent symbol of defiance. (323) Torn as she is between two identities, Margaret here displays the consciousness of the capitalist overlord but the law of supply and demand for once works against her and so Crane persists as a paradoxical icon of his employer's privilege and incompetence.³⁶ In Forster's *A Passage to India*, The Nawab Bahadur, who incidentally confesses the technical difficulties of driving, employs an impertinent Eurasian driver whilst in Scott Fitzgerald's *Gatsby*, Daisy's chauffeur, Ferdie, gives an expression so condescending that Nick asks if the 'gasoline affect[s] his nose'. (83)

Notwithstanding Hegel's divination that the positions of master and slave are reversible, for all their special status, chauffeurs were (and are) fundamentally servants.³⁷ In Fitzgerald's story '**Bernice Bobs Her Hair**' then, chauffeurs stare through the windows of Bernice Harvey's country club for a glimpse of the privileged lives led by those for whom they drive. But these servants also had the means to demonstrate their contempt for their masters. In *Howards End*

Margaret Schlegel's Italian driver 'dearly love[s] making her late' whilst in Lawrence's short fiction '**The Primrose Path**', taxi driver Daniel Sutton's behaviour at the wheel is an expression of the condition we recognise today as road rage. (210) We see the same thing in Lawrence's '**The Captain's Doll**' where Hepburn and Hannele's insubordinate driver recklessly uses his machine to give expression to a 'deep, deep...class hatred'. (*Tales*: 532) In one final example from Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent*, an embittered and seriously drunk Mexican chauffeur gives Kate Leslie and Own Rhys a terrifying ride home from an English tea-party - the driver's refusal to slow down an expression of contempt for his passengers. However, the servant status of chauffeurs became even more pronounced as mechanical reliability improved and owners themselves learned to both drive and maintain cars. In the later fiction of our era then, the chauffeur is more out of the car than at the wheel. In Forster's *Howards End*, for example, Crane tends Henry's motor-car although he does not drive the machine and in *A Passage*, Nancy Derek relegates her driver to the back seat.³⁸ Similarly, in Fitzgerald's *Gatsby*, the hero's chauffeur may not be found at the wheel of the Rolls-Royce or any other car.

The colour of agency

Whilst the employment of a chauffeur certainly signified a degree of social privilege then, up until World War One the ownership of a private motor-car itself bespoke one's economic position. However, as more automobiles in greater variety took to the roads of the world, more precise signs of social stratification were required. Among these was the use of symbolic colours. Whilst Ford relentlessly, and somewhat short-sightedly, pursued his 'any colour so long as it's black' policy late into the production life of the Model-T, up-and-coming manufacturers, particularly General Motors, were experimenting with new and startling polychromatic lacquers. A market craving difference responded enthusiastically and during the prosperous nineteen-twenties a staggering array of colours were applied to motor bodies.³⁹

The Great Gatsby is a veritable celebration of this variation. Indeed, as we shall see, the hero's bright yellow station wagon and the yellow cart which he observes running through green fields both confirm Gatsby's apparently sunny and optimistic outlook whilst his extraordinary cream-yellow Rolls-Royce does likewise – as well as highlighting the fact that he belongs to a world far removed from that of mortals.⁴⁰ On the other hand, Gatsby's chauffeur has a uniform of robin's-egg blue and is so identified with a very worldly aristocratic order. Tom Buchanan's blue coupe suggests similar connections whilst his wife's white roadsters (Daisy is associated with *two* cabriolets in the novel) communicate the particular agency of romantic innocence. This is the case for the Patches of *The Beautiful and Damned* too – although in this novel, as in *Gatsby*, the white car is in fact something of a red herring in that the drivers are actually quite unromantic and guilty of moral crimes.

Of course, green is another crucial 'agency' colour in Fitzgerald's fiction. We will see later how its profound bucolic associations are thoroughly exploited by the author, but here we observe that green is one of the colours of the conquering frontiersman. It is, moreover, the colour of environmental idealism and is employed by Fitzgerald to suggest a Golden Age. Pertinently, Gatsby's own car is misidentified as a green machine – although it does have a green leather interior that communicates its owner's desire to recapture the past. A green vehicle also appears in *This Side of Paradise*. Here, a 'shining green autobus' signifies hope and suggests the idealism that eludes the novel's lacklustre hero. (137) The other reference to green as applied to the motor-car is in 'The Diamond' where, as we will recall, the wheels are decorated with green jewels. In 'The Diamond' then, as in all of Fitzgerald's fiction, the colour green signifies something enduring and manifestly precious.

There are two further colours, as applied to automobiles, that suggest agency in Fitzgerald's writing. They are silver and red. Whilst 'silver' is generally considered a motif rather than a colour per se, we may nonetheless think of it as a symbolic hue since the designers of very expensive motor-cars sometimes eschewed lacquers in favour of polished metal finishes – including nickel and aluminium. This is

certainly the case in 'The Diamond' where the Washington's car has a body 'of gleaming metal richer than nickel and lighter than silver'. (SS: 186) In *The Great Gatsby*, where Fitzgerald is alert to the cultural significance of silver as a sign of both economic prepotency and betrayal, attention is drawn to the bright nickel finish of the radiator and other parts of the hero's Rolls-Royce.

The final colour that suggests agency, in the fictions of both Forster and Fitzgerald, is red. Traditionally, red is the colour of passion although it also suggests the freedom of youth. Of course, English literature's first red car may be found in Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*. In this, one of the twentieth century's greatest narratives of conquest and destruction, the hapless gentlemen own a huge red machine whilst the only automobile to have its colour detailed in E. M. Forster's *Howards End* is the 'vermilion giant' belonging to Henry Wilcox. Although Forster selects the colour of this motor-car to foreground the youthful agencies of Charles Wilcox (who is, as we shall see, profoundly identified with the machine) Scott Fitzgerald is even more aware of the symbolic significance of the colour. In *The Beautiful and Damned*, Parker Allison's red-and-yellow roadster is used to attract women and to foreground the owner's libidinal drives whilst in *This Side of Paradise*, red Stutzes highlight the passions of young men.

In so signifying agencies, then, both Forster and Fitzgerald are at pains to establish connections between certain personages and particular automobiles. Therefore, to foreground sexual power, the red car; to highlight pecuniary success, the silver car; to underscore aristocratic connections, the blue car; to suggest the agency of the dreamer, the yellow car; and to emblematised a figure's affinity for the frontier, the green car. But in order to establish linkages between characters and motor-cars, writers, including Forster and Fitzgerald, go much further and turn the automobile into a 'home' for certain figures.

The car as home

In fictions written between 1910 and 1925, the motor-car is to some extent identified with home – either because the machine facilitates a journey to a familiar locale, or because it becomes a ‘residence’ of sorts. However, it was in 1902 that Bernard Shaw became the first writer to acknowledge that the automobile would replace bricks and mortar. In the figure of Henry Straker, Shaw developed a character whose preferred habitat is the automobile. Specifically, Straker may be found reading in the motor-car and even sleeps in his employer’s machine.⁴¹ Indeed, the chauffeur’s identification with the automobile is so profound that we do not find him in any other environment and it is, moreover, this same close identification with the machine that highlights Straker’s symbolic role as the new man of the twentieth century: the technologically literate individual whose being is predicated on the idea of progress.

Six years later, in *The Wind in the Willows*, Kenneth Grahame foreshadowed a time when people would abandon their houses and dwell on the highways of England. Whilst Toad’s canary-yellow cart itself expresses this idea, Grahame’s percipience finds its most replete expression in the episode in which the Toad, who has been incarcerated by his friends, arranges his bedroom furniture in crude resemblance of a motor-car. Whilst clearly foregrounding the Toad’s chronically disturbed state of mind, the scene also suggests that the animal has rejected the notion of dwelling in favour of a life on the road. E. M. Forster considers the same theme in *Howards End* in which the automobile becomes a ‘home’ for Charles Wilcox.

Like Henry Straker, Charles Wilcox seems thoroughly alienated from human beings but decidedly drawn to technology. Late in the novel his father accuses him of not being able to move without the aid of his motor-car whilst early on Charles stands up in Henry’s machine and shouts (over the noise of its motor) across the lawns of Howards End. In this quite pivotal scene, the automobile is clearly identified as a home for Charles who, in the alien environment of his mother’s garden, feels able to pontificate as he might in his own living room. The motor-

car, then, enables Charles to maintain a profound sense of personal territory - no matter where he travels. The automobile therefore makes it possible for Charles to remain in charge and we may indeed find him animated and empowered by a machine in which he feels, quite literally, at home.

So, as major literary figures of the early twentieth century, both Shaw and Forster recognised that the motor-car was idealised as a second residence. However, they were by no means alone. D. H. Lawrence too sees that the automobile was potentially a home away from home. In *The Rainbow*, for instance, Skrebensky turns his car into a mobile bedroom in which to seduce Ursula whilst in *Women in Love* Birkin does likewise. In this novel too, Gerald Crich turns his machine into a mobile office from which to confront protesters. In *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, of course, Clifford's second home is his motorised cart whilst the automobile is Hilda's definitive environment. Virginia Woolf is also aware of the automobile's function as a home and in *Mrs Dalloway* the machine becomes (a rather depressing) waiting room for Lady Bradshaw. Naturally, the notion of the car as home is not lost on Scott Fitzgerald.

Although the automobile is not *specifically* identified as a second or alternative residence in Fitzgerald's fiction either, there is, once again, a very clear recognition that modern people have abandoned their homes in order to express their being on the highway. Of course, the novel in which this point is most forcibly made is Fitzgerald's second: *The Beautiful and Damned*. Here, Anthony and Gloria Patch leave their lodgings and take to the road in a white roadster. As we will see later, their search for a permanent residence is half-hearted and it appears to their friends, and indeed to us as readers, that they are content to perpetually drift. Whilst Fitzgerald ultimately condemns this rootlessness, he nonetheless deliberately develops an initial sense of anticipation and excitement as the young couple drive off in search of adventure and fortune. A similar mood is elicited with respect to Jordan Baker, the quintessential drifter of *The Great Gatsby*.

Not far into *The Great Gatsby*, we learn that Jordan Baker is of no fixed abode and that her ostensibly enviable freedom is facilitated by

the automobile. Certainly, Jordan gets about. Nick tells us that, among other places, she has been to Hot Springs, Hempstead, and Southampton whilst Tom informs us that she has driven herself across America. Of course, Jordan's peripatetic disposition is further reinforced by the fact that Fitzgerald intends her to be identified with the Jordan Playboy motor-car. Advertisements for this sporty roadster made much of Western imagery and the association between the model and Miss Baker underscores the latter's identity as a questing but lonesome cowgirl. Undoubtedly, there is something splendid about the idea. In the first few chapters anyway, Fitzgerald wants us to be attracted to Jordan and to indulge, vicariously, in her great freedom. By implication, the automobile appears to be a fairly attractive home – especially when compared to Gatsby's cold, empty mansion. By way of penultimate comment on this theme, in Fitzgerald's short fiction, the Ford motor-car is identified as a homely machine, whilst in *Zelda Fitzgerald's Save Me For The Waltz*, Alabama (read Zelda) feels 'at home' when, on a visit South to see her dying father, a 'little brown Ford' driven by her sister appears to pick her up. (282)

Finally, to find fuller representation of the 'car as home' theme, one has to go forward to the fictions of John Steinbeck and William Faulker - both of whom consider the phenomenon of life on the road. Of course, not long after 1925, popular song also celebrated the benefits of the mobile home. Chuck Berry's '**No Money Down**' is probably the most striking example. The lyrics of this suitably fast-moving number foreground the features of the ideal automobile: power steering, power brakes, a large motor, automatic heating, air conditioning, radio, television, a full-length bed, and a telephone. Whilst Berry's vision did not become anything like a reality until the 1950s when Volkswagen launched the world's first multi-purpose vehicle, the Kombi van, it nonetheless highlights a desire to abandon bricks and mortar in a machine that at once has all the comforts of home whilst facilitating unparalleled freedoms.

Freedoms

“And to think I never knew!” went on the Toad in a dreamy monotone. “...never even dreamed.”

Kenneth Grahame - *The Wind in the Willows*

The love of machines

‘There is no simple...litmus of agency.’ (Davidson in Binkley: 4) However, as suggested in the previous chapter, technology has the capacity to empower users and modern society, which appears to subscribe to the idea that progress is amelioration, greets new technologies with unparalleled enthusiasm. Of course, Victorian culture, which was the first to be dominated by technical apparatuses, also welcomed the machine. In his essay ‘**Signs of the Times**’ published in the **Edinburgh Review** in 1829, influential Englishman Thomas Carlyle confidently proclaimed: ‘It is an age of machinery’.⁴² (Carlyle in L. Marx: 43) Whilst the popular perception of Carlyle, as of Dickens, is that he condemned technology, his initial approach to the First Machine Age suggests an admiration of both technical constructs and those who exerted control over them.

Indeed, Carlyle saw technological development as being inevitable, thinking of it as a symbol of humankind’s ability to exert dominion over the natural world; a means of freeing people from lives of drudgery and penury. Furthermore, he regarded captains of industry as modern heroes and perceived something divine in the machine. By 1842 Tennyson had picked up on these themes and included the

following vigorous lines in his '**Locksley Hall**': 'Forward, forward let us range, / Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.' (Tennyson: 73) In the meantime, in America, the optimism of Tench Coxe and others had rubbed off on Walt Whitman who told the Brooklyn Art Union that 'the steam engine [was] no bad symbol of the United States.' (Whitman in L. Marx: 164) Certainly, Whitman's '**Passage to India**' of 1868 sees the machine as emblematic of a higher, spiritual power.

In these early days of machine culture then, criticism was mild, if expressed at all. In his *Life of Johnson*, Boswell describes the moment, in 1776, when Dr. Johnson first considered the significance of emergent transit technologies. His interest in machinery amounts to little more than a detached fascination; certainly there is none of the condemnation of the machine that was soon to become a stock literary archetype.⁴³ Later in the eighteenth century Philadelphia merchant Tench Coxe took the optimistic view that machines relieve us from the drudgery of repetitive manual labour whilst in his *The Philosophy of Manufactures* of 1835, A. Ure wrote this of the factory system: 'In these spacious halls the benignant power of steam summons around him his myriads of willing menials.' (18) Thirteen years on, in *Principles of Political Economy*, John Stuart Mill could only find machinery 'injurious to the labouring class' in that it might 'draw [capital] from other employments...'⁴⁴ (96) Whilst this knee-bending to technology was not to last, the same positive spirit that informs early Victorian texts manifests itself equally strongly in the arts of the early twentieth century; arts that were sizing up and responding to the emergent technologies of the second machine age.

Few would dispute the point that a rash of scientific discoveries and developments influenced *fin de siècle* aetiology. By 1903 the Wright brothers had taken to the air in a powered aircraft and by the late 10's official scepticism about the new air-birds had sufficiently eased to make commercial flights a reality. In 1910 itself Madame Curie isolated the element radium (it had only been discovered in 1898) and Marconi was hard at work developing the wireless whilst Bell, who had long since invented the telephone, was now working, at characteristically feverish pace, on other projects including the

hydrofoil and sonar detection systems. Meanwhile, geneticists were building on the recently discovered work of Mendel and the Newtonian universe was being turned on its head by Albert Einstein, who, as early as 1905, was publishing scientific papers containing profound revelations about physics; revelations which culminated in his Special Theory of Relativity and, later, his General Theory of Relativity. At the same time, Ernest Rutherford was developing his theory of particle physics and in American and European metropolises feature-length motion pictures, which were widely distributed by 1910, were drawing large audiences. By then, of course, Karl Benz had already developed the internal combustion engine and Ford's famous 'T' was being turned out on massive production lines.

Whilst it is true then that the arts were profoundly influenced by the catastrophic European conflict of 1914 -18, it is fair to suggest that the characteristic dissonance of both form and content were equally informed by this medley of scientific invention. The machine age had entered a second, extraordinarily rapid phase of development and by 1900 a new consciousness was emerging - one aligned not to bucolic ideals but to the novel rhythms of science and technical innovation. Of this era's many inventions, it was nonetheless the motor-car that seemed to suggest most completely the new pulse of life, and, as Julian Symonds writes in *Makers of the New*, artists attuned themselves 'to the noise, clatter, and movement of the internal combustion engine....'. (Symonds: 35)

A new sound

'There has always been at each decisive period in this world's history some voice, some note, that represented for the time being the prevailing power. There was a time when the supreme cry of authority was the lion's roar. Then, came the voice of man. After that it was the crackle of fire...And now, finally, there was heard in the streets of Detroit the murmur of this newest and most perfect of forces, the automobile, rushing along at the rate of 25 miles an hour... . It was not like any other sound ever heard in this world. It was not like the puff! puff! of the exhaust of gasoline in a river launch; neither is it the cry!

cry! of a working steam engine; but a long, quick, mellow gurgling sound, not harsh, not unmusical, not distressing; a note that falls with pleasure on the ear. It must be heard to be appreciated. And the sooner you hear its newest chuck! chuck! the sooner you will be in touch with civilisation's latest lisp, its newest voice...'.⁴⁵ These words, which appeared in the *News-Tribune* of 04 February 1900, suggest that reporters at least had awakened to the rhythms of modernity and that discord did not necessarily mean disapproval.

However, whilst journalists toyed with mere onomatopoeia, musicians were responding in a more concerted way to the pulse of modern technics. Classical rhythms were abandoned in favour of the meter of machines, the new impetus spawning a confidence which found startling expression. The years 1908 and 1909, then, were full of famous declarations and Carlyle's assertion of 1829 seemed to be echoed in the text of Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, in the manifestos of F. T. Marinetti, in the art of the Futurists and the Vorticists, in the music of Debussy and Stravinsky, and in the choreography of Vaslav Nijinsky and Serge Diaghilev. Indeed, Diaghilev's *Ballets russes* of 1909 to 1913 were emblematic of a new attitude to technology and therefore merit a more extended examination than one might expect.

On 17 May, 1909 Serge Diaghilev's first Russian Ballet opened in Paris at the Théâtre du Châtelet. As Modris Eksteins notes, it caused a sensation. Opening night audiences went away dazed by the provocative displays of clashing colours, a startling new choreography, and the panache of a percussive score. However, reviews of the performances, though often favourable, displayed little understanding of the cultural phenomena influencing either the ballet or the music. Three years later, when the *Ballets russes de Diaghilev* arrived back in Paris, the city was still recovering from the momentous 1909 season. Premiering was Debussy's *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, a ballet telling the story of a Roman deity who falls in love with a young wood nymph. Attired in leotards at a time when skin-tight costumes were considered obscene, Vaslav Nijinsky provoked the audience into what Eksteins terms a 'collective salivation and swallowing' as he descended, hips

undulating, over the nymph's scarf and quivered in simulated orgasm. (Eksteins: 27)

Gaston Calmette, editor of the influential *Le Figaro*, refused to publish the favourable review of *Faune* written by regular arts columnist Robert Brussel. Instead he penned a front page condemnation of the ballet: 'We are shown a lecherous faun, whose movements are filthy and bestial in their eroticism, and whose gestures are as crude as they are indecent.' (*Le Figaro*, May 31, 1912 in Eksteins: 27) In recounting his own impression of *Faune*, which he saw at its London premier on 17 February 1913, Cyril Beaumont writes: 'The ballet created a sensation both for its novelty of presentation and for the questionable character of Nijinsky's poses immediately preceding the fall of the curtain... I well remember the gasp that went up from the audience at Nijinsky's audacity...the ballet was received with rapturous enthusiasm mingled with some hisses...' (Beaumont: 51-54) Whilst movements in *Faune* were either lateral, thereby breaking every tradition of classical ballet, or downright suggestive, Debussy's innovative, often zealous, and sometimes electrifying score further alienated large sections of contemporary audiences.

But Diaghilev was prepared to go further, his ballets becoming increasingly daring and challenging. Accordingly, the 1913 season opened with *Jeux*, a ballet set around a tennis match. *Jeux* was audacious, not because of any suggestiveness, but because of its extraordinary mixture of classical and anti-classical poses, its expansive score, and its startling rhythms. Stravinsky, himself a musical reformer, was astounded, claiming that it was 'awful' (Buckle: 92) Audiences were similarly disenchanted, but their disappointment turned, in some cases, to blind rage when *Le Sacre du printemps* premiered two weeks later at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on May 29, 1913.

The evidence suggests that Stravinsky wanted *The Rite of Spring* to be provocative. He knew very well that the work was progressive, writing to Diaghilev that: '...we must wait a long time before the public grows accustomed to our language' (Stravinsky in Eksteins: 41) And there is also Nijinsky's correspondence to go by.

Nijinsky wrote to Stavinsky on January 25, 1913 noting that *Le Sacre* would be, 'for the ordinary viewer a jolting and emotional experience.' (ibid) Certainly the music is jarring - violating the laws of harmony and rhythm. What melody there is fleeting and ephemeral, the composer's emphasis on heavy percussion bludgeoning the audience. On opening night, moreover, there was not a single classical movement; indeed, Nijinsky's choreography was starting: a mixture of anti-classical poses (feet were turned inward), jumping, stomping, and unnatural sliding. Hunch-shouldered dancers, moreover, appeared to be weighed down by an invisible force.

Bar a few enlightened reviews, the press response was predictably hostile. Of *Le Sacre's* score, one critic said that it was: 'the most discordant composition ever written' adding that 'Never has the cult of the wrong note been applied with such industry, zeal, and ferocity' (in Eksteins: 51). Another made scathing reference to 'Hottentot music'. (Eksteins: 50) *Le Sacre's* London premier, on 11 July 1913, met with a similarly hostile response from the press and some members of the paying public. Many in that first English audience complained bitterly of splitting headaches, a response, no doubt, to the relentless, pounding musical maelstrom that is *The Rite of Spring*. However, Beaumont's assessment is that the English audience, like the Parisian one, was 'about equally divided in their dislike and their appreciation'. (Beaumont: 75)

Despite the enthusiasm of Brussel, Beaumont, and others, it was not until 1921 that the genesis of *The Rite of Spring*, and the *Ballets russes* generally, was properly understood. Predictably, it was T. S. Eliot who perceived the cognate forms that underpinned Stravinsky's score and Nijinsky's choreography. In 1921, the poet attended a performance of *Le Sacre*. His biographer, Peter Ackroyd, writes: 'at the end he stood up and cheered.' (Ackroyd: 112) For Eliot, Stravinsky's work, in particular, was a powerful emblem in that its abruptness and dissonance seemed to echo the rhythms of modern industrial life. Eliot himself acknowledged the seminal importance of the work, claiming in the *Dial* that it metamorphosed 'the rhythm of the steppes into the scream of the motor- horn, the rattle of machinery, the grind of wheels, the beating of iron and steel, the roar of the

underground railway, and the other barbaric cries of modern life...’ (Eliot in Crawford: 139) But whilst Eliot undoubtedly uses Stravinsky’s music to underpin his own endeavours in **The Waste Land**, where, in accordance with the poet’s emphasis on the auditory imagination, broken rhythms and fractured cadences come closest to enacting modernity’s savage ritual, the Italian Futurists had already assimilated into their work the cacophony of the city - taking as their governing symbol the roaring motor-car.⁴⁶

Responding, perhaps, to Marinetti’s plea to interpret ‘the musical soul of crowds...trains, tanks, automobiles, and aeroplanes’, Futurist musician Luigi Russolo pleaded for artists to cross the great modern capitals ‘with [their] ears more alert than [their] eyes’. This he called for in ‘**The Art of Noises**’ and it was in this document of March 1913 that he also claimed modern music to be ‘PARALLELED BY THE MULTIPLICATION OF MACHINES...’.⁴⁷ (Apollonio: 75) It was here too that he called for the ‘palpitation of valves, the coming and going of pistons, [and] the howl of [the mechanical]’. Russolo’s primary group of preferred noises, as recorded in ‘**The Art**’, comprises: rumbles, roars, explosions, crashes, splashes, and booms, whilst the second celebrates the whistle, the snort, and the hiss.

Of course, the motor-car did it all and so it was little wonder that the Futurist’s greatest musical triumph came with the development of the composer’s infamous noise intoners. The first of these enormous instruments, unveiled in June 1913, produced, through 10-whole tones, the noise of an unsilenced internal combustion engine.⁴⁸ In 1914, not long before he offered ‘**The Meeting of Automobiles and Aeroplanes**’ at the Coliseum, Russolo gave a private performance of the noise intoners in Marinetti’s home. Stravinsky and Diaghilev, keen followers of both Eastern and Western manifestations of Futurism, were in attendance. Stravinsky, who was proposing to use a noise intoner in one of his compositions, ‘leapt from the divan like an exploding bedspring’ when Russolo cranked up his machine, whilst, ‘with a whistle of overjoyed excitement, Diaghilev quavered “Ah Ah”...for him the highest sign of approval.’ (Francesco Cangiullo in Bozzolla & Tisdall: 118)

For the Futurists then, the motor-car was a principal ally. It seemed to suggest everything they were about and through it, as Tim Benton writes, artists like Marinetti and Russolo could realise their Nietzschean fantasies.⁴⁹ (Benton: 19) Prized for all sorts of things then, the automobile's arrival unequivocally signalled that the world was to dance to a new tune: 'Let us break out...make the music lovers scream...[i]t's no good objecting that noises are exclusively loud and disagreeable to the ear.' (Russolo in Apollonio: 76) Of course, painters were also keen to represent the noise of the internal combustion engine, the most striking example being Charles Demuth's 'I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold' - a work completed to complement William Carlos Williams's poem 'The Great Figure'. Faithful to the poem, the painting shows a fire engine cutting a swathe through metropolitan streets. It is a blur of energy; an irresistible cacophony captured on canvas. And, despite the complaints against motor-cars and motorists which were appearing daily in the popular press from 1900, this aesthetic was, to a significant extent, embraced by writers.

The Wind in the Willows is the first book written in English to deal with the negative effects of the motor-car, but it is impossible to find a literary text which flatly condemns the automobile. Indeed, whilst acknowledging the destructive potential of motor-cars, writers like Bernard Shaw, Kenneth Grahame, Ian Hay, William Carlos Williams, E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence, and F. Scott Fitzgerald romanticise the machine - often celebrating its noise.⁵⁰ In *The Wind in the Willows*, for instance, the brazen "poop-poop" of the gentlemen's motor-car seems more of a celebration than the 'double note of warning' it is said to be whilst in *The Great Gatsby* the three-noted horn of the hero's Rolls-Royce seems to herald magnificence. Philip Meldrum, hero of Ian Hay's popular novel *A Knight On Wheels*, '[hears] music in the whizzing of a clutch' whilst for Septimus Smith, of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, the anthem of the twentieth century is the sound of horns and motors.

In Fitzgerald's fiction generally, the sounds of car horns suggest, among other things, promise and sexual potency and even the throbbing automobiles which Nick Carraway hears in New York foreground a certain libidinous drive. Moreover, the throbbing taxi of Eliot's 'The

Waste Land', from which Fitzgerald borrowed his own throbbing machines, subtly suggests the *possibility* of a lively, engaging sexual agency; one that otherwise idles blandly, misfires, or even stalls completely.⁵¹

Sedan seductions

Among the great many freedoms made possible by the automobile then is the liberation of libido from the parental gaze. By the mid nineteen-twenties, as James Flink notes, 'the motor-car [had] undercut parental supervision and authority' and had become a structural component in the life of the American teenager. (Flink: *AA*: 159) But private conveyances had, for a long time earlier, been a convenient, if somewhat uncomfortable, locus for the amorous liaison. Lord Byron's letter to Douglas Kinnard of 26 October 1819 is a celebration of the kind of agent act made possible by private transport. 'As to "**Don Juan**"' Byron writes, ' - confess - confess - you dog - and be candid - that it is the sublime of *that there* sort of writing - it may be bawdy -...but is it not life...Could any man have written it - who has not lived in the world? - and tooled in a post-chaise? in a hackney coach? in a Gondola?...in a court carriage?...'⁵² (Byron in Marchand: 232) One hundred and fifty years earlier, in the pamphlet *Coach and Sedan*, a farmer gloats that his coach is his preferred method of conveyance since in it he can be accompanied by his 'maides...with their Forkes, Rakes, and a bottle or two of good Beere.' (C&S: B3) In the same document a vicar complains that the Coach has been 'these many yeeres a lewd liver, [accompanied by] common Strumpets both of citie and the Countrey...never caring for the Church.' (C&S: E3)

Of course, the same complaints were made against the motor-car. James Flink cites a 1921 special report which commented that 'Numerous complaints have been received of night riders who park their automobiles along country boulevards, douse their lights and indulge in orgies.' (Flink: *AA*: 159) Similarly, Marsh and Collet cite the case of a Juvenile Court Judge who in the 1920s called the automobile 'a house of prostitution on wheels'. They also note that during the same decade the International Reform Society asked Henry

Ford to 'frame legislation that will stop the use of the motor-car for immoral purposes.'⁵³ (Marsh & Collet: 192 - 193) Whilst that legislation was never drawn up, Ford was blamed for doing everything possible to make in car coitus an uncomfortable and hazardous experience and popular belief has it that Ford himself designed the notoriously hard back seat of the 'T'. However, according to one anonymous libertine, Ford 'neglected to reduce the amount of head room in the vehicle thereby encouraging a certain amount of stand-up experimentation.'⁵⁴

There were, then, those who celebrated the new mobilisation of libido, but proponents were in the minority - except, it would seem, among musicians, manufacturers, poets, and novelists. Gus Edwards' *In My Merry Oldsmobile*, for instance, was a particularly popular song of its era.⁵⁵ The delightful double entendre of its lyrics easily won over the younger generation who sent it to the top of the charts whilst worried parents frowned in disapproval of the not-so-subliminal sub-text: 'You can go as far as you like with me in our merry Oldsmobile'. Of course, similar sentiments found expression in other well known songs of the period among which may be numbered: '**On the Back Seat of a Henry Ford**', '**Tumble in a Rumble Seat**', '**When He Wanted To Love Her He Put Up The Cover**', '**Fifteen Kisses To A Gallon Of Gas**', and '**In Our Little Love-mobile**'.

There is also no doubt that automobile manufacturers were themselves keen to capitalise on suggestions of sexual freedom. For instance, since 1903 Buick's bonnet symbol has been a silver ring pierced by a projectile and since at least 1900 Wolseley's radiator icon has been a bulbous head breaking out of a 'V'. Moreover, numerous manufacturers exploited the nude female form - including Rolls Royce with its famous silver figurine. But manufacturers' advertisements were similarly suggestive. Peter Roberts cites a German campaign of the 1920s in which a fraulein suggestively holds a model of an elongated open tourer to her groin whilst whispering the words 'Mein Benz'⁵⁶ but the most famous advertisements of the period, inspiring Scott Fitzgerald's character Jordan Baker, were those promoting the very 'sexy' Jordan Playboy models of the early to late twenties. The first advertisement for the Playboy which appeared in the **Saturday**

Evening Post of 23 June 1923 created quite a stir and made literary history. Whilst Jordan's copy had always been up-beat, mildly suggestive, and slanted to a female target audience, the 1923 campaign, with its Western overtones, word compounding, and striking alliteration was the apotheosis of the advertiser's art. The entire text *is* Jordan Baker - a connection that is more or less made for us by Nick Carraway when he says that 'she looked like a good illustration...'⁵⁷ (Fitzgerald: **GG**: 168)

Scott Fitzgerald then was certainly conscious of the romantic possibilities afforded by the automobile - a theme that finds its way into a good number of his short stories. For example, Matthew Bruccoli notes Keats' influence on Fitzgerald's romantic sensibilities in '**Love in the Night**' where lines from the former's '**Eve of St. Agnes**' are given a modern context and highly anticipatory undertone:

The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen
grass,...

The limousine crawled crackling down the
pebbled drive...'

(in Bruccoli: 73)

But the best examples come from an earlier period. In Fitzgerald's short fiction '**Bernice Bobs Her Hair**' (1920), the narrator informs us that the more adventurous girls will 'park' in automobiles whilst '...the more popular, more dangerous, girls will sometimes be kissed in the parked limousines of unsuspecting dowagers.' (Fitzgerald: **SS**: 26) Later in the same tale an altercation between Bernice and Marjorie is interrupted by the 'riotous honking' of car horns outside the house. (41) These horns, it transpires, are operated by two young men vying for the sisters' attention. Even the most sceptical of Freud's critics would have to read the sounding horns as being emblematic of their operators' sexual appetites.

But not all advances are welcome and so in '**The Ice Palace**', Harry's calculated moves on southern belle Sally in the back seat of his automobile back-fire. In '**The Jelly-Bean**', despite the fact that there is

no conquest here either, the automobile nonetheless highlights primal drives. Of course, particular parts of automobiles do lend themselves to risqué puns and innuendo and here, the breathless, sultry demand of Nancy Lamar for Jim to ‘turn on the gasoline’ exhibits a double entendre not uncommon in Fitzgerald’s fiction. Indeed, the entire episode, in which Nancy lures Jim Powell into the parking lot in order that they might steal petroleum for the purpose of removing some chewing-gum from her shoe, is a metonym for the sexual act. As the fuel drips from the chosen motor-car’s fuel-spout, Nancy calls for ‘[m]ore’ and when drip turns to flow she releases a contented ‘Ah’ followed by the demand: ‘let it all out’. (Fitzgerald: *SS*: 150) Thus the automobile gives voice to Nancy’s straining passion and to Jim’s inarticulate desire.

However, the discrete liaison, made more practicable by the closed private car, is also in evidence in Fitzgerald’s novels. In his first of these, *This Side of Paradise*, a young and romantically inclined Amory Blaine rides in the back seat of a Packard with Myra St. Claire - a girl whose bobbing party he is late for. She is ‘jolted against him, their hands touch’ and, seeing their destination loom through the window, Amory seizes his opportunity and clumsily clutches her thumb. (22) The youth’s not so subtle *legerdemain* in the automobile does however precipitate a consummatory kiss in the country club and so the motor-car, like its predecessor the closed coach, literally becomes a vehicle for the pleasures of the flesh.

This Side Of Paradise then explores the way in which the automobile afforded unprecedented agency to American youth. In a section of the novel suitably entitled ‘The Supercilious Sacrifice’, Amory is invited to join his friend Alec, who is chauffeuring a ‘vermilion-lipped blonde’, in a ‘low racing car’. (232) The hero agrees and the machine is driven across state lines and parked in deep shadows. Alluding to the 1910 Mann Act which outlawed the movements of women from state to state for the purposes of prostitution, Fitzgerald here also foregrounds the automobile’s role as a mechanism to facilitate social transgressions of a somewhat more serious nature.⁵⁸

Earlier in the text we learn that the romantic egoist is in receipt of billet doux, the better ones from women who own automobiles: 'There's Marylyn De Witt - she's pretty, got a car of her own and that's damned convenient...' declares Amory when cataloguing his potential conquests to his Princeton friends.⁵⁹ (56) It is worthy of note that, whilst at Princeton, Fitzgerald himself corresponded extensively with Midwestern girls. Some of the letters have been preserved and one young woman wrote, with breathless anticipation, of the romances that would be made possible should her father purchase for her a new Jeffries sports runabout - as he had promised to do.

Elsewhere, Amory finds himself parked outside the Louisville Country Club in 'someone's' limousine with a 'girl [wearing] green combs'. The girl, whose identity is inconsequential, is frustrated by Amory's academic approach to life and demands that they simply 'go in' if he wants merely to '*analyse*'. (67) The would-be intellectual quickly comes to his senses and the automobile again becomes the locus for a conquest of sorts. Another girlfriend, we learn, has been with some 'terrible speeds', a metaphor, no doubt, for the urgency of their advances. These are the sort of boys, we are told, who drive 'alluring red Stutzes', machines which surely suggest their owners' libidinal capacities. (74) At the very least one might say that such cars are signs of sexual desire, if not performance.

Interestingly, and it is very rare in the fiction of the period, we also get a woman's perspective. For Isabella, the automobile is a locus for romance, not merely a mechanism for a sexual encounter:

'The future vista of her life seemed an unending succession of scenes like this: under moonlight and pale starlight, and in the backs of warm limousines and in low, cosy roadsters stopped under sheltering trees...' (76)

It is also ironic that for Isabella 'the boy might change' since for Amory there a sense that 'some girl' or other will do. It is almost as if the opposite sex is merely an optional extra; a kind of accessory to the sublimity of the machine. As if to illustrate this selfish perspective,

sometime later, Amory and new girlfriend Axia Marlowe pile 'intimately' into a taxicab which bears them to Phoebe Column's private flat. (116) This girl too, is soon forgotten and later again he meets Eleanor of Baltimore, a girl who, at the age of seventeen, insists on being a debutante; a girl who has fallen in with a 'rather fast crowd', the drinkers of cocktails and makers of patronising remarks from the safety of their limousines. (23)

In Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned*, romantic hero Anthony Patch associates with men like Parker Allison whose 'notion of distinction [consists] in driving a noisy red-and-yellow racing car up Broadway with two glittering hard-eyed girls beside him.' (363) Fitzgerald undoubtedly seeks to highlight the vacuous, solipsistic, and sybaritic nature of American youth in this novel and the automobile becomes a structural mechanism through which to do just that. However, Fitzgerald also aimed to offer a picture of American values as he saw them and that included the sexual proclivities of his generation.

And so Anthony, whose identity as a romantic hero is redefined and enhanced by the motor-car, gloats to his friend Maury Noble of his flirtations with an empty-headed usherette in the back of a taxicab, an environment in which he claims to have received 'chaste and fairylike kisses' on the third night of their acquaintance. (47) Later in the novel, when again in a taxi, Anthony puts his arm around the infinitely impressionable Gloria Gilbert, draws her over to him and kisses her. The car then becomes the locus for a romantic encounter in which speed is related to the rise of passion: 'Tell him to turn around,' [Gloria] murmured, 'and drive pretty fast going back.' (96) Anthony's conquest of the girl is complete when, moments later, he laughs 'noiselessly and exultantly, turning his face up and away from her, half in an overpowering rush of triumph...' (96)

Gloria's diary also contains references to the social transgression made possible by the automobile:

'...and Stuart Holcome, who had run away with her in his automobile and tried to make her marry him by force. And Larry Fenwick,

whom she had always admired because he told her one night that if she wouldn't kiss him she could get out of his car and walk home. What a list!

(132)

Gloria is manifestly proud of her list of conquests. She lives for the vital performance and rejects the measured, careful 'Blockhead' Joseph Bloekman who drives so considerately:

'Blockhead came around about ten in his new car and took me out Riverside Drive...he's so considerate...he was quiet all during the ride.'

(133)

But of course it is in *Gatsby* that the automobile is most persistently represented as a sign of sexual conquest - despite the fact that only one physical liaison takes place in a wheeled conveyance.

That connection comes, of course, in chapter four when Nick Carraway makes his move on Jordan Baker as they journey through Central Park in a Victoria coach. Earlier on, Nick explains that he likes the 'racy, adventurous' feel of New York and associates this with the semi-erotic 'flicker of men and women and machines...' and the 'throbbing' of idling taxi-cabs. (57) Of course, there is also the story of Daisy and Gatsby's long drives to 'out-of-the-way places' in the former's white roadster to consider and Tom Buchanan's conquest of a Santa Barbara chambermaid is facilitated by the automobile. (145) It is worth observing too that Tom's triumph over Myrtle is achieved via the motor-car but here, rather than offering specific details, Fitzgerald focuses on the imagery of the machine to suggest themes of objectification and the conquest of the body.

The motor-car can be the most extraordinary symbol of primal drives and the male sexual apparatus. Kronhausen and Kronhausen's *The Complete Book of Erotic Art* features a remarkable eighteenth century work by the Japanese painter Jichosai in which, spurred on by a

pace-maker who claps together large wooden blocks, a sweating team of men is depicted pulling a two-wheeled cart upon which rests the enormous member of an entrant in a phallus contest.⁶⁰ Represented here, for perhaps the first time, is the speeding penis; a forerunner, as it were, to the next century's slightly more subtle evocations of masculinity as symbolised by motor-car architecture.

No book on the cultural significance of the motor-car then could be considered complete without making reference to the theories of Sigmund Freud. Although Freud's reputation is decidedly on the wane, his *General Introduction to Psycho-Analysis* nonetheless has some common sense and historically verifiable things to say about the relationship between machinery and the male member. 'The imposing mechanism of the male sexual apparatus', Freud writes, 'lends it to symbolisation by all kinds of complicated and indescribable machinery.'⁶¹ (Freud: 508) Certainly, as automobile bonnets stretched out to accommodate bigger and bigger motors, the connection between automobile architecture and the penis became more obvious, a relationship that artists, photographers, writers, and automobile manufacturers themselves seized on enthusiastically.⁶²

According to Keath Fraser, *The Great Gatsby* is, among other things, 'a narrative of potency and impotency'. (Fraser in Bloom: 65) It is an assessment that the text's narrative details certainly invite. Tom Buchanan, for instance, drives an elongated blue coupe whilst Gatsby's own car is 'swollen here and there in its monstrous length.' (63) It is partly through the symbolism of the motor-car then that Fitzgerald sets up the macho contest between the hero and Tom; a contest all about the 'ownership' of a woman. Tom, whose body seems to take its cues from the motor-car (he leans 'aggressively forward' and is capable of 'enormous leverage'), has turned his garage into a stable. Whilst this detail is one of many suggesting the novel's central idea of turning back time, it also signposts Buchanan's function as a notional stud.

Doubtless he is described in phallic terms. In the second chapter he stands, legs apart and dressed in swanky riding clothes, on the steps of his mansion. His movements too are short, automatic, and threatening. For instance, making a 'harsh sound in his throat, and with

a violent thrusting movement...’, he forces his way through the crowd which gathers around Myrtle’s body. (132) Tom’s driving, moreover, is inextricably bound up with his sexuality since he applies to his relationship with women the same crude philosophy that he applies to the road: dominate and win. Seeing the road as a space for contest, Tom is the novel’s ultimate ‘take over’ man. His Ventura Road accident, the details of which Jordan reports to Nick, appears to have been caused by a careless, drunken effort to overtake a wagon and in the seventh chapter, fearing that both his wife and his mistress are ‘slipping precipitately from his control’, [i]nstantly makes him step on the accelerator with the double purpose of overtaking Daisy and leaving Wilson behind...’ (119). It is almost as if, as in some childish game, Tom has convinced himself that prowess on the road equals prowess in life; that if he can win the contest of the cars he can win back his wife too.⁶³

The sexual anarchy of modern America then is emblematised through the motor-car and its associated paraphernalia. Myrtle Wilson’s sexual appetites are certainly thus represented. In chapter four Nick catches ‘a glimpse of Mrs Wilson straining at the garage pump with panting vitality...’ and in chapter seven, even at the point of death, her status as an overheated Venus is highlighted through the automobile. A. B. Paulson’s Freudian reading of *Gatsby* is one of a number which posit that the whole scene suggests a sexual assault paralleling what effectively amounts to her abuse at the hands of her erstwhile lover.⁶⁴ We will later see that there are indeed profound connections between Tom’s attentions to Myrtle and the accident. Certainly, the way Gatsby’s phallus-like car is described as having ‘knock[ed] right into her’ and the examination of her corpse by Michaelis and his companion bespeak violation and a sick sort of eroticism. (Fitzgerald: *GG*: 133) Even George Wilson’s misplaced lusts are foregrounded through the automobile. This small time proprietor hankers after the motor-car that Tom has promised him. Just the thought of the machine seems to masculinate the man since through it he imagines that he can make a large enough profit to rekindle his wife’s interest in him before taking her away. In fact, as Keith Fraser says in *Another Reading of the Great Gatsby*, ‘cars are [the only things that] stimulate Wilson’. (Fraser in Bloom: 61)

Jordan Baker too has her sexual agency suggested through the motor-car. We have already seen that she takes her name, in part anyway, from the sporty Jordan Playboy roadster - a machine which is a metonym for sexual licence. Certainly Jordan is a free spirit and a tease; an experienced 'player' in every sense of the word. Her careless driving, moreover, is a metaphor for her careless approach to human relationships. The man that she finally does emotionally connect with, narrator Nick Carraway, is himself variously defined by automobiles and driving. The would-be adventurous aspect of a very frustrated, repressed sexual being is signified by Nick's longing to be inside one of New York's suggestively 'throbbing taxi-cabs.' As noted above, he associates the 'racy, adventurous' feel of the city with the 'constant flicker of men and women and machines' - an impression to which Nick cleaves with a feeling of almost overwhelming emotion. (57) Nonetheless, it is a feeling that is very much transitory. As with Forster's Adela Quested, the primal urges of the id are entirely dependent on the circumstances of the moment

As we will see, in E. M. Forster's fiction motor-cars generally signpost masculine consciousness, instrumental rationality, and Western hegemony but they also facilitate connections between the sexes.⁶⁵ In *A Passage to India*, as in Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*, in what may properly be termed a *topos* in modern English literature, hands are jolted together as Ronny and Adela are conveyed in a motor-car. It is important to remember that the woman has just terminated her relationship with the City Magistrate and that this ride in the Nawab's throbbing, lurching automobile is to be their last felicity together. However, as the machine goes over a bump in the road their hands touch 'and one of the thrills so frequent in the animal kingdom passe[s] between them.' (85-86) The moment signals a re-connection after their erstwhile break up but the unity between them, like Nick's quasi-epiphany in New York, is spurious; '...as local and temporary as the gleam that inhabits a firefly.' (ibid) Ronny's dedication to Adela then, and hers to him, is only as deep as the primitive impulse will allow and only as enduring as the moonlight ride is long. Nonetheless, the motor-car has served as a vehicle for social collocation even though it is a most atavistic connection.

In *Howards End* the automobile is not employed as a vehicle for the unharnessing of lusts, but Henry Wilcox's automobile is nonetheless carefully described as a 'great' open car; a 'luxurious cavern of leather.' (31) Whilst Ernest Schlegel warns his daughters that 'it is the vice of a vulgar mind to be thrilled by bigness', there is a clear sense in the fictions of both Forster and Fitzgerald, that the scale of the automobile suggests, among other things, the sexual potency of its owner. Whilst it is not an overtly sexual connection, the link between Margaret Schlegel and Henry Wilcox is nonetheless effected by means of the latter's shining new automobile, a machine that Margaret describes as 'a fairer creature than the vermilion giant that had borne Aunt Juley to her doom three years before.' (164) Significantly, it is just after the drive to the Wilcox estate that Henry succeeds in securing a promise of marriage from a somewhat overawed Margaret.

With the notable exception of *Maurice*, however, transit technologies do not signpost sexual drives or outright libidinous conquests elsewhere in Forster's fiction. In *Maurice* itself, there is only one motor-car which cannot be rescued from the background noise of the text. However, Maurice Hall's rush to acquire a new and authentic sexual identity is signified through the motor-cycle. At the end of chapter nine, in spite of his own homosexual proclivities - and in a fit of English priggishness, Maurice rejects the advances of university friend Clive Durham. In the next chapter, with Clive in the side-car, Maurice plunges his motor-cycle at top speed into a by-lane - deliberately pointing the machine toward a wagon full of women. The symbolic value of the gesture, though juvenile enough, is not lost on Durham and some time later the friendship is renewed on a libidinous footing.

Only D. H. Lawrence's fiction matches Fitzgerald's in terms of transit technologies facilitating and suggesting passionate encounters. In *Sons and Lovers* Paul Morel and Clara hold hands in a tram-car the motion of which suggests coitus: 'She rocked slightly to the tram's motion, as she leaned against him, rocked upon him.' (373) In *The Rainbow* the young Lieutenant Skrebensky woos Ursula Brangwen in a motor-car the motion of which again causes the couple to come into

contact. They hold hands in the car and later use the machine to access the countryside in order to make love.⁶⁶ However, it is in Lawrence's short fiction that the motor-car is employed most suggestively. Certainly the physical empathy between Lou and Phoenix in '**St. Mawr**' is emblematised by the over-heating automobile in which they ride, whilst Phoenix's masculine drives and 'male armour of artificial imperviousness' are also thus signposted: 'Give him a little gas...and away he goes: all his male gear rattling, like a cheap motor-car.' (*Tales*: 639, 631)

But it is the machine's representation in '**The Captain's Doll**' that epitomises its suggestive potential. Here, following the death of his wife, Hepburn employs a motor-car to court his new love, Hannele. The passion of the new relationship is underscored by the speeding automobile as it takes the lovers deep into the European mainland. A sense of breathless adventure is syntactically foregrounded through long, complex and compound sentences broken by caesural pauses in the form of commas and semi-colons. The motor-car's agency-enhancing capacities are also reinforced, of course, in that the machine is in the subject position of the sentence with verbs rendered in active, present participial form: 'darting', 'swerving', 'rushing', 'swinging', 'leaping', and 'scrambling'. (*Tales*: 531) Parataxis too contributes to the impression of haste and abandonment and the motor-car itself, as often in Lawrence, is personified rather than represented objectively - here eliciting a feeling of helplessness quite germane to the lovers' burgeoning relationship. So far as sexuality is concerned then, Forster, Fitzgerald, and Lawrence represent the motor-car as a mechanism for anarchy and uncheckable transgression and so the machine's capacity to take lovers far away from where their behaviour must be circumscribed is repeatedly driven home.

Getting away from it all: into the garden

Unlike many other technologies, the motor-car is not of a local environment: it is not confined with respect to either space or time. The automobile, then, intrinsically speaks of 'beyond' and makes it possible for us to quickly and physically gain access to that which is remote.

We have seen, for instance, how Fitzgerald's *Gatsby* and *Daisy* use the motor-car to escape to out-of-the-way places, how Forster's Henry and Margaret (and Ronny and Adela) drive into the country, and how Lawrence's Skrebensky and Ursula similarly escape the city in order to conduct their romance in private. However, escape to the country is not only prompted by physical desires. Indeed, the will to renounce culture in favour of nature has a long tradition – one that may be traced back to the earliest journey literature and one that is distilled in novels such as *Moby Dick*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Natty Bumppo*.

What fuelled the modern revival of these dreams though was a staggering rise in the rate of urban expansion. Of course, the arrival of the automobile made its contribution too in that it 'inherited these desires and lent them a new expression'. (Sachs: 155) So then, the popular cure for urban congestion (and this was a theory promulgated by Ford) was to simply leave it behind. Motoring commentator James Flink confirms that the automobile was indeed welcomed as a panacea to urban pollution and the crush of crowds. 'With the motor-car', he writes, people were able to leave behind 'the masses;...the stench of rotting drays;...the regular but generous smatterings of horse droppings.'⁶⁷ Not surprisingly, the automobile came to be regarded as friend of the natural world and in *The Graphic* of 13 June 1908, there appeared a large photograph of flower-laden motor-vehicles participating in Paris's annual *Fête Des Fleurs*.⁶⁸ This remarkable picture suggests a happy marriage between nature and the machine and therefore foregrounds a naïveté that endures to the present day.

Significantly, those writers who publicly condemned the very idea of the machine in the garden privately revelled in the rural motor-tour. In early December 1912, for example, E. M. Forster wrote to his mother, Clara, from Chatarpur describing 'a wonderful moonlight drive' in the Maharaja of Dewas's automobile. (Letters: 163) Later in the month Forster wrote to his mother again, this time proudly announcing that his party was seeing the Maharaja every day and that he 'usually [took them] on a country motor drive.' (Letters: 169) Even more significantly, those in Forster's party included G. L. Dickinson who, just six years earlier, had vehemently attacked motor vehicles in the *Independent Review*. Whilst Scott Fitzgerald's love of motoring,

motor-cars, and travel is detailed elsewhere, here it is noted that D. H. Lawrence was another writer who, whilst publicly railing against the automobile, enjoyed motoring into the country. In March of 1915, in a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, Lawrence wrote: 'Monica has a motor-car every day to drive her out, so we go too. Today we drove to Bognor. It was strange...- a white vague, powerful sea, with long waves falling heavily... .' (Selected Letters: 80) Clearly, Lawrence's objections to the automobile did not prevent him from taking advantage of its power to put him in touch with Sussex.

With respect to the machine's presence in the garden then, whilst voices of condemnation clearly dominate in the novels of both Forster and Fitzgerald, subtle murmurings of approval may nonetheless be detected. In Forster's *Howards End*, for instance, Henry takes his daughter, Evie, on a motor-tour through tranquil English hinterlands and proselytises, quite credibly, that there is no greater felicity whilst in *A Passage* the Nawab Bahadur takes Ronny and Adela on what starts out to be a recreational early evening drive - much like those enjoyed by the author himself. In *Maurice*, albeit on a motor-cycle, the hero and Clive Durham ride away from Cambridge to be 'outside humanity' and end up talking in a peaceful, open field. (66) In all cases, initially at least, there is an emphasis on social collocation and an atmosphere of imperturbability prevails.

As noted above, Scott Fitzgerald's novels similarly acknowledge the automobile's power to take us away from it all. At the end of *This Side of Paradise*, hero Amory Blaine clearly enjoys the panoramic views made possible by the high wheel-base of the Locomobile and in *The Beautiful and Damned* Anthony and Gloria's sojourn into the country puts them among 'a familiar roster of pastoral figures who enact the ideal life of the American self journeying away from the established order of things into unexplored territory... .' (Marx: *PU*: 74) Of course, to begin with, this is precisely how Fitzgerald wants us to view the couple, and so their journey into heartland America is presented as a great adventure. Ostensibly, then, Anthony and Gloria are cast as archetypal wanderers searching for an identity well outside establishment norms. Whilst we are to eventually understand that their motivation is actually a mixture of cowardice and profound

restlessness, the opening movements of the novel felicitously bring to the fore the idea that the couple is seeking to connect with the authentic spirit of the Midwest – and for a time at least, their motor journey into rural America reinforces the illusion.

However, it is, as often, in *The Great Gatsby* that the motor-car is most profoundly connected with bucolic idealism. Once again, whilst the narrative steers us ineluctably toward the conclusion that the machine has no place in America's garden, there may be observed a certain ambivalence on the part of the author. Who, for example, may deny the sense of excitement that accompanies the cataloguing of Jordan Baker's geographical conquests? Who, moreover, is not affected by the hero's tragic hankering for an ideal foretime that is much more than the sum of his relationship with Daisy? Nick's description of Gatsby's motor-car itself bespeaks the pastoral idealism that the modern world has traded in for so-called technical supremacy. As always, Fitzgerald's diction is carefully selected - the ambiguous 'conservatory' alluding to both the labyrinth of glass that comprises the vehicle's windscreen arrangement and to the idea of preserving something that might otherwise be lost forever. In context, the word 'terraced' suggests cultivation and shaping. Of course, both words may be connected with the lost garden and that state of innocence that is so central to Gatsby's consciousness.

The word 'conservatory', moreover, is especially significant since it suggests defiance of the weather and the seasons – something that we must inevitably associate with Gatsby's great enterprise: that is, to turn back time. So it is that the 'green leather' interior of Gatsby's car is an emblem of an unattainable Golden Age. (63) Perhaps this is the reason for the inclusion of the following detail later in the novel: 'He felt the hot, green leather of the seat.'⁶⁹ Certainly, references to an Edenic foretime are deftly adumbrated through images of various twentieth century gardens: 'Once more it was pouring...and my irregular lawn...abounded in small muddy swamps and prehistoric marshes.'⁷⁰ (85) Of course, Gatsby's 'babble slander' in a garden setting also connects him with the pastoral myth contemporaneously suggested by his automobile. (128) Here, in his magnificent but commercially cultivated pleasance, he makes up a profoundly sanitised

version of his life. It is not, as Nick acknowledges, a conscious lie, but more of a wish for a simple purity of heart. Indeed, we may observe the same naïve desire in Nick himself, who, having motored over to Fifth Avenue, muses that it is ‘so warm and soft, almost pastoral, on the summer Sunday afternoon that [he] wouldn’t have been surprised to see a great flock of white sheep turn the corner.’ (57)

Of course, the vehicle’s capacity to connect us with the natural world is otherwise highlighted in *The Great Gatsby*. We have already seen, for instance, how the hero romanced Daisy in out-of-the-way places – milieux accessed in the latter’s white roadster - and we have observed too that among Gatsby’s more enduring memories is that of a yellow trolley racing through green fields. Nor may we forget the significance of the motor-cars that park, five deep, on Gatsby’s driveway – a ribbon of metal that bisects his sweeping and profoundly symbolic lawns. So, while images of pastoral idealism ultimately give way to simulacra of the waste land in *The Great Gatsby*, the novel nonetheless reinforces the idea that in the motor-car we may find something of that spirit which would free humankind. Despite everything that happens in Fitzgerald’s third and greatest novel then, the automobile is never fully stripped of its aura: its promise to liberate us.

Going faster: the abolition of time and space

Central to the notion of liberty is the freedom to travel. A corollary of that is this: the faster we travel, the more our freedom must be enhanced. As noted in the first chapter, humankind’s desire to rapidly master an extensive milieu has always been a sign of the will to power and mechanical civilisation made possible what once were merely far-fetched dreams. Human beings could speak to each other over huge distances and could transport themselves across and between entire continents. The desire for limitless acceleration became self-justifying. As a critical and disappointed Raimon Panikkar observes: ‘It is all reduced to the discovery of higher speeds... .’ (Panikkar: 246)

Since it gives us access to multiple horizons, the motor-car represents a profound contribution to the fulfilment of this desire. It is,

as Alvin Tofler writes, one more technical construct in the ‘growling engine of change...; a major force behind the accelerative thrust.’ (Tofler: *CFS*: 90) Whilst Tofler’s focus is evolutionary, the motor-car became and remains humankind’s chief means of accessing space; its mechanism for abolishing remoteness without bringing nearer the destination. Despite this reality, however, the so-called conquest of space has become a defining characteristic of advanced culture. A 1906 issue of *Allgemeine Automobil-Zeitung* had this to say of the motor-car’s conquest over time and space: ‘The automobile has succeeded in overcoming space and time more completely than ever before. From a certain point of view, all of the technological endeavours of mankind are directed only at transcending space and time. The telegraph transmits the written word over great distances in the smallest time units, just as the telephone does for the spoken word...Steam locomotives and electric trains, steamships, bicycles, airships - all of these serve the purpose of conquering space and conquering time...’ (in Sachs: 167)

In 1895 Emile Levassor won the Paris-Bordeaux-Paris motor-race in a four horse-power Panhard - a contest against eighteen of the world’s best gasoline, steam, and electric vehicles and by 1904 a petrol-driven Mercedes exceeded eighty miles an hour at the Vanderbilt Cup Race. In 1907, the year that the Brooklands racing track and aerodrome was opened giving motorists and fliers a centre for an exchange of ideas, L. H. Pomeroy’s Vauxhall achieved 100 miles an hour and in 1908 a 12.8 litre Mercedes won the Grand Prix at Dieppe at an average speed of 69 miles an hour over 477 miles. In these early days of motoring, as has already been observed, huge engines were used to make cars go faster, the great aero-engined machines of the period being the largest. Of these, Clive Gallop and Count Louis Zborowski’s twenty-three litre chain-driven monster is the most famous. The machine’s six huge cylinders roared in a two yard block so deep that the oil sump had to be artificially closed off and with the same net weight as an Austin Seven tourer, the vehicle promised a frightening performance. And so rumours soon percolated through the racing fraternity that a Gallop-Zborowski designed two-hundred horse-power Maybach-Zeppelin engined car was registered for the Brooklands meeting of Easter 1921. Whilst the Royal Flying Corp, who convened

the event, refused to allow a rather bland original name for the entry, they were delighted to admit the quickly christened 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang'. It won, easily, achieving an average speed of 100.75 miles an hour. Performance had become an end in itself, rather than something to be explored along philosophical lines: inevitably, in both aviation and motor-sport circles, the quest for speed became paramount.

Of course, such changes in tempo stimulated changes in consciousness - and, therefore, changes in cultural representation. It did not take long for a strong public interest in motor racing and record-breaking to find expression in the visual, and, later, literary arts. The first to recognise the artistic possibilities inherent in the automobile was Toulouse-Lautrec whose 1896 lithograph *The Motorist* is an affectionate caricature of his auto-centric cousin.⁷¹ The work is characterised by intensity and a striking impression of speed. In 1900 French sculptor Aimee-Jules Dalou was commissioned to create a memorial to Emile Levassor, the French pioneer racing motorist who died in the Paris-Bordeaux-Paris race of 1895. Dalou was initially horrified at the suggestion of this celebration of machinery since only thirty years earlier Ingres had asserted that industry was no fit subject for the arts. However, Dalou eventually decided that the commission would be fun since it would ruffle the feathers of the establishment.

The genesis of the work is interesting in itself since Dalou's notebooks contain a series of thirteen sketches beginning with mythical goddesses and concluding with an indefatigable and all-conquering Levassor driving through an imaginary triumphal arch in the port town of Maillot. There are, in these sketches and in the finished work itself, profound suggestions of flight and links to deity. Levassor, moreover, is the conquering hero: crowds wave; figures strain forward; nature is vanquished. The fact that Levassor was killed in his machine seems a remote fact and despite a general focus on realism, the driver's appearance in a bowler hat and formal tunic, hardly the attire of the serious motorist, reinforce the sub-text of idealism. Nonetheless, Dalou's sculpture is a huge departure from earlier celebrations of automobility.⁷²

For Futurist artists though, the static representation of speed was not enough. That had, after all, been done before. Futurists wanted to capture instead the essence of movement; to represent flux itself - 'universal dynamism...rendered as dynamic sensation' as the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* asserted. (in Bozzolla & Tisdall: 32) 'All things move, all things run, all things are rapidly changing...space no longer exists...the motor-bus rushes into the house it passes, and in their turn the houses throw themselves upon the motor-bus and are blended with it...' declared the Manifesto which went on to assert that 'All subjects previously used must be swept aside in order to express our whirling life of steel, of pride, of fervour and speed'. (Bozzolla & Tisdall: 33-35)

In the '**Manifesto of the Futurist Painters**', published early in 1910, contributing artists declared that 'we must breathe in the tangible miracles of contemporary life'. (in Apollonio: 25) 'How', they asked, 'can we remain insensible to the frenetic life of our great cities...?' (in Apollonio: 25) And in an interview with the *Evening News* Marinetti declared that 'London itself is a Futurist city.' (Marinetti in Cork: Vol 1: 28) Seeing in the sprawling metropolis the panache and vigour so much the stimuli for Futurist endeavour, Marinetti praised the 'coloured electric lights that flash advertisements in the night..., the enormous glaring posters...the brilliant hued motor-buses.' (Marinetti in Cork: Vol 1: 28)

'**The Technical Manifesto**', published later in 1910, developed ideas adumbrated in the earlier publication by requiring that 'the gesture which we would reproduce on canvas...shall simply be the *dynamic sensation* itself.' (Apollonio: 27) As an example, and perhaps to massage Marinetti's boundless ego, the writers urge readers to consider the rolling motor-bus - a vehicle that offers a thousand simultaneous impressions 'like persistent symbols of universal vibration.' (in Apollonio: 28) So it was that the motor-bus became a vehicle for fractured sensation and the intoxication of art.⁷³ Certainly, this aesthetic found sublime expression in works like Carra's '*What the Tramcar Said to Me*' and '*Jolting Cab*', both completed in 1911 while this new focus on urban experience and responsiveness to technology and its effects may also be seen in Balla's '*Abstract Speed*' and

'*Speeding Automobile*', both of 1913. Indeed, Giacomo Balla devoted himself to capturing the subjective dynamism of speeding cars and, signing himself 'Futur Balla', the artist had, by 1915, completed twenty works relating to the automobile.

But others, too, had adopted the automobile as their symbol. Arthur Symon's rapturous observation of London motor-omnibuses is particularly well known while Wyndham Lewis' extraordinary '*No. 5*', epitomising the Vorticist admiration of sound and movement, projects a blur of energy, and, like Munch's '*Scream*', makes a profound auditory statement. Later still, influential Swiss architect and urban planner Le Corbusier produced his '*L'Esprit Nouveau, no. 13 - Evolution des formes de l'automobile 1900 - 21*', a collection of drawings which stresses the streamlining aspect of the motor-car. Even Ernest Shepherd's characteristically static representations of reality find a new energy when the artist is depicting transit technologies. For instance, Shepherd's autobiography, *Drawn From Life*, contains a wonderfully vibrant drawing of a Roman centurion driving a chariot. The picture was completed as a homework exercise when Shepherd was just fifteen years old but nonetheless betrays the fascination for speed and power that was to culminate in the artist's inimitable representation of automobiles in *The Wind in the Willows*.

Writers too wanted to celebrate speed and Marinetti's poem '*A mon Pégase*' is a testament to the thrill of motor racing. Inspired perhaps by the extraordinary success of Italian cars on the world racing circuits of 1907, Marinetti's motor-car 'plunges down country roads...overcom[ing] placid mountains like a whirlwind...' the machine symbolising '...the wind of destructive change...the coming of age of the mechanical man.'⁷⁴ (Marinetti in Benton: 20) Moreover, there is, in '*A mon Pégase*', a suggestion of the driver roaring into oblivion to achieve a horizon beyond that of the temporal world. It is, of course, this same desire for the 'other' that so fascinated E. B. White who wrote that 'everything in life is somewhere else and you get there in a car.' (White in Pizer: 50) And it is the same sense of imminent departure, the same urge to achieve 'somebody else's horizon', the same anticipatory mood bespoken by the automobile that so completely besots Kenneth Grahame's Toad in *The Wind in the Willows*.⁷⁵

‘The poetry of motion!’ exclaims the Toad, having sighted his first ‘...immense, breath-snatching, passionate,’ motor-car ‘with its pilot tense and hugging the wheel, possess[ing] all the earth and air for a fraction of a second... .’ (Grahame: *WW*: 26) This surely encapsulates a universal desire for speed and psychic transcendence. That was in 1908. Yet as early as 1776 James Boswell urged Dr. Johnson to consider the proposition that ‘...a man is never happy for the present, but when he is drunk...or when driving rapidly in a post-chaise.’ (Boswell: 297) Clearly, both Boswell and Grahame relish the peculiar suspension of self-consciousness which only speed can afford.

In his *Behaviour in Uncertainty*, psychologist John Cohen writes that ‘The most far-reaching change that comes over a man when he drives a vehicle is a dramatic fall in his capacity for self-regulation.’ (Cohen: 62) Cohen argues that when a person gets behind the wheel, the various chemical regulators which bring about a normal homeostasis are muted. When we drive fast, moreover, we experience that curious mixture of terror and pleasure called exhilaration; the result of pushing one’s self and one’s machine to the limits of endurance. In his cultural study of automobility, Wolfgang Sachs writes of a commensurate swelling of the ego as acceleration increases, as if the multiplication of forces bespoke by the machine enter into the consciousness of the driver who imagines himself to be an invincible hero. Sachs’ point is that the fantasy of greatness on the road makes us feel alive even though we may be failures in all other aspects of our being. And so Toad of Toad Hall at the wheel begins ‘...to lose his head.’ (Grahame: 165) The driver tries to interfere, but Toad pins him down in his seat with one elbow, and puts on full speed: ‘The rush of air in his face, the hum of the engine, and the light jump of the car beneath him intoxicated his weak brain.’ (ibid: 165-166)

Colonel T. E. Lawrence was another who enjoyed speed; another whose personal agencies were undoubtedly enhanced by the swift-moving automobile. In *Oriental Assembly* he boasts that ‘...petrol makes light of the deserts, and space is shrinking to-day, when we travel one hundred miles an hour instead of five.’ (89) But it is, of course, in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, that greatest of all narratives of

conquest and destruction, that Lawrence's celebration of motoring finds its most full and felicitous expression. For Lawrence, the motor-car literally became an ally in his campaigns against the Turks, and, at times, the colonel's celebration of the machine borders on the poetic. Certainly the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost armoured car which Lawrence used in the desert afforded him unprecedented agency as the conquering hero: 'Once I had been proud of riding from Azrak to Akaba in three days; but now we drove it in two, and slept well of nights after this mournful comfort of being borne at ease in Rolls-Royces, like the great ones of war.'⁷⁶ (581)

Through the motor-car, moreover, Lawrence was able to employ the classical military virtues of speed and surprise. At one point in *The Seven Pillars*, with the Turks in utter disarray, Lawrence's armoured vehicles bear down mercilessly on a major objective: a Turk station. Lawrence remembers it as a race, proclaiming proudly that 'our car won' allowing the Bedouin to engage in 'the maddest looting of their history.' (522-3) A few pages on Lawrence recounts the sprint for the Mejaber Springs: '...so Rolls made his car leap forward in a palpitant rush across the great width. The earth fell away in front of us, and a plume like a dust-devil waved along our track behind.'⁷⁷ (558) On this particular day, roughly eighty miles fell into the colonel's hands and of their conquests a few days later he could write: 'We ran at speed over the smooth flint or mud-flat, letting the strong car throb itself fully....'. (619)

However, and as often in *The Seven Pillars*, there is a strong sense of the hero leaving lesser men in his wake and Ford motor-cars come in for some particularly disparaging comments since they cannot achieve any respectable speed. In one dismissive aside, Lawrence complains of a 'Ford car' which struggles to 'keep up with successive advances'. (Lawrence: *SPW*: 520) A little later he complains again of the same 'painstaking little Ford' which barely hangs on as his '...splendid car [drinks] up the familiar miles.' (528)

Writers of the first quarter of the twentieth century, then, saw in the automobile a vehicle for expressing aspiration and agency. Accordingly, theirs was not a strictly scientific fascination - although,

from about 1910, they did become increasingly interested in the commodity status of the automobile. However, Bernard Shaw was not interested in the motor-car as a sign of instrumental rationality. For him, as for T. E. Lawrence, the machine was a sign of improvement. It has already been noted that in the figure of Straker Shaw played up the importance of technological competence - the chauffeur's very name implying a certain desire for progress.⁷⁸ Tanner himself announces that Henry Straker is the 'New Man...caring for nothing but tearing along in a leather coat and goggles, with two inches of dust all over him, at sixty miles an hour at the risk of his life and mine.' (Act 3, p. 81) Straker's identification with the motor-car is profound, his very being predicated on his mastery of it. After a break-neck twenty-one minute motor-ride from Hyde Park to Richmond, in which a steam-car is raced, a disconcerted Tanner walks around the house to calm his nerves while a disconsolate Straker complains that with a clear road he might have achieved the distance in fifteen minutes. When it transpires that Hector Malone's steam-car has beaten the motor-car by a full four minutes, a furious Straker savagely kicks his employer's automobile. He has lost the race against a more primitive machine and has, therefore, as it seems to him, had his mastery of the road and indeed his entire validity as a social agent - called into question.

While Sherwood Anderson, in *A Story-teller's Story*, confesses to mixed feelings of shame and vicarious power when at the wheel of an automobile, E. M. Forster says nothing that is directly positive about man's conquest of time and space through the motor-car. On the other hand, like James Boswell, Scott Fitzgerald suggests that a fast drive is a sign of life and progress. Accordingly, the final section of *This Side of Paradise* is entitled 'Going Faster' and here Amory Blaine appears to experience profound psychological revelations as a speeding Locomobile takes him west. This is certainly consistent with the author's misplaced belief that his hero gets somewhere. And in *The Beautiful and Damned* Gloria Patch, though ultimately condemned as shallow and perfidious, likes to live life fast and drives accordingly. Indeed it is a source of infinite frustration to her that 'this old thing' (she refers to her motor-car) 'won't go over thirty-five'.⁷⁹ (159) Even the chariot sign outside Anthony's favourite club elicits suggestions of pace and progress and emblematises this rather conservative figure's

ostensible desire to live life in the fast lane. Similarly, in what the reader quickly recognises as a vain attempt to animate a rather lacklustre consciousness, Anthony surrounds himself with vibrant and dynamic personalities. The spendthrift Parker Allison is therefore a symbolic acquaintance, his automobile an emblem of the vigorous and engaging sensibility to which Anthony himself aspires. (F: *BD*: 363)

In *Gatsby* too, the speeding car reinforces notions of a super-agency. Certainly, a rigorous Barthesian analysis of the novel would reveal significant and systematic links between various figures' proper names and certain rapid transit technologies wherein each such connection would underscore the notion of lives lived at extraordinary pace - as well as ideas pertaining to journeys and destinations. While not offering a thorough-going high-structuralist analysis of *Gatsby*, connections between the hero's name and modes of transport nonetheless give the illusion of a moral determinacy; a mode of being. And so Gatsby's Silver Ghost, as it speeds past the slums and saloons on the edge of Fitzgerald's waste land in the novel's fourth chapter, seems to annul the real world outside - thus suggesting the hero's aloofness to squalor or the things of the temporal world generally.

Far from the deep-seated selfishness and moral insouciance which are ascribed to Gatsby and which undoubtedly inform the characters of Daisy Buchanan and Jordan Baker, references to transport technologies, as they apply to the hero alone, imply a particular and peculiar consciousness: a spiritual rather than an atavistic or strictly worldly drive. Moreover, these irregular references contribute substantially to the subtle systematology by which the hero's authentic self is revealed since, in reading *Gatsby*, or indeed any novel, we seek narrative corroboration of impressions formed; a reassurance that, in order to define 'character' or indeed gain some sense of narrative purpose, we have combined the 'right' semantic details. In *The Great Gatsby* then, numerous references to rapid transit technologies, particularly the motor-car, linked to sites denoted by the proper name 'Gatsby' allow us to form an impression of the hero such as 'skimming hastily through a dozen magazines' might elicit. (65) Indeed, it is not too much to say that Gatsby's structural function as notional quester (his restlessness is marked by a positiveness which does not inform the

personality of any other individual figure in the novel) is defined by such references since, as suggested above, they are deployed with such frequency so as to officiate as semantic alibis for the notion of spiritual progress. In this way, as Barthes himself would argue, we may systematically rescue units of meaning from the background noise of the text and so arrive at a narrative determination which may be properly defended.⁸⁰

As already noted, in E. M. Forster's fiction the speeding car is, among other things, represented as a sign of social hubris. The corollary of this is, of course, that, if we are alert to the voice of the 'other' in texts, the mechanism must also inhere in, if not erupt through, Forster's narratives as a sign of the positive; specifically, energy and agency. Inevitably, since the fast and dynamic is more immediately attractive than the passive or quiescent, the Devil gets all the good tunes in literature and Forster's fiction, where technology and evil are quite explicitly linked, is no exception. So, while we have already examined the status of the motor-car as a code of class and will later examine its function as a sign of crippling rationalities, we may here focus on two representations of the speeding automobile as emblems of personal agency - albeit an agency which, when he is conscious of it at all, Forster condemns as both shallow and transitory. In *Howards End* then we return to Charles Wilcox's break-neck drive from the railway station to his parents' country estate and in *A Passage* we examine Nancy Derek's proclivity for speed.

While Forster's judgement of the industrial mind is as harsh as we may find anywhere in modern literature, there nonetheless inheres in his narratives another voice; one which acknowledges the vitality of the autoist - a being more consciously, and therefore deliberately, represented as an exponent of high-rationalism in his fiction. And so while there can be little doubt that Charles Wilcox's connection to automobiles serves to foreground the young man's technical disposition, there is also a sub-text which suggests that his modern sensibilities are nonetheless more vigorous and engaging than those of the Victorian mind - a mind represented in *Howards End* by the ultra-conservative figure of Juley Munt. When Charles drives Aunt Juley from the railway station to Howards End then, he drives recklessly, and,

as we have observed, arrogantly - largely because he wishes to punish the woman for accusing his brother Paul of emotional impropriety. However, Forster's prose betrays a certain admiration for both machine and driver in that the active voice, which is always more direct and vigorous than the passive, is employed in short sentences to suggest the machine's dynamism and the young man's agency:

Charles...sent the motor swerving all over the
lane. She screamed. (35)

To summarise this stylistic contrivance, when presenting action which they approve of, writers habitually employ transitives in the active voice since these verbs imply agency. Of course writers are also able to demonstrate a disengagement of interest, or even disapproval of activity, by deliberately rendering perfunctory verbs in the passive voice. Such an approach denies a sense of agency and such disinterest or disapproval, moreover, may be reinforced through the use of complex or compound sentences since these, unlike shorter or simple sentences, contribute little to a text's verve. So, while Forster's main interest in the automobile is as an emblem of high-formalism, his diction, grammar, and syntax collectively suggest an otherwise unacknowledged admiration of both machine and its agency-enhancing capacities. We may observe the same phenomenon in *A Passage to India* where Nancy Derek's 'on-the-go' consciousness is emblematised through her association with the speeding automobile.

Forster's disapproval of *A Passage's* Nancy Derek is scarcely veiled but a deconstructive approach to the text nonetheless reveals a certain authorial approbation in that once again active verbs, strong adjectives, and short sentences give the impression of profound agency. When driving the Europeans away, at speed, from the scene of the accident on the Marabar Road for instance, Miss Derek is said to be in 'tearing spirits'. (89) To be sure, the adjective 'tearing' carries with it the pejorative connotation of destruction - but its force nonetheless implies vigour and energy; a sense of ineluctable progress. And so Forster's ostensible intention to foreground Miss Derek's somewhat flighty and reckless disposition is compromised.⁸¹

However, to exclusively privilege such a post-structuralist reading of Forster or Fitzgerald, and so abandon the position of the social idealist to support the stance of the social realist, would be to do violence to the writers' texts. This is simply because, with respect to technology, the voice of the 'approbatory other' cannot be said to drown out the voice of moral condemnation that that makes itself so plainly and persistently heard in their fictions. As will be argued more thoroughly later, Forster and Fitzgerald wrote in the mid-capital era during which proponents of high-culture roundly condemned materialism, technology, and the commercial drive generally. The wholesale application of late-capital modes of interpretation on mid-capital texts then seems somewhat questionable.

Nevertheless, Forster's view of technology is not entirely negative. Close attention to grammar, syntax, and diction does suggest a closet celebration of automobility and speed. To some extent then, Forster quietly acknowledges that technology equates to agency: freedom from rules and regulation, freedom from the parental gaze, freedom from the strictures of time and space; freedom from human limitation. However, as the second half of this thesis argues, such freedoms, though perhaps covertly indulged, are ultimately short-lived.

The open car

Most of the speeding in fiction, up to and including *The Great Gatsby*, is done in open cars. Cabriolets, as opposed to the very first motor-cars which were permanently open to the elements, exuded and still do exude panache - a low, open, touring car complete with fold-up hood implying energy and non-conformity.⁸² More than any other variety of automobile, cabriolets bespeak desire - particularly the desire for speed; the desire to break rules. Accordingly the cabriolet gives its occupants a taste of the pace of a racing machine. However, the relationship between racing-cars and street-legal personal tourers remained a fairly radical one until the creation of the Prince Henry Tourer in Germany in 1908. It was around this time that the cabriolet became less a performance machine and more of a mechanism for '...parading about in', [and] showing off the cool character and even

arrogance of privileged people...'. (*New Zealand Car*, August 1994: 41) While open cars became more ornamental and refined then, implications of freedom and rebellion never disappeared.

Popular novelist Max Pemberton, author of *The Amateur Motorist* (1907), wrote that he would: 'sooner take a train any day than drive a hundred miles in a stuffy, closed, limousine.' 'Motoring', he added, 'loses its charm for me the moment I am boxed in. There is a sense of oppression in these closed cars which no amount of draughts - and draughts there are abundantly - can make good...the stuffiness of it, the limitations of it, are to me intolerable.' (Pemberton in Tubbs: 46) Sentiments like these explain why 'sports-car' aficionados are so protective of the label. Regardless of the degree of architectural digression then, the sports-car must have a fold-down soft-top; it may not be a closed coupe since the closed car does not imply the freedoms of the open car.

A wide populace is now in possession of the psychological truth that commodities are representations of their owners. And, as we have seen, there is no single commodity more thoroughly connected to its owner than the automobile, something both Forster and Fitzgerald recognised. It should be remembered though that prior to World War One, closed cars were uncommon and so it is a little simplistic to suggest that motor-cars are simple representations of character in fiction. Charles Wilcox's open tourer in *Howards End* then cannot be said to suggest its owner's brashness. After all, his more conservative father drives an open car as well. However, in Forster's 1924 novel *A Passage to India*, Miss Derek drives a cabriolet that is in every respect appropriate to her restless and flighty personality. Similarly, in D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, the expurgated edition of which appeared in 1928, the liberated Hilda drives an open tourer while in Fitzgerald's 1920 novel *This Side of Paradise*, an uncharacteristically expansive Amory Blaine takes his last ride in a magnificent, open Locomobile. In Fitzgerald's next novel, *The Beautiful and Damned*, which appeared in 1922, Anthony and Gloria Patch purchase a 'sparkling new roadster'. (Fitzgerald: BD: 158) Despite its limited horse-power, this car is a gesture in the direction of revolt and freedom and is, as we have seen, driven as such.

It is, of course, in Fitzgerald's third novel, *The Great Gatsby*, that the open car becomes an emblem of ultimate agency. Gatsby's open Rolls-Royce is an elaborate series of architectural digressions that collectively suggest the romantic agencies of the rebellious hero while Daisy drives a large white convertible. It has already been noted that, when courting, Gatsby drove Daisy to out of the way places in her open white runabout, both white cabriolets signifying a certain freshness and innocence as well as bespeaking a sense of imminent adventure. Similarly, the restless, adventure-seeking, fun-loving Jordan Baker drives a white car and is rumoured to have borrowed a white cabriolet and left its top down on a wet day. And, of course, Jordan's name is inspired, in part, by the sporty, open Jordan Playboy automobile. Indeed, while Amory Blaine's mother drives an open electric car, Nancy Derek, Gloria Patch, Daisy Buchanan, and Jordan Baker represent the then radical phenomenon of the 'woman at the wheel'.

Women at the wheel

Prior to the nineteen-twenties women didn't drive much; '...it just wasn't the sort of thing a nice girl did'.⁸³ As D. H. Lawrence observes in *Women in Love*, it is men who have 'the freedom, the liberty, the mobility.' (49) Not surprisingly therefore, with the exception of Grahame's Toad, who is at the time disguised as a washer-woman, we do not find women drivers represented in any major text written in English prior to Fitzgerald's 1922 novel *The Beautiful and Damned*. However, severe sets of establishment values in England and America, which frowned on the very prospect of female enfranchisement, were by no means the only impediment to would-be women drivers. The other major barrier was in fact a physical one: women couldn't start the machines. Before 1912, when Henry Leyland invented the self-starter, motor-cars had to be hand-cranked into action, an activity that required a great deal of strength and not a small amount of perseverance. As it was, many men found the task of turning engines over by hand a daunting one.⁸⁴

Still, in 1898 Genevra Mudge drove a Waverly electric in New York to become the first female motorist in the United States.⁸⁵ However, the lack of public interest in this milestone reflects the androcentricity of the contemporary press; perhaps men thought that if nothing was said the phenomenon of women drivers would simply go away? But of course it didn't. In fact, the motor-car went on to emancipate the female body from the relative prison of the home and therefore hastened the process of a strictly political enfranchisement. Indeed, this will of women to enter domains hitherto dominated by men came, in literary texts, to be symbolised by their agency on the road.⁸⁶ In this connection, Sherwood Anderson's confessions about automobility have been already adumbrated. However, Anderson's friend, the legendary Gertrude Stein, had an even more profound relationship with her Model-T, a machine which she drove without fear through the mud of Flanders Fields during the Great War. While this woman's famous phrase about the 'lost generation' is believed to have come from her remonstrance at a mechanic who had done a poor job repairing her car, Stein's extraordinary agency could only be anticipated by an earlier generation although it is worth noting that Edith Wharton's pioneering motor-travels in a 15hp Panhard in 1907 and 1908 are recorded in her *A Motor-Flight through France*.⁸⁷ And so in D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* (1915) the road becomes a sign of the way forward for the Brangwen women who reject the family-centred, homely tradition of their sex to: 'look out to the road...and the world beyond...to where men moved dominant and creative, having turned their back on the pulsing heat of creation...to enlarge their own scope and range of freedom.' (9)

By 1908 though, as noted above, Kenneth Grahame had put the first woman behind the wheel of a motor-car. However, she is only a notional woman: the Toad of Toad Hall in disguise. And those who permit her to drive treat her in a totally condescending manner:

“Bravo, ma'am! I like your spirit. Let her have a try...She won't do any harm....How well she does it! Fancy a washerwoman driving a car as well as that...!”

(Grahame: 163)

Moments later, the Toad accelerates to an entirely reckless speed leaving one with the impression that Grahame is anticipating the day when women will assert their new agencies by giving men hair-raising rides in automobiles. Traditionally, of course, it is the other way around as evidenced by D. H. Lawrence's Skrebensky who, in *The Rainbow*, asserts that machines give men a way of punishing women and E. M. Forster's Charles Wilcox who in *Howards End* uses a motor-car to terrify Juley Munt.

However, Forster's Nancy Derek of *A Passage to India* symbolises the new agencies of the emancipated woman, as does the figure of Hilda in Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. Moreover, when women take the wheel in F. Scott Fitzgerald's fiction the driving is characteristically fast and furious, men being disempowered by it. While reckless driving is a sign of moral insouciance and emotional rootlessness in these and other texts, it is also, as we have seen, a sign of a character's willingness to engage; to put themselves, and others, at risk in order to experience exhilaration. And so Gloria Patch's driving in *The Beautiful and Damned* turns her husband Anthony into a nervous wreck while Jordan's driving in *Gatsby* leaves the conservative Nick almost speechless. However, apart from its undeniable awfulness, Jordan's driving foregrounds the agency of the new woman: as her name implies, Jordan is the spontaneous, well-travelled playgirl and her willingness to take risks both on and off the road (particularly the risk of emotional connection to Nick) redeems her in our eyes - if not in those of the narrator.⁸⁸ In the end, it is Nick's deliberate, careful, back-seat, and essentially spectatorial approach to life that condemns him, his good driving scarcely an ameliorating factor. So it is with Fitzgerald's Anthony Patch.

Freedom from schedules and responsibility

The train is surely the ultimate transit technology of the tourist: it is appropriate, therefore, that Nick rides one in *The Great Gatsby*. However, while the railway emphasises the passenger rather than the driver, it also bespeaks uniformity, conformity, and standardisation.⁸⁹

But, in the fiction of Forster and Fitzgerald, it is not only the rationality of the railway that is foregrounded: Forster is interested in it as a sign of post-feudal political hegemony while Fitzgerald employs it as a symbol of status. However, both writers observe the agency-limiting implications of the railway and tram-way too in that the freedoms of both locomotives and tram-cars are profoundly compromised by the placement of track.

The physical and cultural constraints of mass transit technologies then run counter to the politics of the self: our desire to shape our own destinies; our wish to escape the rigours of the predetermined line; our appetency for personal space. So, while the locomotive is an impersonal mode of conveyance, the motor-car was welcomed since it betokens independence: 'freedom from the fixed schedule; rescue from the tyranny of rails; immunity from the swelling station crowds.' (Sachs: 22) The automobile, then, became an object of desire not simply as a token of high-culture and conspicuous leisure, but because it provided a means of personal sovereignty. And so in Germany, 1906, the *Allgemeine Automobil-Zeitung* declared: 'The automobile: it will grant to human beings their conquest over time and space by virtue of its speed of forward motion. The entire over-grown apparatus of the railroad - the network of tracks, the train stations, signal stands, supervisory personnel, and administration - falls away, and in relative freedom humanity has conquered time and space.' (ibid: 7 - 9) The English, while taking to the motor-car somewhat belatedly, nonetheless enthused along with their continental neighbours about the new freedoms it afforded. *The Autocar* of November 14 1896, for example, was a special red-letter 'liberty' issue and indeed the whole emphasis of early publications pertaining to automobility was the notion of freedom. It is therefore not surprising to find H. G. Wells suggesting that a light, powerful, and smooth-running engine might speedily resolve problems associated with train and tram travel.⁹⁰

Automobility certainly provided serious and on-going competition to the large rail and street-car monopolies which, as we will see later, did more than merely protest any move to make straight the path of the motor-car. With the democratisation of the automobile made possible by mass-production though, the railway men and the

street-car companies had to give way: there was no stopping the revolution; the motor-car had made it possible for the man on the street to take revenge. And it was just this spirit of rebellion that Scott Fitzgerald sought to foreground in his fiction - particularly in the figure of Gloria Patch in *The Beautiful and Damned* whose careless flaunting of freedom is all too easily dismissed as mere social deviancy. In the novel's first book, Gloria, who has sulked her way into the driver's seat of the roadster for the second time, becomes impatient when caught behind a slow-moving street-car which has 'persisted callously in remaining upon its track'. (160) In sheer frustration the woman ducks down a side-street, the meaning of her act implicit: Gloria, no inmate of mass transit systems, doesn't follow the common pattern. And so in the novel's second book she sneers at her husband for following the main road while later still, in the third, we find Anthony and tedious mistress Dorothy Raycroft idling hopelessly, '...in their own tracks of the previous Autumn.' (295)

Of course, Forster too celebrates technology's capacity to free us from the rigour of the schedule. In *Howards End*, Henry escapes the imperatives of business by taking a country motor-tour while in *Maurice*, the hero and his friend Clive Durham use the motor-cycle as a mechanism to escape the strictures of a perfunctory academic schedule. We have already noted that in the thirteenth chapter the pair skip lectures to ride out 'a long way' from Cambridge where they might be 'outside humanity'. (66) Of course, they are also escaping the moral rigour of Georgian England and so the motor-cycle becomes a mechanism to facilitate sexual agency and personal authenticity.

If schedules imply obligation then, and they do, it follows that if one is free from certain schedules one may be free too from certain societal or moral imperatives. It is for this reason, perhaps, that the mobility of a notoriously peripatetic and non-conformist American public is today held strictly in check by an increasingly powerful Department of Motor Vehicles. Like all government departments though, the DMV was slow to grasp underlying meanings and so only in the late 1980's did this powerful state agency conclude that if you take away a person's private means of conveyance you may limit

seriously the opportunity to rebel. Kenneth Grahame's prescience in *The Wind in the Willows* then seems all the more impressive.

As in John Buchan's novel *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, Grahame's hero employs all manner of transit technologies to escape both moral responsibility and the agents of the law. These mechanisms seem to enhance each agent's stature - in the case of the Toad quite literally since he manifestly puffs up when at the wheel - and one senses a commensurate diminishment of agency when each is forced to rely on aboriginal strengths. While this motif of the motoring renegade, in whose exploits we might vicariously indulge, finds its fullest expression in novels like Kerouac's *On The Road*, Hunter S. Thompson's *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, and, more latterly, in P. J. O'Rourke's collection of essays *Republican Party Reptile*, earlier fiction certainly exploited the convention and so when the Toad escapes from prison dressed as a washerwoman, he takes a barge, hijacks a locomotive, and, in his moment of greatest glory as notional recidivist, talks himself into the driver's seat of the same automobile he stole in the first place. Thus ensconced, the Toad experiences that fundamental psychological alteration which can only be fully appreciated by the motoring enthusiast: '...all sense of right and wrong, all fear of obvious consequences, seemed temporarily suspended.' (Grahame: 94)

Pioneering film producers too quickly caught on to the idea that the motor-car was the ideal vehicle for the outlaw in that it facilitated a psychological (as well as quite physical) distancing of the self in relation to a particular crime or reality more generally.⁹¹ As noted earlier, the development of the cinema roughly parallels the development of automobility, and, since mechanical apparatuses are essential to moving pictures, film became 'a natural medium for expressions of movement, pace, and speed.' (Arnold Hauser: *Social History of Art*: in Pursell ed: 228) Silent film makers like Buster Keaton and Mack Sennett, then, looked for things that moved fast and in urban environments they were spoiled for choice with locomotives, steam-ships, factory machinery, motor-cycles, and, of course, motor-cars becoming favourite subjects. Mack Sennett's *Keystone Kops* farces of 1914 - 1922 typify the slapstick of these silent film makers. A veritable celebration of automobility and non-conformity, the series

exhibits a complete disregard for authority, any dignity associated with the business of policing undermined by a supremely incompetent police force which, for its transport needs, shares a single Tin Lizzie. In this machine, and in deliberately jerky, speeded-up tempo, the kops dash off in hot pursuit of evil-doers who themselves drive cars. But the bad ones get away while the police crash into houses, hen-coops, washing-lines, tents, rubbish-bins, ladders, and anything else not originally in the way. Despite this, no one gets hurt: the kops live to fight crime another day, while the audience gets to vicariously indulge in motoring madness and the anarchy of comedy.

Celluloid experiments like this inevitably influenced authors and slap-stick certainly informs Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*, *The Beautiful and Damned* as well as *The Great Gatsby*.⁹² In all three novels Fitzgerald represents the careless, apparently amoral, motorist who seems to have no consciousness of mortality or the temporal consequence of actions. However, about this sensibility Fitzgerald is somewhat ambivalent in that it paradoxically signifies a frightening and reprehensible indifference (the obvious interpretation of bad driving) but also a complete sense of personal freedom. It is a disposition felicitously expressed by Fitzgerald's wife Zelda who, in 1932, wrote this about the consciousness of the New Yorkers of 1925: 'There were people in automobiles all along the Boston Post Road thinking everything was going to be all right while they got drunk and ran into fireplugs and trucks and old stone walls. Policemen were too busy thinking everything was going to be all right to arrest them.'⁹³ While a tone of some concern is elicited here, the stuff of slap-stick is also represented: that extraordinary sense of indestructibility that informs the silent comedies.

It is not only the episodic nature of film that finds its way into her husband's first three novels then. In *The Beautiful and Damned*, in particular, the characters seem wooden - not at all a stylistic deficiency on Fitzgerald's part but a deliberate attempt to turn the protagonists into mechanical archetypes: 'marionettes' as the author himself calls them. And, by turning to farce, Fitzgerald certainly undermines any residual interest we may have had in Anthony and Gloria as figures morally worthy of our attention. At the same time,

however, he imbues both with an apparent imperviousness to disaster, our interest in them immediately rekindled on an entirely different footing. Now we see the hero and heroine as mechanically animated renegades on the run from the ordinary and the perfunctory, or, at the worst, they may be viewed as the vacuous and morally bankrupt heroes of the highway. Whichever, their agencies are profoundly enhanced by automobility.

In the motor-car, then, we may become as Gods: conquering heroes of the high road; banishers of 'the past'; destroyers of the fixed schedule; victors over time and space; saboteurs of sexual normalcy; lords of multiple mileux. It is not surprising, therefore, that the love-sick Peter Walsh and the war-sick Septimus Smith, both of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, see the motor-car as a symbol of freedom from the present. For them, the automobile is indeed a modern day *Dues*; an object onto which we might properly project our desires to get away from it all; a mechanism by which we might escape the temporal world itself.

Desire for the new

Motor-car manufacturers themselves trade on the concept of freedom from schedules and obligation⁹⁴. Of course, they promote their machines by appealing to deep desires for other freedoms as well: freedom from discomfort, freedom from danger, freedom from the bland and homogenous, freedom from maintenance worries, and, not least, freedom from older, inferior forms of technology. The desire for the new then is largely predicated on the rejection of the old - something that occurred to Alfred Sloane of General Motors who, in 1920, told his assistant executives that demand for the motor-car should be based on a 'certain amount of dissatisfaction with past models.' (Sloane in Flink: *AA*: 124) However, by 1908 it seemed that technology was at its limits. In July of that year *The New York Times* ran an article which questioned whether automobiles could be developed much further, the writer supposing that 'only minor improvements and mechanical refinements' might be made. (*NYT*: 04 July, 1909: Pt 4: 4)

But it soon became a twentieth century obsession to ascribe notions of ‘better’, ‘bigger’, ‘faster’, and ‘stronger’ to technological innovation. Indeed the supposition that all innovation is amelioration quickly informed the popular consciousness and in *The Autocar*’s inaugural edition the editor enthusiastically writes that the ‘horseless carriage...is the latest’. In justifying the need for his periodical he goes on to assert that ‘[t]he latest is the best’ and that the best deserves to be celebrated. (*The Autocar*: November, 1895: 1) Of course, this notion of eternal amelioration lives on in the promotional literature of the post-modern era and so an *Autocar* supplement featuring the ‘all new’ 1996 BMW 5-series is subtitled ‘Probably the best car in the world’, the next page announcing that ‘BMW’s new 5-series is bigger and better than its predecessor.’ (*Autocar*: 27 September 1995- reprinted by BMW)

As one would expect then, writers of the early twentieth century enthusiastically picked up the theme of amelioration through technical development. Bernard Shaw of course saw the motor-car as a sign of improvement and in his writings, with the exception of *Pygmalion* where Eliza tells Higgins that he has the finesse and tact of a motor-bus, the playwright sees the automobile as a sign of the superman ideal. F. Scott Fitzgerald also makes use of the automobile as a sign of the new and apparently desirable. In *The Beautiful and Damned*, the narrator foregrounds Gloria’s penchant to anticipate fashion by juxtaposing her with the ‘newest and most beautiful designs in automobiles...out on Fifth Avenue...’ (116) while in *The Great Gatsby* Nick employs a motor-metaphor to convey the spirit of the hero’s romance with Daisy: ‘fresh and breathing and redolent of this year’s shining motor-cars...’ (140) However, and quite unlike that of Marinetti, Shaw, Stein, and Wharton, there is a sub-text in the writings of Forster and Fitzgerald; one which carries the suggestion that what is new and attractive today may be old and unwanted tomorrow.

So, even when the automobile seems to be foregrounded as an object worthy of our approbation, there is always a suggestion that beneath bright surface significations lie darker and more enduring meanings. Still, as we have seen, the motor-car does facilitate and give expression to certain shallow, ephemeral, and transient desires: our

wish to highlight our social and pecuniary success; our desire to play the king; our perverse need to provoke those who are beneath us; our eagerness for a home away from home; our desire for a place of seduction; our dream of bucolic idealism; our relentless drive to abolish space and time; our desire for gender equity; our wish to escape responsibility; and our desire for modernity. But among those values most persistently exploited by novelists is the automobile as a sign of heroic romance and metaphysical endeavour.

Transcendence

“...always somebody else’s horizon.”

Kenneth Grahame - *The Wind in the Willows*

A knight on the open road

Romantic heroism has a long and distinguished literary tradition and, as suggested above, it is one that survives in the modern period although the agency of the modern ‘knight errant’ or ‘picaresque hero’ is enhanced not by magnificent steeds but by motor-cars and other rapid transit technologies. As Cesar Grana observes: ‘...the romanticism of Byron and Hugo among others, is inseparable from the figure of the magically powerful male adventurer, a figure so durable that one might say...the romantic hero is still the hero of popular literature.’ (Grana: 165) Although modern romantic heroism finds expression in figures like Dean Moriarty from Kerouac’s *On The Road* and Willy Loman’s brother from Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*, we might just as readily turn to Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows* in order to find one of its most durable, if somewhat maverick, representatives.

Toad of Toad Hall is, of course, the ultimate adventurer of children’s literature, his non-conforming ‘on the road’ romantic agency asserted through various transit mechanisms including cart, locomotive, and motor-car. But Toad is only truly Toad when at the wheel: ‘He increased his pace, and as the car devoured the street and leaped forth on the high road through the open country, he was only conscious that he was the Toad once more, Toad at his best and highest, Toad the terror, the traffic-queller, the Lord of the lone trail, before whom all

must give way or be smitten into nothingness and everlasting night.’ (94) Exhibiting the same naïve disregard for the rule of law or for the safety of others that was later to be demonstrated in real life by Clyde Champion Barrow, Toad is only whole when he is at one with the road.⁹⁵

Traditionally, of course, the road is a simple, unambiguous metaphor for progress; an avenue for enterprise, agency, learning, social collocation, and enlightenment. And on the road, moreover, one may encounter the spirit of romance. In all sorts of literature, then, we may find the road as facilitator of the spiritual, psychological, or romantic quest. As suggested above, this topos, which has its tentacular roots in the journeys of classical and medieval literature, finds expression in modern popular fiction as well as in high culture and so, next to a set of well-thumbed science manuals, the favourite text of Philip Meldrum, romantic hero of Ian Hay’s 1914 popular novel *A Knight On Wheels*, is Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*. Seeking to master the automobile as a vehicle for his own romantic proclivities, Meldrum sees himself as ‘a twentieth century Galahad, roaming through the land in a hundred horse-power armoured car, seeking adventure, repelling his country’s invaders, carrying dispatches under cover of night, and conveying beauteous ladies to places of safety.’ (115)

Of course modern literature is full of latter-day knights errant. Gatsby himself, quite specifically cast as a heroic quester in search of a grail, is, as we will see, empowered as a romantic agent by the motor-car while his character double Nick, albeit it in a far less spectacular way, pursues his comparatively base urgings in the back seat of a moving vehicle. For Gatsby though, the highway seems to suggest possibilities of escape and so, like Keroac’s Dean Moriarty, Fitzgerald’s hero internalises the highway’s promise of infinity. Indeed Gatsby indirectly links roads and automobility with notions of a super-agency when he responds to Sloan’s ‘Very good roads around here’ with: ‘I suppose the automobiles-’ (98) Although the broken conversation is one of many fragments in the novel, one imagines that Gatsby’s next word, had his interlocutor not interrupted with the laconic ‘Yeah’, may have been ‘fly’. Gatsby’s agent worth then is foregrounded not just through the motor-car, but via the open road.

While we will return to the theme of the open road in Fitzgerald's fiction shortly, here it is noted that D. H. Lawrence also employs the highway as a symbol of agency.

We have seen that in Lawrence's *The Rainbow*, that the Brangwen women look to the road as a sign of the way forward and as an emblem of the unknown. Moreover, it suggests the possibility of triumph over the doubts and fears that the unknown provokes. However, it is not in his fiction that Lawrence most felicitously expresses the cultural significance of the highway but in his famous essay on Walt Whitman.⁹⁶ In this, Lawrence asserts that '[t]he great home of the Soul is the open road.' (*SCL*: 163) He adds: 'having no known direction...the soul [remains] true to herself in her going.' (*ibid*) For Lawrence, then, the highway bespeaks the crucial process of becoming; the business of forging an authentic identity. We may see the same theme in the fictions of E. M. Forster.

In the opening chapter of Forster's *Howards End*, Helen Schlegel writes to her sister Margaret that Charles Wilcox 'takes us out every day in the motor...' and that among the byways travelled is 'a wonderful road...made by the Kings of Mercia.' (21) As we will see, under Kings Aethelred and Offa, significant progress was made toward English political unification and the road mentioned by Helen, at one level anyway, communicates the idea of connection and becoming. Much later in the novel, Margaret uses the open road as a metaphor for progress and social collocation. In anticipating her marriage to Henry, and, therefore, a connection between the prosaic, capitalist, pragmatic Wilcoxes and the passionate, romantic, socialist Schlegels, Margaret muses that a conjoined soul will have a clear road ahead – although she does acknowledge that it will be 'hard going in the road of Mr Wilcox's soul.' (204) In *A Passage to India*, Forster once again signals the positive significance of the road. Here, the highway once more becomes an emblem of connectivity (and conquest) since the Europeans were driven to overcome the daunting geographical scale of India.⁹⁷

Finally, and as noted above, Scott Fitzgerald also takes the open road as an emblem of hope and progress. In '**The Diamond as Big as the Ritz**', for example, while the Roll-Pierce motor-car undergoes its

magnificent ascension, Percy Washington tells his startled friend of a private brick road on which they will drive the five miles to his parents' mechanised heaven. The mock odyssey to this promised land is highlighted by the narrator's account of the car's progress:

‘The tapestry brick of the road was smooth to the tread of the giant tyres as they rounded a still, moonlit lake.’

(SS: 188)

While ‘**The Diamond**’ is one of Fitzgerald's most cutting parodies of the American Dream, it nonetheless betrays the author's love of magic: his craving for perfect luxury; his desire for a new consciousness attuned not to this base world, but to the heavens. We will see later that the road becomes a metaphor for becoming in both *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned* as well, but it is, as suggested above, an idea that seems to lie at the very heart of *The Great Gatsby* where it speaks of a magnificent desire for the unattainable.

For Jordan Baker, Tom Buchanan, George Wilson, Myrtle Wilson, and narrator Nick Carraway, the highway promises escape from themselves. For Jordan, travelling the open road means that she never has to reckon with the marauding despair and loneliness that lie just beneath a worldly-wise exterior, while for Tom the road offers a space on which to compete and so partially experience the thrill of conquest once enjoyed on the football pitch. For George, the highway promises commercial success and for Myrtle it promises a romantic otherness that she will never experience with her worn out husband. For Nick, at the beginning of the novel anyway, the road suggests the possibility of riches; a chance to make a connection with the big money men of the East. For Gatsby himself, however, the highway implies infinity: horizons well beyond those of the temporal world.

The thing that redeems the hero of Fitzgerald's third novel is his desire to achieve the impossible. Like Nick, we cannot pass judgement on Gatsby in the limited terms of his failure to realise his dream since, in the end, not even the hero's shady associations and crooked deals may compromise our admiration of his extraordinary capacity to

wonder. For Gatsby, and by implication for us, it is the undertaking of the journey that counts: the readiness to dream dreams; the willingness to strive for something great. While Gatsby's motor-car undoubtedly represents ideals and the stuff of visions then, it is also the hero's association with the open road which foregrounds his metaphysical conquests. Indeed, when Gatsby is on the road, wonderful things happen: it seems to Nick that his neighbour is able to command the gods, stories of rubies and big game hunting are told, the Rolls-Royce itself seems to take flight, and lights flicker splendidly on the girders of bridges.⁹⁸

How, then, may we condemn Kenneth Grahame's Toad? Like those of Fitzgerald, Lawrence, and Bernard Shaw, Grahame's hero hardly leads a blameless life, but a life he does lead nonetheless. A braggart, a liar, and a criminal, Toad's extraordinary agency is emblematised by his conquest of the open road and, when at the wheel, we vicariously indulge in his remarkable and poetic flights of fancy. Indeed it may be said that the crime, from the point of view of the Toad himself, is not so much in the taking of the motor-car, but in the possibility of *not* taking it. And so Toad, who in the inimitable sixth chapter of *The Wind in the Willows* has just escaped incarceration for the second time and has had surrendered to him the wheel of the same motor-car he stole in the first place, pins the machine's original driver into his seat and announces that he is: '...the Toad, the motor-car snatcher, the prison-breaker, the Toad who always escapes!' (165-166) He then goes on to gloat of his fame, his skill, and his fearlessness. He is, for the moment at least, the returning wanderer; the car a symbol of the *elan vital* which Bergson had written of just one year prior to the publication of the novel.⁹⁹

As previously observed, other writers also noted the hero enhancing potential of the automobile and so the motor-car facilitates the cavalier and romantic agencies of Bernard Shaw's Tanner from *Man and Superman*. Like T. S. Eliot, Shaw was appalled at the vapid, flaccid spiritual condition of contemporary England and cast about for a suitably vigorous symbol of improvement.¹⁰⁰ This he found in the motor-car, writing that '...[it] cannot be suppressed: it is improving our roads, improving the manners and screwing up the capacity and

conduct of all who use them; improving our regulation of traffic, improving both locomotion and character as every victory over Nature finally improves the world and the race.' (CP: 214) It is a sentiment shared, albeit later, by the great twentieth century architect Le Corbusier who writes: 'I was assisting in the titanic rebirth of a new phenomenon....traffic. Cars, cars, fast, fast! One is seized, filled with enthusiasm, with joy...the joy of power, of strength. One participates in it. One takes part in this society that is just dawning. One has confidence in this new society: it will find a magnificent expression of its power. One believes in it.' (Le Corbusier in Berman: 166) Like Shaw, instead of being menaced by the new world, Le Corbusier is able to participate in its dynamism: 'The man in the street will incorporate himself into the new power by becoming the man *in* the car.' (Le Corbusier in Berman: 167)

To return to Bernard Shaw though, Tanner's open tourer emblematises the notion of progress and personal development which the playwright sought so vigorously in his own life, and the hero's surrender to the machine, 'I am a slave of that car', is to be read not so much as a social commentary on the pocket-impoverishing effects of owning an automobile but as a sign of his willing capitulation to the Life Force itself.¹⁰¹ *Man and Superman*, then, acknowledges the dynamic of the new era and the play's foregrounding of the automobile, a machine at the time thought to be unworthy of the serious arts, confirmed that the moribund old order now faced a serious challenge.

Conservatism was already in its death throes when Queen Victoria died in 1902 and Herbert Asquith, who became Prime Minister in 1908, epitomised a new age of freer social mobility. His Liberal party enacted a famous series of social reforms aimed at increasing individual agency and when Asquith was eventually succeeded in 1916 it was by Lloyd George, the first non-conformist to lead the country. The impact of social, political, economic, and technological change was certainly profound and in 1910 Rupert Brooke paused to take stock of the differences between his eighty year old uncle's world and his own. 'The whole machinery of life...change[s] beyond recognition every generation', he wrote. (Brooke in Cox & Dyson: 1) This was the extraordinary background against which Shaw was writing and while

the motor-car later became a universal emblem of the age, 1902, the year in which *Man and Superman* was written, was remarkably early for such a full representation of its energies. Moreover, the play is the first literary text in English to posit that through technology humanity might achieve, in a positive sense, a technical mode of being.

In order to declare one's validity as an agent then, the individual may align the self with technology. We may return, once more, to *The Wind in the Willows* in order to see the results of such a cleaving to the technological order. As our emblematic technocrat, Grahame's Toad is sucked into the slip-stream of progress to become the new agent of modernity; an agent who accelerates, with a mixture of confidence and hubris, into an unknown future. In so employing technology as a mode of being or self-revealing, Grahame's text, like Shaw's, fits into a category of literature characterised by the output of Nietzsche, Bergson, the Italian Futurists, and, more recently, writers like Dunlop and Kerr whose book *Industrialism and Industrial Man* argues that technology permits us profound freedoms.¹⁰²

From the mid-nineteenth century, things were moving steadily in this general direction. Philosophy itself had turned from traditional static values to a more vigorous modality characterised by a recognition of motion, change, and evolution. Partly in response to emergent technologies and partly in recognition of the inherent agency of humanity, Henri Bergson, who undoubtedly influenced Bernard Shaw, celebrated universal flux and applauded dynamism but it would nonetheless be unwise to ascribe Shaw's conception of the Life Force directly to him since the English idealists of the 1870s had promulgated something similar when they acknowledged that man is a centre of unfolding, impulsive activity. While Bergson's notion of the *elan vital* had a direct influence on the Russian and Italian Futurists then, his idea wasn't first described until the publication of *Creative Evolution* in 1907 - five years after the scripting of *Man and Superman*. However, Shaw certainly admired the metaphysical position which argued that man was a transitional being; a living phase in the development of a superior life form and so his Life Force is similar to Belfort Bax's definition of 'the good' as '...essentially a process of eternal Becoming which is never complete.' (Bax in Holroyd: 76) Shaw believed that this

striving for betterment, this desire for progress and amelioration would eventually lead to the Superman ideal.¹⁰³

Shaw's heroes then are agents of the Life Force and Tanner, a figure variously described in the play as 'restless', 'excitable', 'exaggerative', and 'megalomaniac', is, like Gatsby, defined through the marauding motor-car - a superb emblem of teleology and accomplishment; a quintessential manifestation of man's desire to better his last achievement. Indeed Tanner's surrogate, Don Juan, tells the Devil that 'to be in hell is to drift' while 'to be in heaven is to steer' - his motoring image suggesting man belongs in the driver's seat, actively determining his destiny rather than remaining content to be borne along in the current of life. And so Tanner urges Ann Whitfield to 'break [her] chains...and learn to enjoy a fast ride in a motor-car'. He dares her to come with him '..to Marseilles and across to Algiers and to Biskra, at sixty miles an hour....'. This, he claims, 'will be a declaration of independence', will finish her mother, and make a woman of her. (Act 3, p. 85)

There is certainly something Byronic about Tanner. His energy, his propensity to proselytise, and his scant regard for personal safety smack of the Superman consciousness. Moreover, the relationship between Byron's *Mazeppa* and his horse seems to be echoed in that between Tanner and his machine:

'Away!-away! My breath was gone,
...
Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind,
All human dwellings left behind;
We sped like meteors through the sky,
...'

(Byron: *Mazeppa* X - XI: p. 345)

One might just as readily find parallels with Byron's Manfred who, when alone on the peak of the Jung Frau, strikes a pose of defiant, romantic heroism and claims to be his own destroyer - and his own hereafter. Indeed, in Act One, Tanner, for whom read Don Juan, asks

Roebuck Ramsden to 'cultivate a little impudence' in order that he might become a remarkable man and later tells Ann that in the act of destruction one might gain breathing space, liberty, and an authentic mode of self-revealing arguing, in the same breath, that women stand in the way of creative passion: '...your bodies are under our wheels as we start.' (Act 1, p.64) The motor-car here reinforces Tanner's reforming, iconoclastic drives, the link between it and the Life Force explicitly developed at the conclusion of the Parliament in Act 3 - just in case we had missed it earlier.¹⁰⁴ Here, the cry 'Automobile, Automobile' felicitously connects with the debate about the Life Force - the approaching armoured vehicle an expression of man's urge to destroy and the motor-car which accompanies it a sign of his desire to create.¹⁰⁵ Of course the American capitalist Hector Malone is also an expression of the Life Force. Describing himself as getting 'carried away in an ecstasy of mendacity' Malone's lively, engaging, and romantic personality is emblematised through his '...mawdest possess[ion] of a motor-car.' (Act 3, p.89)

As noted earlier, Fitzgerald's *Gatsby* too fits into the tradition of the knight errant; the figure 'on the road.'¹⁰⁶ As one of modern literature's better-known wanderers (he fights in The Great War, studies in England, is rumoured to have lived in the great capitals of Europe, circumnavigates America with Dan Cody, and is 'dedicated to the following of a grail'), *Gatsby's* romantic agency is, as we have seen, underscored through his winged Rolls-Royce. But while *Gatsby* remains the only one of Fitzgerald's heroes of the period 1910 to 1925 in whom we might profitably invest our sympathies, Anthony Patch and Amory Blaine, though lacking the metaphysical and moral stature of *Gatsby*, nonetheless seek refined modes of transport as unequivocal signs of their agent worth. As we will see in the next chapter however, Fitzgerald deliberately denies them such means of conveyance so as to underline their narcissism.

Nonetheless, *This Side of Paradise* was the first popular American manifestation of the European *entwicklungsroman* - the novel of youth's coming of age. Its hero, Amory Blaine, symbolises the cosmopolitan consciousness of the twenties; the sense of "New Freedom" searched for by de Toqueville and claimed, on behalf of a

generation, by President Woodrow Wilson. This consciousness is primarily foregrounded through Amory's association with transit technologies and the roads or rails upon which they travel. And so, at the beginning of the story Amory is cast as a latter-day Picaresque hero. He is in characteristic mode: on the move. By age ten, he has 'done' the country, accompanied by his bored and restless mother, in a private car and early on we learn that Amory's motivation is to 'pass'; to get ahead.¹⁰⁷ (28) Later, in 'Spires and Gargoyles', in an attempt to enhance their agencies, the romantic maverick and friends pile into a stolen car and head out to Deal Beach.¹⁰⁸ Sometime after, Amory and associates take two motor-cars 'to New York in quest of adventure'. (91) On the way back, the hero's romantic consciousness is emphatically attuned to the road as he forms the outline of a poem in his head and in 'The Egoist Considers', Amory discusses with Monsignor Darcy the possibility of leaving Princeton. In the process of his half-hearted deliberations, Amory dishonestly claims to have gone 'thoroughly into the destruction of his egotistic highways' before lamely and ironically suggesting that if it were not for 'this tiresome war' he would 'like to travel.' (107) That the hero's egotistical consciousness wavers toward an indeterminate 'beyond' is further underscored when his reading preferences are revealed in 'Narcissus Off Duty', the final section of Book One of *This Side of Paradise*. Here it transpires that Amory favours the work of arch-egoist George Bernard Shaw, a man who had invested his entire being in the notion of progress and whose own ego was at one with the limitless road.

The second part of *This Side of Paradise* is entitled 'The Education Of A Personage', and, in keeping with the *entwicklungsroman* tradition, we again find Amory Blaine 'on the road'- ostensibly in search of an identity. Of course, the acquisition of an education on the road is a significant literary genre in its own right, the origins of which may also be traced to medieval literature. The figure of the self-driven autodidact, moreover, has many literary manifestations and the notion of the grand motor-tour may be found in various texts including those of Shaw, Lawrence, Forster, and Fitzgerald. With the exception of Shaw, however, the motor-tour is shown up to facilitate a spurious, shallow, non-academic education but one nonetheless valued by the Anton Skrebenskys, the Henry and Evie

Wilcoxes, the Nancy Dereks, the Amory Blaines, the Anthony and Gloria Patches, and the Jordan Bakers of modern literature. Of course, this 'learning on the road' topos persists in post-modern fiction where, as in Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*, it is condemned for its failure to lead to any worthwhile or definitive conclusion.

And so Amory, complaining limply that the Great War has 'sort of killed individualism out of [his] generation', determines, much like Joyce's Dedalus, to raise his slumbering consciousness through art. Given his proclivity for progress it is then not surprising that he turns to the road as a vehicle for the acquisition of an authentic identity. Significantly though, the road leads Amory back and not forward and so his attempt to immortalise and sanctify his meeting with Rosalind Connage, a girl who rejects him, by employing the imagery of the street and the motor-car to frame the poignancy of the moment, seems all the more embarrassing - if not simply comical. In describing the wet snow under the street lamps, Amory suggests that it is '*like golden oil from some divine machine.*' (210) The simile is unconscious testament to Amory's general sensibility: a propensity to live in the past and a counteracting wanderlust which together act to ensure that he gets nowhere. The device is, moreover, a sign of the hero's incurably romantic disposition and of his unspoken materialistic yearnings - as well as his desire to be rescued *Dues ex machina*. Later, in the same section of the novel, Amory complains bitterly that his life, once 'an even progress along a road stretching ever in sight', is now 'a succession of quick, unrelated scenes...' (223) Here, rather than signposting the way forward to understanding and enlightenment, the road becomes a symbol of the hero's emotional malaise.

In Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned*, an introspective, un-American Anthony Patch seeks to enrich his dull life by immersing himself in the glamour and pace of the modern world, and so the shining, new, but not so expensive, white roadster which belongs to he and new wife Gloria is a sign of the couple's romantic and ostensibly innocent agency. So it is with Jim Powell, hero of Fitzgerald's short fiction **Dice, Brasskuckles & Guitar**. Here, regardless of his machine's advanced degree of dilapidation, Powell's quest for financial success is emblematised by his motor-car. Though it is possible to

interpret the hero's ultimate destitution as a sign of his shattered agency, with Powell, as often in Fitzgerald's fiction, it is the questing that counts. At the end, though financially embarrassed, Powell is undefeated, a fact symbolised by his re-entry into his contraption where he is animated by a new spirit: 'Then he got into his car and as his foot found the clutch his whole manner underwent a change.' (*SS*: 257) The same enthusiasm and spirit of adventure that is expressed for his journey north is manifest again as he announces, with impressive dignity, that he's 'goin' south for the winter.' (*ibid*) As his machine roars into life, Powell becomes an extension of it; 'part of the intense vibration into which the automobile was thrown'. (*ibid*) The old machine, bespeaking new horizons, becomes once more the facilitator of the quest. While everybody else seems to drift aimlessly about, Powell is filled with purpose and goes down the road in 'quite a preposterous cloud of dust.'¹⁰⁹ (*SS*: 258) Even though the body slides off the chassis before it reaches the first bend, something of a common occurrence in the early days of motoring, there is nonetheless a sense of heightened optimism as the occupants dismount, reattach the halves, and take their seats again without looking around.

In E. M. Forster's fiction, the notion of the superman is more muted but it is notable that Henry Wilcox sees himself as falling into some different category than 'one of your Bernard Shaws who consider nothing sacred.' (Forster: *HE*: 296) However, the irony is that Henry does have the superman consciousness: obtuse, strident, materialistic, capitalistic, and progressive. Henry's son, Charles, who inherits and shares his father's drives, is also represented as the arrogant superman - this nowhere better highlighted than in the defiant pose struck from the safety of his automobile at *Howards End*. In this episode, the car becomes the young man's suit of armour, its relentless chugging (he does not turn the motor off as he delivers his tirade across the sanctuary of his mother's gardens) seemingly a sign of some sort of complicity - the suggestion being that Charles is a manifestation of the industrial conqueror: the superman of the modern world. Similarly, Rico, from D. H. Lawrence's short story 'St. Mawr', is another figure not whole unless at the wheel of a motor-car: 'No sooner was Rico put in the automobile than a self-conscious importance came over him, like when the wounded hero is carried into the middle of a stage.'¹¹⁰ (649)

In all of these fictions then, the motor-car is represented as a sign of heroic conquests: the conquest of social milieux, the conquest of space, the conquest of time, the conquest of older and more primitive technologies, the conquest of a torpid Victorianism, the conquest of conservative sexual values, and the conquest of old cadences. As such, the automobile is recognised as the emblem *par excellence* of change: the principal motor of the second machine age and the chief mechanism by which a person's natural agencies might be magnified.

Magnified man

It was this manifest and radical change-over to a technological society which contemporaneously animated the whole of Futurist thought. Moreover, 'it was the sense of sudden change which, in all probability, enabled them to exploit more quickly than other European intellectuals the new experiences...' writes Richard Banham in his *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*. (Banham: 44) And so 'The founding and manifesto of Futurism' was published in 1909 by the flashy showman F. T. Marinetti. In the introduction to the document itself, Marinetti recalls having stayed up all night, feverishly scribbling with his revolutionary friends. He remembers 'hearing the mighty noise of the huge double-decker trams that rumbled by outside...' (Marinetti in Apollonio: 19) Things then go quiet again, but then, writes Marinetti, 'under the windows we suddenly heard the famished roar of automobiles.' (Marinetti in Apollonio: 20) While modernity is often said to have begun with the premier performance of '*Le Sacre*', it is at the moment above that Futurism was borne. Marinetti claims to have leapt to his feet crying: 'Friends, away! Let's go! Mythology and the Mystic Ideal are defeated at last. We're about to see the Centaur's birth and...the first flight of Angels!...We must shake the gates of life, test the bolts and hinges. Let's go!' (Marinetti in Apollonio: 20) It is appropriate that that seminal evening of comradeship was to end in a furious automobile ride.

Marinetti, who had a passion for driving, laid amorous hands on his machine and took the wheel. With friends aboard, he roared, tyres

burning, past houses smacking of tradition and ‘reeking of domestic death.’ He recalls bawling out another challenge to the old order before spinning his car around to confront two startled cyclists. To his own disgust, he swerved to avoid them and rolled his ‘beautiful shark’ into a ditch. But, like the Toad, Marinetti rose from the mud to live another day, declaring ‘high intentions to all the *living* of the earth.’ (Marinetti in Apollonio: 21) When the party returned from its night-riding, the Italian man of action penned the following famous words:

‘We intend to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and fearlessness....we affirm that the world’s magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing car whose hood is adorned with great pipes, like serpents of explosive breath - a roaring car that seems to ride on grapeshot, is more beautiful than the victory of Samothrace...[W]e want to hymn the man at the wheel,...’

(Marinetti in Apollonio: 20)

In the motor-car then, Marinetti saw the potential for a profoundly enhanced social and political agency - something not at all surprising since the automobile bespeaks the multiplication of force. Like Shaw before him, this self-proclaimed father of Italian Futurism had found his symbol of personal and cultural improvement: a machine through which, with the mere press of a starter-button, one might release the force of many horses; a machine quite unlike any other in that a person could manipulate it as a more or less precise extension of the will. For the Futurists then, as for Shaw, Forster, Fitzgerald, D. H. Lawrence, and others, the motor-car was more than mere product. To Marinetti and friends it was welcomed as ally: a mechanism to aid them in their iconoclastic assault on the European establishment; a means of achieving a Superman status that could destroy old institutions whilst empowering the individual.

So, whilst it is usually considered a proto-fascist movement, one can fairly say that Futurism was an expression of the struggle of the personal *against* the institutional. In fact, the mechanisation of consciousness sought by the Futurists was not so much to be desired as the quintessential expression of state military ideology, but more as a means of establishing and guaranteeing personal sovereignty. For the Futurists then, a form of psychic cyborgism would ensure the individual victory over the crippling and paralysing strictures of institutionalism and governmentality. For confirmation of this we must turn to Marinetti's most important statement on the machine aesthetic - '**L'Uomo moltiplicato e Regno dello macchina**' - 'Multiplied man and the reign of the machine'. 'We exalt...love of the machine...', he wrote, adding that: 'We must prepare man for his imminent and inevitable identification with the motor, encouraging and perfecting an incessant interchange of institutions, rhythms, instinct and metallic disciplines...' 'We believe', he added, 'in the possibility of an incalculable number of human transformations and we declare solemnly that in the flesh of man lie dormant wings.' (Marinetti in Benton: 30)

Having tuned up the engines of aesthetic revolution on the continent and secure in the belief that to murder is to create, in 1912 Marinetti set out to destroy the English artistic establishment. 'The fact is', he goaded, 'that your painters live on a nostalgic feeling, longing for a past that is beyond recall.' (The Times, 21 March 1912, p.4) But, predictably, perhaps, this throwing down of the gauntlet was ignored. The reaction, such as it was, is best represented by Wyndham Lewis's *Centauress* of 1912 - where a mythological creature rears up in front of a strictly stylised ultra-modernity of sharp lines and acute angles. The centauress stares, 'horrified to realize that her abstract surroundings threaten to overwhelm....' (Cork: Vol 1: 29)

Whilst the Futurists were embracing the empowering potential of the machine then, Lewis was taking the first tentative steps toward the Vorticist aesthetic: a reluctant acknowledgement that humanity in the second machine age had entered into a profound relationship with technology. Later in 1912 Lewis produced '*Two Mechanics*', the work which marks the 'first unsentimental step forward towards the concerns of Vorticism.' (Cork: Vol 1: 30) The drawing depicts two straining,

angular figures against a back-drop of industrial shapes. It is as if the mechanics have surrendered their humanity to the impulses of their technical environment. For all that, the figures are still recognisably human. But barely so. However, in *'The Vorticist'*, produced later still in that year, one cannot separate the man from the machine. (see Cork: vol 1: 31)

Quite unlike the Futurist approach to technology then, Vorticism had '...nothing whatever to do with the superficial notion that one must beautify machinery.' (T. E. Hulme in Cork, vol 1: iii) 'It is not a question of dealing with machinery in the spirit...but of the creation of a new art having an organisation, and governed by principles, which are at present exemplified...in machinery', wrote Hulme. So, as the Vorticist movement took shape, its proponents, especially the indefatigable Wyndham Lewis, sought to overthrow all competing artistic ideologies - including Futurism. Despite an explicit debt to Futurism (and Cubism), Vorticism did something profoundly different with the forces of iconoclasm and technics. It is, as Richard Cork says, 'all too easy to dismiss the Vorticists' use of machines as a superficial fad borrowed wholesale from their immediate forebears on the continent.' (Cork: Vol 2: 324) Besides, Ezra Pound thought a degree of knee-bending to the machine an inevitable consequence of the era: 'I remember young men with no care for aesthetics...examining machinery catalogues...[and]...commenting on machines that certainly they would never own. ...This enjoyment of machinery is...natural...' (Pound: *The New Age*, 11 February 1915 - in Cork: Vol 2: 325)

The Vorticists, then, wished to meet the machine 'in a stoical embrace...'; to acknowledge, albeit it reluctantly, the spirit of modern technics; to identify the self with the machine. (Lewis: *Wyndham Lewis the Artist*, p.78-79) However, in so doing, they had no ambition to glorify the machine, nor to use it as a device to exalt the self. Whilst not denying the impact of the technological on the consciousness, such a fusion did not mean amelioration - as it did for the Futurists. Rather, Vorticism was a non-judgemental acknowledgement of the influence of technique on the human mind. For Vorticists, the mechanical was brutal, even dehumanising, but it also implied a vitality that could not and should not be shunned.

Wyndham Lewis himself believed that machine imagery imbued man with a dynamic completely absent from the flat Cubist planes of Picasso, Braque, and Gris: 'Picasso's structures are not ENERGETIC ones, in the sense that they are very static dwelling houses...A machine is in a greater or less degree, a living thing. Its lines and masses imply force and action, whereas those of a dwelling do not.' (ibid: 79) The Vorticists, then, thought that the best way to inject the maximum amount of vitality into the portrayal of a human being was to equate him with a mechanism: 'There should at least be the suggestions of life and displacement that you get in a machine.' (Lewis in Cork: Vol 2: 327- 328) F. Scott Fitzgerald would have agreed with that sentiment, the fast-moving, brightly-coloured motor-car suggesting, in the case of the author's pre-eminent hero, profound energies and extraordinary agencies.

Metaphysical yearnings

In his *Mythologies*, Roland Barthes asserts that 'cars today are almost the exact equivalent of the great Gothic cathedrals...' (95) In recent news footage recording the celebration of one hundred years of automobility, an 1886 automobile is to be seen driving up the aisle of an Anglican cathedral. The church was holding a special service to honour the motor-car - an event which raised a storm of protest culminating in a woman removing all her clothing at the altar whilst railing bitterly against the presence of a 'machine of death in the house of God'.¹¹¹ The event serves as confirmation of a primal impulse to worship or even deify the machine – and, of course, as a sign that there are also those who vehemently oppose the glorification of the technical world. However, whilst the Anglicans stopped just short of canonising the car, Eastern cultures are prepared to go further. In traditional Chinese funeral ceremonies, for example, an integral part of the committal calls for the burning of paper representations of those objects said to enhance the afterlife of the deceased. Produced by highly skilled funerary suppliers, model automobiles are commonly committed to the pyre with life-size paper sports cars much admired. As noted

earlier, the Chinese have a long history of automobility and would appear to see the motor-car as an ultimate sign of ascendancy.

Motor-car architecture itself establishes these profound connections between worldly freedoms and metaphysical agencies. Sachs observes that the classical shapes of car radiators suggest the facades of the great Greek temples and considers the formality of automotive design a kind of liturgical response to the uplifting spirit that inheres in the very notion of automobility.¹¹² Psychologist Anthony Greeley also presents an argument for the spiritual dimension of the motor-car when he points out that ‘No suppliant more eagerly await[s] a revelation from an oracle than does the automobile worshipper await the first rumours about new models.’ (Greeley in Marsh & Collet: 6) Marsh and Collet themselves observe that ‘a modern motor-show carries all the trappings...of a religious festival’ in that it has colours, lights, priests (salesmen), priestesses (fashion models), a ritual, and, most importantly, a liturgy. (ibid)

Advertising in popular magazines and newspapers in the early twentieth century also established the link between automobility and religious experience. An advertisement for Daimler which appeared in a 1911 edition of *The Times of India* began with the headline ‘MOTORING-IN-EXCELSIS’ whilst other manufacturers boasted of the heavenly experiences afforded drivers of their machines. Literary representations of the worshipped automobile begin, of course, with Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows* where, having sighted his first motor-car, Toad of Toad Hall falls into a state of religious rapture: ‘They found him in a sort of a trance...He breathed short, his face wore a placid, satisfied expression, and at intervals he faintly murmured “Poop-poop!”’ (27-28) Whilst these halting utterances of the Toad amount to the vocal genuflection of the religious convert, D. H. Lawrence distances himself from his narrative to observe, ex-cathedra, that the motor-car has become a modern god, supplanting faith in original deities.

In his *The Plumed Serpent*, for example, Lawrence observes that for Mexicans there is ‘one hope, one faith, one destiny: to ride in a camion, to own a car.’ (103) However, it is, as we might expect, Scott

Fitzgerald who makes the most of religious paradigms in his representation of the automobile. Not surprisingly, flight imagery underpins his endeavour in this respect. In 'The Diamond', for instance, literature's most extravagant dream-machine undergoes an extraordinary ascension. Like some sort of *Deus ex machina*, it is raised, by four immense cables attached to the hubs of its jewelled wheels, onto a private road. Fitzgerald's parody of the Christian faith in this story is very well documented by Matthew Bruccoli and others, and so here it is enough to acknowledge the parody of Christ's ascension; faith in a god being replaced by the deification of the machine.

One of the most heavenly cars in English literature is, of course, Gatsby's Rolls-Royce. Described as a 'circus wagon' by Tom Buchanan, the car inevitably implies social triumphs but the antagonist's disparaging description does suggest alternative agencies. It is therefore appropriate that the car, much like its owner, is something of a paradox. To begin with, its paintwork is ambiguous. Nick tells us that the Rolls-Royce is cream coloured whilst Wilson insists that a big yellow car ran down his wife.¹¹³ Another observer tells us that the death car is green, and another that it is white.¹¹⁴ In fact, they are all right. Like Gatsby himself, the car suggests one thing at one time and another at another, the machine eliciting a multitude of impressions. From about the mid nineteen-tens, Rolls-Royce did paint some Silver Ghosts a rather uncertain cream-yellow and, as might be seen in the illustration at centre, the lacquer also betrays a greenish hue.¹¹⁵ But quite apart from reflecting the fact that its owner too is variously perceived, the car signposts a certain, ill-defined yet profound metaphysical yearning.

That Fitzgerald exploits the symbolism of colours is scarcely in doubt and whilst readers are well advised to exercise caution when tempted to pedantically and slavishly ascribe fixed significance to them, the meaning of yellow is nonetheless clear: it is the colour of aspiration; a sign of the outer life; an emblem of dreams and agencies. Where the yellow is faded, as it is on the bonnet of Jim Powell's old wreck in 'Dice' or on the exterior of George Wilson's garage in *Gatsby* or on the 'murky yellow cars of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad'

in the same novel, we may safely assume a substantially compromised agency is being implied. (166) But where the yellow is bright there might we find cardinal drives in operation.

One of *The Great Gatsby's* most striking (though seldom commented upon) images, is that of the bright yellow trolley which the hero once saw racing through open, green, spring fields.¹¹⁶ It is a sign of hope; an emblem of agency in a world which offers, in the mind of the hero, few, if any, limitations. The cream-yellow Rolls-Royce, with its green leather interior, means much the same thing and is indeed a palpable manifestation of Gatsby's will to conquer the unconquerable: to turn the clock back to an ideal foretime.¹¹⁷ Whilst the vehicle's bucolic associations have been and will be explored elsewhere, there can be no doubt that the car communicates its owner's metaphysical endeavours and transcendental preoccupations, if not his conquests.¹¹⁸ And in so doing, the car suggests the hero's agent worth since one's value as a human being may be 'measured' in direct proportion to the morality or sublimity of one's motivations.¹¹⁹

Although one may then see Gatsby's Silver Ghost as a gaudy creation of enterprise that dooms us to death, it must also be viewed in the same light as Cody's yacht: as a symbol of the highest endeavour; as an emblem of dreams; as a sign of 'all the beauty and glamour in the world.' (96) Whilst most readings of the novel emphasise Gatsby's mistake of putting material artefacts ahead of the imperatives of the human heart, few note his ultimate detachment from these very objects: '...he stared around at his possessions in a dazed way...none of it was any longer real.'¹²⁰ (88) This alienated, spectatorial stance of the hero from the affairs of the real world is most deftly foregrounded in chapter three where he stands, a figure of 'complete isolation' on the porch of his mansion, physically elevated from the scene of violent motor confusion in his garden. (56) On one hand object and on the other abstraction, Gatsby's magnificent Rolls-Royce then is an index of the hero's real world conquests, but sign too of his will to achieve greater horizons. However, although not of the world, Gatsby is nonetheless in it and so, in the end, though a profoundly innocent victim of the foul dust that travels in the wake of dreams, Gatsby's strivings for a not-so-meretricious beauty are not enough to save him from treachery.¹²¹

However, Gatsby arranges his life as though he doesn't particularly care for the world, his heavenly objects merely things upon which he might project and focus his romantic agency. That his car is described as a 'circus wagon' also points to such metaphysical endeavour. As 'circus master' and performer (one of Gatsby's progenitors is Petronius's Trimalchio) Gatsby is inevitably defined by his automobile, a machine which Brian Way declares is '...not so much a means of transport as a theatrical gesture' – one commensurate with the hero's 'non-stop theatrical performance'.¹²² (Way in Bloom: 102) Leo Marx writes that Gatsby has about him a 'gratifying sense of a dream about to be consummated' and emblematising this is the hero's dream car - one of many objects in the novel which bespeak Gatsby's attempt to locate, in the real world, the stuff of unutterable visions.¹²³ (L. Marx: *PA*: 77) A panoply of colours and shapes, his Rolls-Royce is 'gorgeous', an adjective applied to the hero himself when Nick tells us that he has 'something gorgeous about him.'⁽⁸⁾ It is, moreover, said to be 'splendid', whilst, just a little later, Nick speaks of its owner's 'purposeless splendour.'⁽⁷⁶⁾

As circus wagon, moreover, Gatsby's car is an enchanted object; an eminently suitable symbol for a man who lives an 'enchanted life.'⁽⁶⁴⁾ In addition, the machine makes a substantial contribution to Fitzgerald's comedy of the excess in that, as everyone knows, those cars employed by clowns at circuses appear to adhere to a set of physical laws that have nothing whatever to do with those governing real world events. In this sense, all circus wagons defy mastery in the same way that Gatsby himself might be said to defy all attempts at definition. We have already examined the suggestion that the hero's car seems destined to fly and this together with its extraordinary paint-work, its plethora of optional extras, and its fair-ground inspired three-noted horn makes the machine a comic construct entirely befitting a circus setting. Like Daisy's white roadster, a machine that ironically bespeaks innocence and purity, Gatsby's machine is a trick; a bright theatrical gesture that belies sinister meanings to be revealed and considered elsewhere. It is no accident, then, that Gatsby offers to drive Nick to Coney Island, the site of one of the world's greatest amusement parks - now ironically fallen onto bad times. In context

though, what better site for one of the great actors who turns his own home into a veritable circus: a blaze of 'spectroscopic gaiety' with 'several hundred feet of canvas' and 'coloured lights'?¹²⁴

To be sure, other cars appear as circus wagons too, most notably the coupe which a drunk laughably and ridiculously suggests should be driven out of a ditch outside the hero's mansion - despite the fact that the machine is minus one of its wheels. And nor may one easily ignore the comic excess of the dozens of parping, caterwauling horns of the motorists queued up behind this spectacle. Whilst undoubtedly underlining themes of illusion and destruction then, these cars, and some (but by no means all) of the incidents surrounding them, nonetheless point toward the magnificence of life's theatre: the dream of triumph over nature; the urge for personal liberation; the 'creative passion' itself.¹²⁵ (92) This is why Nick Carraway is so drawn to Gatsby: because the hero and his enchanted objects point to a gorgeousness which lies beyond the stars; a gorgeousness which relieves the narrator of his own limited horizons.

Chief among Gatsby's collection of enchanted objects, then, is his Rolls-Royce and implied in its colour and its architecture (note the wing-like fenders) is a sense of a certain straining toward otherness; heaven, if you like. In this connection, Robert Long calls Gatsby's Rolls a 'sun-car'.¹²⁶ It is an apt description. After all, the machine's 'labyrinth of windshields...[mirror] a dozen suns' and light, from its shimmering body, is 'scattered...through half Astoria.' (63, 66) Moreover, the hero himself is referred to a 'patron of recurrent light' and would appear to have a financial interest in the Swastika Holding Company, the symbol of which has heliocentric connections.¹²⁷ (86) Although Gatsby's greatest trick - to 'fix things the way they were before' - fails miserably, his time and space conquering motor-car stands, at one of its many levels of significance, as a material sign of such admirable aspirations. Through it, as Ernest Lockridge suggests, the hero triumphs over earth and air - victories that point to greater triumphs still.¹²⁸ And in all of these respects we must be careful not to read *Gatsby* as an uncompromising criticism of our commercial drives, though to be sure excoriation of materialism is to the fore as Fitzgerald urges us to rediscover the organic unity of an ideal foretime. It is this

paradox which Gatsby's motor-car seems to underscore in so many ways.

Those magnificent men

As is suggested in the preceding section (and elsewhere), it is surely the ambition of every serious autoist to achieve flight and from radiator mascots to the cock-pit-like orientation of driver controls, motor-cars have been and are still ineluctably associated with mastery of the air.¹²⁹ Having already noted an increasing emphasis on abstraction in painting along with the deployment of classical flight imagery in turn of the century motoring advertisements, we may look to sculpture too as evidence that artists were conscious of this quite particular agency. Andre Aucoc's 'Gordon Bennet Trophy' of 1900 is, for instance, quite typical of the classical forms favoured at this time and certainly foregrounds the notion of winged triumph. Similarly, Dalou's 1909 'Levassor' sculpture suggests escape from the surface of the globe since car and driver, both rendered in relief, appear to burst forth from the very marble in which they are carved. However, Charles Sykes's 'Spirit of Ecstasy' (a winged lady straining forward toward an indeterminate beyond) which graces the radiators of Rolls-Royce motor-cars and which in 1911 won a coveted prize in the *Salon de l'Automobile*, must surely be considered the finest physical manifestation of this theme.¹³⁰

But whilst the visual arts were responding to emerging rapid transit technologies - particularly the motor-car and aeroplane - writers too were increasingly interested in the idea of winged triumph. Powered flight had an enormous influence on poets, novelists, and playwrights, inspiring works like Kafka's '**The Airplanes at Brescia**', a story written in response to the Brescia Airshow which Kafka attended in the hope of lifting his then flagging spirits. Writer, military hero, and, later, ardent Fascist, Gabriele D'Annunzio was at the same show. Whilst the effect of the spectacle on Kafka was relatively short-lived, D'Annunzio appears to have internalised the phenomenon, not only because he celebrates flight in works like '**Perhaps So, Perhaps Not**', but since he went on to become an accomplished pilot in the

Great War. For D'Annunzio then, powered flight offered another means by which to signify the arrival of the Superman.

Marinetti, of course, was as enthralled by the aeroplane as D'Annunzio. The *Founding and manifesto* was published just after Wilbur Wright's triumphs in France and his 1909 play *Poupées électriques* was dedicated to the flier. However, given the contiguity between the development of aircraft and the motor-car, and taking into account the relative accessibility of the latter, it is, as Tim Benton suggests, perhaps not surprising that notions of winged triumph ultimately transferred to the automobile.¹³¹ Certainly, so far as Marinetti is concerned, no better evidence of this transference is to be had than in his *A mon Pégase*.

Whilst writers like Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, and Scott Fitzgerald then represent both technologies in their work, others, like E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence, and Kenneth Grahame, focus their energies on the autoist as pilot. In *The Wind and the Willows*, for instance, the driver of the cart-destroying motor-car is represented as a 'pilot' in possession of 'all earth and air', his machine 'a droning bee'. (27) Later, the Toad becomes pilot:

'He chanted as he flew...fulfilling his instincts, living his hour...' (94)

Later still, having crashed the machine, Toad finds himself '...flying through the air with the strong upward rush and delicate curve of a swallow.' (166) The sensation, it seems, pleases him and appears to confirm the creature's drive for a super-agency:

He liked the motion, and was just beginning to wonder whether it would go on until he developed wings and turned into a Toad-bird, when he landed on his back with a thump...'

(166)

Whilst Grahame brings his creature down to earth again then, the Toad's motor-flights nonetheless facilitate new and profound agencies culminating in escape from the globe itself. Of course, as has been already highlighted, Scott Fitzgerald too exploits the metaphysical implications of automobility and here we may consider principal manifestations of 'winged triumph' in his fiction.

Fitzgerald's enthusiasm for the trope is indicated via three principal methods: objective representations of automobile architecture, metaphor, and, as with Grahame, the deliberate selection of diction pertaining to aeronautics. In *This Side of Paradise*, for example, the two machines that bear Amory Blaine and friends back from New York to their university have wing-like fenders suggestive of flight. Certainly, having consumed copious quantities of alcohol, the occupants are in high spirits with Blaine himself forming the outline of a poem in his head. Indeed, the simile 'wing-like', as applied to the vast mud-guards of the machines, implies not merely flight but the super-agency of youth; the promise of immortality (cruelly ironic given the events that are to follow) and the freedom of the human spirit from the rigours of schedules academic and otherwise. Moreover, the image signifies a more intensely spiritual agency confirmed in Blaine's flights of poetic fancy.

In *The Great Gatsby* too the hero's Rolls-Royce has huge fenders 'spread like wings'. (66) Whilst Fitzgerald's own psychological propensities to elevation are described by wife Zelda in her autobiographical novel *Save Me For the Waltz*, Gatsby (for whom we may, in part at least, read Fitzgerald) has his desire for a spiritual transcendence indicated through his gorgeous car and his hydroplane.¹³² Nor is it accidental that Gatsby lives on an 'Egg' and that his chauffeur wears a uniform of 'robin's egg blue' since a fragile and quite latent agency pertaining to flight is thereby implied. Daisy and Jordan, moreover, have their flighty dispositions underscored through their association with motor-cars.

So then, via the motor-car, Fitzgerald appears to confirm and sanction, to some extent at least, a certain animation of the spirit. But it should nonetheless be asserted that apparent animation may be a mere

transitory counterfeit for a more sublime and enduring agency - such as that which drives Gatsby himself. Whilst outwardly attractive and engaging then, the psyches of Fitzgerald's women actually signify a kind of moral rootlessness; a rootlessness suggested by the automobile. So, whilst Daisy Buchanan's motoring at one level suggests her function as a notional rolling stone, she is more specifically aligned with those aspects of automobility that bespeak carelessness, destruction, and death. Indeed, cast as nightingale, her last ride with the hero suggests the tragic reality of a romantic flight that is not to be: the dissolution of dreams. As further illustration of this principle, which will be developed in depth later, Anthony Patch, hero of *The Beautiful and Damned*, temporarily animated by Gloria's bird-like spirit, suggests they '...take a taxi and ride around a bit!' (95) Here, the motor-car appears to be employed as a mechanism to reinforce notions of psychic freedom, but, on closer examination, actually suggests a deep psychological malaise: the characters' inability to settle and dwell and so become authentic beings. So, for Gloria and Anthony, as for Daisy and Jordan, the automobile offers a means of escape from themselves.

A God from a crane

The tradition of rescue by a machine-borne God is as old as classical Greek tragedy where desperate and disconsolate heroes are borne away by sympathetic deities in chariots literally suspended from cranes.¹³³ Greek audiences then were quite accepting of the idea of the 'ghost in the machine' and were equally comfortable with the notion that temporal problems could be solved by the sudden intervention of mobile Gods. However, whilst for Euripides, Aeschylus, and Sophocles, the *Deus* was a legitimate and often imperative mechanism for the resolution of plots, Forster and Fitzgerald tend to satirise the convention. In Fitzgerald's '**The Diamond**', for example, the divine machine takes John Unger and Percy Washington away from the world of ordinary mortals and into a mechanised heaven. However, it is a dream world which ultimately breaks down when the real world smashes through its fantastic defences.

In *Gatsby*, in a much more subtle representation of the tradition, the hero uses his Rolls-Royce to spirit Daisy away from the temporal consequences of her carelessness whilst in *This Side of Paradise* the 'shining green auto-bus' dreamed of by the hero is one of two foreshadowings of Amory's rescue *Deus ex machina* at the end of the novel - the other being his flight of poetic fancy concerning Miss Connage.¹³⁴ Toward the end of *This Side of Paradise*, having had his name published for improper sexual connection, having lost his girl to the wealthy, reliable, and boring J. Dawson Ryder, and having been informed that his income from his mother's failed speculation in the street-car market is to cease, a disconsolate Amory Blaine wanders the streets and contemplates his miseries. It is here, within fifty miles of Manhattan, that a passing motor-car slows down beside the shambling figure. Amory looks up to behold 'a magnificent Locomobile' and is hailed by one of the two anonymous, begoggled, and otherwise dehumanised figures inside. These Gods of the machine then drive Amory West, in the direction of hope, as one of its occupants indicates with a 'sweeping, lateral gesture.' (257) However, rather than being representations of God's mercy, manifestations of the *Deus* in Fitzgerald's fictions tend to underscore the notion of flight from obligation or flight from the essential self - the former identified by Sachs as a motif we might find in all sorts of texts.

In Forster's fiction the *Deus* figures quite traditionally in the short story 'The Celestial Omnibus' in which a young man and his father's friend, Mr Bons, are taken from a dreary life in Surbiton for a ride to heaven by a terse and rather ghostly driver by the name of Sir Thomas Browne - the English physician and writer. Due to his lack of imagination, Bons does not survive the journey, but the boy, rewarded for his humility and his belief in the spirit of poetry, is crowned with a garland. Here then, the *Deus* rescues the lad from the cynicism and cruelty of the adult world. Of course the device also finds expression in *A Passage* where Nancy Derek's car twice comes out of nowhere to rescue characters from disaster: once at the portentous scene of the motor-accident on the Marabar Road and again below the Marabar caves themselves when Adela Quested is 'rescued' from her 'ordeal'.¹³⁵ But here, as in *Howards End* when Charles Wilcox drives away from the scene of Leonard Bast's death, the *Deus* tradition loses its classical

associations of rescue, relief, and release to take on the more dubious suggestions of flight from responsibility and moral imperative.

Only a thoroughgoing surface reading of Forster's and Fitzgerald's fictions then may foreground the motor-car as a sign of unequivocal conquest. But the question begged is this: 'To what extent may such a reading be considered legitimate?' The answer must be that the exercising of a singular approach to any text may be sanctioned only inasmuch as violence (that is to say the pedantic application of a tortuous logic) is resisted. With respect to technology then, whilst the approbatory voice of the 'other' may undoubtedly be heard in the fictions of Forster and Fitzgerald, it is a voice that nonetheless fails to drown out the cries of caution, negativity, and condemnation which consistently and authoritatively assert themselves in their texts. All this points more firmly to something that has been variously suggested in the first half of this thesis: that is, by privileging the post-modernist surface model, one denies these latter voices their due.

Such a denial also amounts to a complete rejection of depth-models such as literary structuralism, existentialism, dialecticism, and psychoanalysis. Moreover, as noted earlier, whilst the application of late-capital modes of analysis to mid-capital texts may be rewarding, and even revealing, a myopic adherence to deconstruction would appear to be unreasonably out of step with an increasingly hostile response to modern technology from about 1910 on. Notwithstanding this, and as has been suggested above, it will be seen that authors do have what may be said to be a somewhat ambivalent view of technology. It is an ambivalence that can certainly be foregrounded through the application of literary structuralism and accordingly, it is to the motor-car as a sign of servitude, broken connections, and death that the second, and inevitably longer, part of this study turns its attentions.

Before so turning to part two of *Narratives of Conquest and Destruction* however, we must bear in mind that it is in the nature of oppositions to dissolve into paradox. Therefore, while it will become clear that both Forster and Fitzgerald are heavily critical of the motor-car and motorists, it will also be seen that they are not unequivocally judgemental. Even at the end of *Gatsby*, and Fitzgerald's attitude is

emblematic of that of many modern writers who foreground automobiles in their work, we cannot quite forget that the death-car is also a dream-car; a sign of what might have been were it not for the profoundly human propensity to worship the material thing. Of course, this interpretation in itself reveals yet another level of paradox: that the object of our desire will kill us in the end. And so, as was noted in the introduction to this thesis, a limited level of textual deconstruction may be defended as both functional and desirable.

PART 2:

DESTRUCTION

Servitude

When his violent paroxysms possessed him he would arrange his bedroom chairs in rude resemblance of a motor-car and would crouch on the foremost of them, bent forward and staring fixedly ahead, making uncouth and ghastly noises....
k-i-ck-ck-ck, and poop-p-p, and other sounds...'

Kenneth Grahame - *The Wind in the Willows*

The stolen purse

As we have seen, the motor-car is a beguiling machine. It offers a means of asserting our economic and social power; it bespeaks multiple horizons; it makes possible romantic liaisons; it enables us to triumph over space and time; it affords us 'superman' status. The automobile, then, is a vehicle for a certain mode of self-revealing; a *modus operandi* for profound conquests. Who, therefore, can condemn the passion for automobility exhibited by Kenneth Grahame's Toad, E. M. Forster's Nancy Derek, D. H. Lawrence's Hilda, and many of Scott Fitzgerald's characters? For them, and for other figures, the motor-car is, as D. H. Lawrence himself observes, a machine through which mortal beings may exhibit a God-like status. However, as is widely acknowledged in modern fiction, such autoists cleave to mere images: to that which is obviously communicated. These men and women of the machine, then, are defined by illusions: like the Chromes of Fitzgerald's *Gatsby*, their authentic identities are only as deep as the bright-work on their vehicles.

At its worst, therefore, technology influences our innermost being and so, when seduced by mechanical contrivances, the costs carried are seldom confined to the original purchase price. This is nowhere truer than in the case of the automobile, a machine that impoverishes the heart as well as the pocket. However, in considering the various costs of automobility, we do well to begin with money since it is the most obvious price to be borne by motorists. The expense of owning and running an automobile is notorious. Whilst purveyors speak of their machines as investments, few, if any, technologies attract such a high initial premium, depreciate at a more savage rate, or require such a significant ongoing financial commitment. Nonetheless, as we will shortly see, by the 1920s car ownership had become a prerequisite for acceptance into an emerging middle class. Ironically though, such ownership compromised one's ability to maintain that very status.

The first significant literary acknowledgement that the automobile may undo us financially came in 1902 with the publication of Shaw's *Man and Superman*. When Tanner complains to his chauffeur that he is 'a slave of that car', he is, at one level, acknowledging the ruinous costs of keeping his temperamental machine on the road. However, whilst Tanner's complaint is fundamentally rhetorical, the dilemma of Charles and Dolly Wilcox in E. M. Forster's *Howards End* is far more real. Here, whilst Leonard Bast dreams of car ownership as a badge of middle class status, it becomes clear that the ongoing cost of running their 'motor' is contributing to the Wilcox's financial demise. In *Howards End* then, as elsewhere in his fiction, Forster employs the automobile as a sign of financial and social servitude. So does F. Scott Fitzgerald, particularly in his early fiction.

Both *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned* foreground the automobile as an emblem of impecuniousness. Along with other disastrous investments, including forays in the street-car bond market, it is the maintenance of Beatrice Blaine's 'electric' and her purchase of 'a French car' that finally brings about her financial demise in *This Side of Paradise*.¹³⁶ (104) In *The Beautiful and Damned*, hero Anthony Patch attributes his own financial catastrophe to the automobile. Speaking of the white roadster that he and Gloria

purchase to keep up appearances, he complains that the ‘darned car was an expense from start to finish.’ (255) In *Gatsby* too, George Wilson is kept poor by the automobile. A low-key dealer in second-hand machines, he has worked for years on notoriously thin margins. James Flink records that dealers in used automobiles had a particularly hard time in the mid to late 1920s when profits on sales were very slight. In fact, the trade-in was ‘a losing proposition’ until 1925 when the Ford Motor Company inaugurated a scheme to allow its dealers to dispose of used autos at a slight profit.¹³⁷ (Flink: *CC*: 144) Of course, the fact that Wilson is a second-hand car dealer also reinforces that everything else in his life is second-hand too. His dream, built on the enterprise of others, is second-hand; his premises are second-hand; even his wife is second-hand.¹³⁸ And of course, he himself is thoroughly used. Fitzgerald then, is also at pains to highlight the cultural meaning of the common or inferior car.

The commodification of artefacts

The roadster that Anthony and Gloria Patch purchase is not a particularly good one. Described as a ‘cheap’ machine, it soon develops rattles and proves unreliable. Moreover, as a mass-produced vehicle, and despite the fact that any sports-car bespeaks a certain panache and artistry, it finally confirms the painful process of proletarianisation that the Patches endure. Therefore, the mass-produced vehicle may be viewed as an attack on elitism. Fitzgerald, then, knew that mechanical reproduction compromises artistry by stripping the original of its aura. Uniqueness, such as the uniqueness of *Gatsby*’s motor-car, is a prerequisite for authenticity but when, through mass-production, such artistry becomes mere commodity it is ‘released from its traditional social function...into the anonymous freedom of the market place...[where] it exists, not for any specific audience, but just for anybody with...the money to buy it.’ (Eagleton: *IA*: 368) As Jaques Ellul observes, art itself is actually ‘sterilised through technique’ and becomes a public good, not in the moral sense but in the sense that it becomes a purchasable commodity. (Ellul in Stover: 13)

William Carlos Williams' idea that the machine finally condemns us to an unimaginative life without art is firmly asserted by the following words which appear on the side of a tanker in *The Great American Novel*: 'STANDARD MOTOR GASOLINE'. This, the narrator cynically implies, is as close as American culture can come to setting words free: placing them on the side of a truck. And so, in submitting to the fact of a 'civilisation of fatigued spirits', he abandons thoughts of Musorgski, Nijinsky, and the gaudy showmanship of P. T. Barnum, and calls out for Ford - the greatest man of American 'culture'; the undeclared apostle of Dada and precursor of European Fascism.¹³⁹ Others, however, felt that mass-production would lead to a redefining of art, rather than to its absolute abolition. For instance, Paul Valéry writes:

'Our fine arts were developed, their types and uses were established, in times very different from the present, by men whose power of action upon things was insignificant in comparison with ours. But the amazing growth of our techniques, the adaptability and precision they have attained, the ideas and habits they are creating, make it a certainty that profound changes are impending in the ancient craft of the Beautiful. In all the arts there is a physical component which can no longer be considered or treated as it used to be, which cannot remain unaffected by our modern knowledge and power. For the last twenty years neither matter nor space nor time has been what it was from time immemorial. We must expect great innovations to transform the entire technique of the arts, thereby affecting artistic invention itself and perhaps even bringing about an amazing change in our very notion of art.'

(Valéry: 225)

Valéry's suggestion that the facsimile might acquire status as artifice is plausible and we might accept it completely were it not for the fact that mass-production does not quite annihilate the original.

Whilst the creation of multiple machine copies (as opposed to hand made facsimiles that are in *some* measure authentic) undoubtedly compromises the original, something of its auratic presence is nonetheless conserved – either as legend or as caricature. Back of the copy, therefore, may always be felt the spirit of the original striving to be discovered anew. This, in part, is the reason that Gatsby's Rolls-Royce is represented as a 'circus wagon'. Alongside the grey Dodges, the black Fords, and the mass-produced coupes in *The Great Gatsby*, it is a fantastic caricature and so, whilst we may take the hero's car as a sign of cultural excess, we must also see it as an emblem of rare artifice in a world which sanctions and evinces the bland philosophy of massification. Gatsby's Silver Ghost, then, is a genuine artefact among the cheap and humiliating copies represented in the novel.

However, in compromising the aura of the original, mass-production leaves us to bend the knee to inauthenticity. And so when, in an anti-auratic machine culture, we are persistently separated from original artistry, our minds become attuned to the inauthentic and the fungible. It is part of a process of proletarianisation and massification in which modern beings endure a profound and prolonged assault on their cognitive processes and finer sensibilities. Of course, the ultimate expression of this process is fascism – that political ideology which vigorously promulgates cultural homogeneity at the expense of personal autonomy. Overall, therefore, it is not too much to suppose that our ongoing encounter with the commodity contributes to our turning away from a personal, authentic identity. Of course, in its totality, such a disastrous turning depends on much more than day to day engagement with vulgarity - although such an onslaught of the mass-produced counterfeit doubtless promotes our identification with Heidegger's 'publicness' – the turning away from our essential selves to the world.

The mass-produced automobile

Like any other copy, therefore, the mass-produced motor-car lacks authentic presence. Nonetheless it may acquire a peculiar sort of authority as the 'universal' or 'democratic' automobile as Henry Ford called the Model-T.¹⁴⁰ But despite such dubious political presencing, the mass-produced motor-car finally bespeaks the sterilisation of artifice, the relentless application of industrial technique, and, whilst promising manifold liberties, an insidious attack on individual identity.¹⁴¹ In *Minima Moralia*, social commentator Theodor Adorno notes that in an age of fungibility 'luxury is sapped' and that mass-production is effectively an attack on elitism or difference. (120) In illustrating his case, Adorno refers to the manufacture of automobiles pointing out that whilst the Cadillac and the Chevrolet are positioned at opposite ends of the market both are nonetheless mass-produced and therefore lack artistic authenticity:

'Whilst a Cadillac undoubtedly excels a Chevrolet by the amount that it costs more, this superiority, unlike that of the old Rolls Royce, nevertheless itself proceeds from an overall plan which artfully equips the former with better, the latter with worse cylinders, bolts, accessories, without anything being altered in the basic pattern of the mass-produced article... So luxury is sapped.'

(Adorno: 119-120)

Inevitably, the mass-production of automobiles implied a new sign of public identity - one neatly encapsulated by David Perry, Auckland (New Zealand) Automobile Association General Manager, who in 1975 asserted that: 'Motorists are the people.' (in Chapple: 10) However, that motorists were synonymous with the people was a cultural reality by 1927 when the Model-T finally went out of production.

When Henry Ford finally admitted that the Model-T had had its day, fifty percent of American families owned an automobile, Ford himself was the second richest man in America (in 1928 he would become the richest), and mass-production was firmly established as the most profitable means of production.¹⁴² Apart from the efforts of specialist parts suppliers, many of whom sought to individualise cars, art was forgotten in the pursuit of the perfect commodity.¹⁴³ British manufacturers such as Herbert Austin and W. R. Morris were continuing to implement Ford's industrial methods and the number of automobiles imported into England continued to fall whilst the number of exports rose.

*U. K. Table of Imports and Exports of
Motor-cars*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Net imports</i>	<i>Exports</i>
<i>1908</i>	<i>1229</i>	<i>802</i>
<i>1909</i>	<i>1046</i>	<i>953</i>
<i>1910</i>	<i>1204</i>	<i>1377</i>
<i>1911</i>	<i>1410</i>	<i>1804</i>

Source: The Economist, 17 August 1912 ¹⁴⁴

Of course, up-and-coming US automobile industrialists, especially Alfred Sloane of General Motors and Walter Chrysler of the newly incorporated Chrysler Corporation, also sought to compete with Ford. This was the era that saw the birth of what we have come to call the multi-nationals, a new generation of entrepreneurs typified by W. H. Lever who built massive industrial complexes all over the world. Cinema too was booming, which necessitated the mass-production of film, and there was also a massive increase in the publication of cheap, mass-produced books.¹⁴⁵ Without a doubt, as Valéry had correctly divined, the world was confronted with a new production phenomenon; one that elicited new meanings and one that demanded the application of new intellectual modalities if it were to be properly critiqued.¹⁴⁶

Old discourses, then, were inadequate and it is interesting to see how, after 1910 when mass-production was well under way, writers sought to represent a mobile public vis-à-vis a mobile elite.¹⁴⁷ In the end, the solution to the problem of representation was as simple as it was obvious: the mass-produced automobile, including the motorised public carrier, was employed as a new symbol of the colourless majority. Before the 1920s the meaning of such iconography was particularly clear since Henry Ford, who was then the pre-eminent manufacturer of automobiles, dismissed public demand for variation by quipping that you could have any colour you like, so long as it's black. In modern fiction then, the mass-produced automobile usually signifies publicness: identification with monocultures, deference to conservative social values, adherence to mainstream political ideology, a liking of the institutional, a belief in the beneficence of government, and an acceptance of the idea that the majority is always right. This is nowhere better represented than in F. Scott Fitzgerald's fiction where specific makes (and colours) of cars are detailed as part of the narrative.

As we will see later, in his short fiction, Fitzgerald foregrounds the Ford motor-car as a sign of compromised agency and servitude to middle class ideology and aspirations. In *The Great Gatsby* too, George Wilson's old Ford contemporaneously signifies the garage proprietor's financial problems and his frustrated desire for upward social mobility. So does Nick Carraway's old Dodge, another of the novel's mass-produced automobiles. Indeed, Fitzgerald's choice of the Dodge for Nick exhibits the author's acute consciousness of the cultural meanings attached to particular makes of motor-car. Quite apart from signposting Nick's unspoken servitude to his social ambition, the old Dodge is also an index of the narrator's slavery to his self-effacing, clerk-like, and conservative personage. Tad Burness notes that the Dodge was a car that particularly appealed to conservative and careful drivers. Certainly, the Dodge brothers' advertising of the nineteen-twenties, which steadfastly emphasised staunchness and stability, reinforces this conclusion.¹⁴⁸ The make, therefore, is entirely appropriate to Nick - the man who takes no risks, who shuns excitement, who aligns himself with mainstream Midwestern monocultural values, who identifies more with the mechanical than

with the human, and who, until the very end, fails to commit to the extraordinary.

In reviewing the manuscript of *The Great Gatsby*, Keath Fraser records an exchange between Jordan Baker and Nick Carraway which was finally, and perhaps unfortunately, excised:

‘You appeal to me,’ she said suddenly as we strolled away,
“You’re sort of slow and steady...you’ve got everything adjusted just right.”¹⁴⁹

To have been included at the end of the third chapter, Jordan’s assessment of Nick, which Fitzgerald may have felt to be just too misleading, suggests that the narrator has, in minute detail, fine-tuned the cognitive machinery necessary to successful navigation through the social milieu. However, Nick’s ‘slow and steady’ approach to life (a mode of being surely suggested by his choice of automobile) is not a manifestation of social competence at all but is rather indicative of a hypocritical Midwestern Puritanism. In this sense, as Fraser says, the narrator most certainly does not have everything adjusted just right. Indeed, his desire to protect himself and his quite mechanical responses to authentic disclosure (the latter again suggested by the motor-car) highlight the fact that Nick prefers to live by rules that might have been laid down in a user’s manual.

In his introduction to *The Great Gatsby*, Tony Tanner observes that ‘Nick is a spectator in search of a performer.’ (Tanner in Fitzgerald: xxiii) Of course, Gatsby himself is just that - his Rolls-Royce a prop for his act: a performance car of sorts. And certainly, Nick is a marginal participant; a kind of voyeur who goes along for the ride. Whilst Nick usually appears as a front seat passenger in the novel, the ‘back seat driver’ metaphor actually suits him quite well in that from this position he may rigorously and relentlessly apply the moral squint of the social scrutineer. Essentially, Nick wants everyone to conform to the same set of middle class rules that he has interiorised and so he is sharply critical of those like Jordan and Gatsby who appear to live life by the seat of their pants.¹⁵⁰ Early on in *Gatsby* then, Nick

tells us that he admires order and the ‘uniform’. (8) Certainly, the make of his motor-car suggests such and given that Nick’s preferred world is static, that his psyche is colourless, and that his automobile is hardly a flier, it should come as no surprise that he is identified with the ‘wingless’ of the story. (10) There really can be little doubt that Fitzgerald employs the mass-produced Dodge to signify all these things since the contrast between it and Gatsby’s *carrossier*-created flying sun-car with its fenders ‘spread like wings’ could not be more absolute.

Finally, the mass-produced Dodge, which, unlike the Model-T, had a reputation for reliability, suggests Nick’s loathing of chaos – particularly emotional chaos.¹⁵¹ Fitzgerald also signposts this significance by carefully juxtaposing the narrator’s bland grey machine with the hero’s magnificent multi-coloured circus wagon, a car which, by inference, is surely the ultimate manifestation of misrule and disorder. By contrast, of course, Nick’s grey Dodge signifies non-performance – particularly the emotional non-performance that compromises his being. Moreover, that Nick drives a closed car (Tom Buchanan is the other figure in the novel who does so) suggests deeply held conservative values and a desire to cocoon himself away from the world whilst remaining able to observe it. More specifically, the closed car bespeaks his fear of having to make an emotional connection.¹⁵² In summary, and as is persistently emblematised through the automobile, the narrator is everything that the hero is not. Whilst Gatsby is the independent and creative being, for most of the story Nick remains an insecure and enslaved member of the American moral majority. Of course, his identification with public vehicles also underscores this fact.

The colour of conservatism

As suggested above, conservative values are reflected in bland hues. And so the motor-cars of politicians, government officials, and members of the professional class are, more often than not, grey.¹⁵³ For instance, the automobile of eminent psychologist Sir William Bradshaw, that pillar of society in Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway*, is grey. It therefore reinforces its owner’s quintessential conservatism and aptly matches Bradshaw’s ‘grey hair’ and grey suits. It is, moreover,

virtually indistinguishable from the ‘grey parliament buildings’, the ‘grey churches’, and the ‘grey professional rooms’ to which he belongs.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, this automobile, with its insignia-inscribed doors, is inevitably to be associated with the Prime Minister’s own grey car and Bradshaw’s establishment connections are thereby confirmed.¹⁵⁵

Whilst E. M. Forster does not use automobile colours to bespeak social strata, we have seen that Scott Fitzgerald does. It is noted above that Nick Carraway’s old grey Dodge stands as a sign of normalcy and psychic monochromacity, but, more particularly, the bland, mass-produced machine emblematises Nick’s unofficial membership of a colourless, but nonetheless powerful, Midwestern moral majority. In the end, Nick is an establishment man and Fitzgerald is at pains to foreground this fact. The careful selection of Nick’s automobile, then, contributes to a matrix of clues that confirm Nick in his ‘common man’ role.

Public cars and the public mind

In 1829 an entrepreneur by the name of Shillibeer started London’s first ‘bus’ service, an idea he got from the French ‘omnibus’ companies operating across the channel.¹⁵⁶ By then, however, interest in steam vehicles such as these was peaking on the continent. In the first place, they were far slower and much noisier than the more traditional horse and coach. Moreover, passengers, in what must have been a very unsatisfactory experience, were commonly deluged with hot grit and soot. Nonetheless, British turnpike operators saw in these contraptions a serious threat to their livelihood and so petitioned government to levy punitive tolls against steam-bus owners. The resultant Turnpike Act of 1831 wasn’t repealed until 1896 by which time it was clear that demand for automotive public transport may have had an impact on the parliamentary majorities of those who favoured the retention of the legislation.

In 1894, Karl Benz had developed the first motorised public carrier and one year later the Michelin Brothers invented pneumatic

tyres for the new motor-buses, so improving ride quality. By 1910 the machines 'had become a reasonably reliable form of public transport' and, as ride quality improved and engines became quieter, they became more popular still. (Cox & Dyson: 68) Parliament's acquiescence was inevitable then and whilst World War One saw an abatement of demand for the private automobile, demand for commercial vehicles and public carriers continued to rise unchecked. By 1918, and the end of hostilities, motor-buses were so common that they had even made their presence felt in such unlikely places as school grammar books.¹⁵⁷ However, the very ubiquity of motor-buses only served to confirm their place as symbols of publicness. This, of course, is the main reason that traffic authorities in modern day metropolises like Bangkok and Mexico City have great difficulty getting commuters to abandon their automobiles in favour of public transport.

In the work of E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald then, the public car is a symbol of the masses. However, whilst Forster tends to employ the express as a sign of publicness in his fictions (for example having the servants travel by train in *Howards End* and in *A Passage to India*) Scott Fitzgerald uses the autobus or the public taxi as a sign of the common crowd. Interestingly, for a long time (and certainly until private motor-car had been popularised) the private taxi enjoyed wide acceptance as a most desirable means of conveyance. In Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, for example, Eliza Doolittle hires a taxi to highlight her financial triumph whilst in Fitzgerald's *Gatsby*, Myrtle Wilson hires a new taxi to celebrate her escape from the mean garage in Flushing Meadow.¹⁵⁸ Actually, whilst from Myrtle's point of view the taxi is a symbol of extravagance, by 1925 they were no novelty in New York and so her association with it really only serves to underscore her identification with the masses.

Returning to Fitzgerald's earlier fiction though, in *This Side of Paradise* the public carrier is, as noted above, employed as an emblem of the common crowd. Waitresses, for instance, ride atop autobuses whilst the privileged few are borne about in luxury automobiles. However, it is in *The Beautiful and Damned* that Fitzgerald most consciously foregrounds the public vehicle as a sign of cultural inferiority.¹⁵⁹ Here, the novel's spendthrift protagonists are forced to

ride in taxis, buses, and trains when they can no longer afford the relative independence of their roadster. Indeed, Fitzgerald is at pains to foreground Gloria Patch's disdain of public transport which she sees as having plebeian associations. Nonetheless, in the novel's second book, husband Anthony endures the ignominy of having to take a taxi to his brokers where circumstances are forcing him to redeem yet another gifted bond. But things are made worse by the fact that he does not have enough money to pay the fare. The humiliated Patch then resorts to fantasy and imagines brazening the ride out to its completion before assaulting the driver.¹⁶⁰ However, Fitzgerald's determination to foreground the public car as a symbol of Anthony's impecuniousness is admirably highlighted when the hero brings the ride to an early conclusion so that he might not have to omit 'the ten percent tip.' (202)

As if to drive home the point Fitzgerald also foregrounds Anthony Patch's final, and most embarrassing, fall from privilege through the automobile. Having insulted Joseph Bloeckman, a drunken Patch is beaten and unceremoniously thrown out of the exclusive *Boul' Mich'* club onto the pavement. At the curbside a motor-car's occupants are alighting and wait 'in offended delicacy until [the] obscene obstacle [is] removed...' (383) To add insult to the injuries so far endured, Patch, staggering to his feet, demands a taxi - despite the fact that once again he lacks the fare. At the end of the ride, in an ironic reversal of the hero's earlier fantasy, the taxi driver punches him in the face before hurling him out against the steps of his apartment house. So, at the end of the novel, and despite the successful challenge to his grandfather's will, Anthony Patch remains the defeated dilettante: the private automobile a symbol of his social aspiration; the public car a ubiquitous emblem of his shattered agency.

In *The Great Gatsby*, the public vehicle once again appears as a symbol of the masses. We learn, for instance, that a penniless Gatsby once rode in a day coach whilst Nick, that representative of the Midwestern moral majority, often takes the train up to New York.¹⁶¹ Indeed, as has been suggested, transit technologies are crucial to a proper reading of Nick's character in that his publicness is comprehensively emblematised and highlighted through such technology.¹⁶² And of course, his personal and narrative identification

with public icons (notably the mass-produced automobile and the passenger train) makes his abandonment of his old Dodge and his final recognition of Gatsby's authenticity all the more profound. Given this, perhaps it is not so much Gatsby's benevolence that encourages him to run his own private taxi service (that is, the yellow station wagon that 'meets all trains') but a belief that the private car bespeaks a measure of authenticity? After all, it would be consistent with his abhorrence of publicness to refuse to have his guests associated with public utilities.

In D. H. Lawrence's fiction too, the public motor-car signifies the common crowd. The author's disapproval of social collectivism and his passionate regard for the emotional integrity of the individual is, as everyone knows, a principal Laurentian theme and one which finds various expressions in his fiction. Like Forster and Fitzgerald then, Lawrence uses transit technologies as signs of publicness. In his short story '**The Captain's Doll**', for example, Hepburn and Hannele's hired motor-car squeezes disdainfully past a 'huge...drab and enormous-looking' motor-omnibus which has just conveyed a 'touristy' crowd to a glacier. (*Tales*: 532-533) But the author's belief that the world is 'made up of a mass of people and a few individuals' is nowhere better adumbrated than in his Mexican-American novel *The Plumed Serpent*.¹⁶³ Here, 'tram-cars' and 'incredibly dilapidated Ford omnibuses' bear the masses to a bull-fight whilst protagonist Kate Leslie rides to the spectacle in a private taxi. (26) So, whilst in this case the taxi foregrounds a degree of social privilege vis-à-vis the peons' comparative lack of economic agency, it also highlights Kate's ostensible individualism. Ironically though, as we will see later, in declaring that she has no wish to be numbered among the 'mechanical cog-wheel people' Kate fails to appreciate that, as an Irish-European, she is part of the West's technical order and so has already submitted to the imperatives of rationality.¹⁶⁴ (96)

In conclusion, Forster, Fitzgerald, and Lawrence appear to exploit the idea that mass-produced and public vehicles are effectively an attack on artifice. For them, the commodification of artefacts provides a convenient index of publicness and naturally highlights mass consciousness as defined above. Of course, this suggests that these and other writers are thus able to draw crucial distinctions between modes

of being. Whilst we will consider later the profound connection between technology and consciousness, here it is enough to observe that there is indeed a public mode of presencing and that mass transit technologies provide a unique way of representing same. All three writers then foreground the public car as a sign of cognitive and emotional servitude to an anti-auratic culture which, above everything else, demands homogeneity. By implication, each author profoundly criticises and undercuts the industrial and political ideology that underpins the production of such commodities as 'the people's car'. But whilst they were cognisant of the meaning of the inferior or public vehicle, Fitzgerald and Forster were also alert to the significance of the absent automobile.

The absent automobile

To be carless in Scott Fitzgerald's world is to be a social nonentity - a point powerfully made in the novels *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned*. We have already seen how, in the latter, Anthony Patch's agency is circumscribed by his lack of an automobile. In *This Side of Paradise*, Amory Blaine is similarly frustrated by a lack of motive power whilst in *Gatsby* garage owner George Wilson's economic, social, and personal delinquency is reinforced by his carlessness. However, it is in the short fiction 'The Diamond as Big as the Ritz' that Fitzgerald most profoundly links carlessness with social estrangement. Whilst John Unger (for which read 'hunger') looks longingly enough at the Washington's magnificent Rolls-Pierce, Percy Washington's apology to his friend for the buggy ride to the machine confirms Fitzgerald's intention to foreground automobile ownership as a sign of social agency: 'It wouldn't do', he says, 'for those Godforsaken fellas in Fish to see [the] automobile.' (SS: 186) There is a class of beings, then, for whom motor-car ownership is quite impossible.

As we have seen too, motor-cars are signs of solipsism and social agency in E. M. Forster's fiction, but whilst the large and luxurious automobiles of both *Howards End* and *A Passage to India* undoubtedly emblematised their owners' self love and social hegemony

(Henry Wilcox uses his car to pursue the traditional aristocratic entertainments of hunting and fishing) Forster is even more inclined than his American counterpart to use the absent car to make a statement about social agency. In *Howards End*, for example, Leonard Bast dreams of 'a most magnificent place at Streatham and a 20-h.p. Fiat'. (62) However, the inflexibility of the Edwardian social hierarchy is still such that these relatively modest trophies of cultural conquest elude him and he, like members of the servant class, must walk or take public transport. Of course, a similar set of transportation demarcations was transferred to India. However, on the sub-continent the 'rules' governing transit were organised along racial, rather than economic, lines.

In *A Passage to India* then, an entrenched set of values demand that Indians travel in tongas or by bicycle, whilst Europeans are characteristically conveyed in private carriages or in private motor-cars. Hamidullah Begum, an Indian lawyer acutely aware of the plight of his people under European colonialism, says that it is impossible for Indians to be friends with Englishmen. He illustrates his point by making sardonic reference to the fact that, in the weeks following Turton's arrival, he had once had the honour to ride in the Collector's private carriage. The veracity of Hamidullah's cultural assessment is evidenced in numerous ways throughout the narrative, but is particularly and humiliatingly apparent when Aziz, as approaching Major Callendar's compound in a tonga, fears 'a gross snub...the inevitable snub' at the hands of European officialdom. (18) He remembers a 'case' when 'an Indian gentleman had driven up to an official's house and been turned back by the servants and been told to approach more suitably - ...'. (ibid) It becomes immediately apparent that, in sign of his servitude, the Indian is to approach on foot; that his arrival in a vehicle of any kind (even a tonga) would denote some sort of cultural audacity. The whole scene, moreover, is a subtle representation of General Campbell's 1918 'salaaming-order', an edict which effectively forbade any Indian to ride a wheeled conveyance in the presence of European dignitaries.¹⁶⁵

So, whilst the legal machinery of the Raj sought to reinforce the colonisers' cultural superiority, the Nawab Bahadur is excused its most

humiliating excesses since, until the trial anyway, he is in league with the European authorities. It is an alliance variously signalled although the Nawab's transport privileges, including his ownership of a motor-car, underscore best his moral complicity in the denigration of his people. Conversely, immediately after the trial that so embarrasses the Raj, Adela Quested is denied the mechanised conveyance which bore her to the court-house, her carlessness symbolising her newly acquired 'untouchable' status - something she now shares with Fielding. She is therefore forced to leave the court with the latter in a victoria coach. In this highly political novel then, it is pertinent to assert that the ownership of a motor-car is an overt sign of cultural hegemony and that carlessness foregrounds second-class citizen status.

Other modern writers too, are alert to the cultural significance of the absent automobile. In Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, for example, Peter Walsh, having been rejected by Clarrissa, stares into the showroom of an automobile purveyor and dreams of a machine that might rescue him from his emotional situation and restore his damaged ego. Walsh's carlessness therefore appears to confirm his inadequacy as a lover and, moreover, his failure as a man. In the same novel, a despairing Rezia Smith contemplates what life with her husband might have been like (and indeed could still be) given a cure for his psychological condition. She muses that Septimus '...might have been a clerk...might end with a house in Purley and a motor-car...'. (93) For Rezia, as for Leonard Bast, such is the essential paraphernalia of life, the motor-car a clear sign of middle class normalcy; its absence paradoxically emblematic of non-being.

However, as both Forster and Fitzgerald are at pains to point out, those who seek to invest their lives with meaning through identification with technology have it all wrong. In the texts of both writers then, technologies of all kinds, and especially motor-cars, are presented as symbolic indictments of the early twentieth century. Indeed, while Forster and Fitzgerald foreground that the motor-car robs us financially and socially, they also reinforce that, as a component of the modern technical order, it robs us intellectually and emotionally. The price of too strong an identification with the wheels of progress, they argue, is

our very status as responsive, feeling, and humane beings who have the ability to connect with others.

Philosophy and technology: the background

The idea that technology may be opposed to humanity has a long pedigree. The second Lateran Council of 1139, for example, banned the use of the crossbow on the basis that human life should not be taken by an automatic device. Other authorities suggested that technology may influence the human heart and mind. The philosophers Plato, Aristotle, Aurelius, Aquinas, Locke, and Hegel, for instance, criticise the application of pure reason as a formative force in human society. While they do not argue that people's rational faculty may, in part or in whole, be *informed* by a technically dominated milieu, there is a suspicion that cultures which rely on mechanical arrangements brought about by technical practical reason are '...neither armed for all circumstances nor adequately secured against...change that may be wrought by new allurements.' (Kant: 368)

This intuition that a technical milieu causes a certain cognitive inflexibility is developed by later philosophers and commentators such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Jacques Ellul, Herbert Marcuse, Julia Kristeva, and Marshall McLuhan, all of whom argue that technical modes of operation may be indirectly damaging; that there is such a thing as a mechanical, rational mode of being and that the human mind may be profoundly influenced by a milieu dominated by the technical - not merely in the form of physical apparatuses but in the guise of bureaucratic and institutional technics as well. These and other writers, therefore distinguish between the ostensible meaning of an object or phenomenon and the actual meaning of such. So, for Kant and Hegel and, later, Marxists and Existentialists, the point of art, and indeed the point of philosophy itself, is to reveal essence. Indeed, Kant writes of humanity's capacity to 'cognise': that is, to see beyond the surface; to go beyond an acceptance of a thing as thing; to criticise the manifest in order to reveal the 'Real'; to unmask the latent truth that is inherent in all phenomena. But whilst Kant saw

in technology the 'injurious' spirit of capitalism, it was for others to detail the nature of the injuries . (Kant: 9)

Later, non-literary, responses to the technological milieu of the First Machine Age were often, but not exclusively, politically motivated. According to Gaskell's well known *The Manufacturing Population of England* the steam engine was from the very first an antagonist of human power; an enemy that 'enabled the capitalist to tread under foot the growing claims of the workmen.' (Gaskell in K. Marx: 214) Karl Marx, however, more thoroughly defines the relationship between the industrial order and human consciousness: 'Modern industry', he wrote, '...convert[s] the workman into a living appendage of the machine.' (K. Marx: 238)

For Marx, then, the factory perpetrated a subtle but nonetheless profound assault on human sensibility; the same kind of insidious colonisation of consciousness that Carlyle had earlier perceived. Coming later, in response to the Second Machine Age, J. A. Hobson's *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism* takes Marx's ideas one step further. 'Machinery', Hobson asserts, '...can only teach what it practises. Order, exactitude, persistence, conformity to unbending law - these are the lessons which must emanate from the machine. Therefore, if you confine a man to spending his energy in trying to conform exactly to the movements of a machine, you teach him to abrogate the very principles of life. Variety is the essence of life, and the machine is the enemy of variety,' (Hobson: 351)

Hobson, therefore, comes closer than Marx to revealing the effects of technology on the human psyche. But Max Weber comes closer still because he perceives that technology takes a variety of guises. For instance, he sees the army as the cognate mechanism that gives birth to all discipline. 'No special proof', he writes, 'is necessary to show that military discipline is the ideal model for the modern capitalist factory...' (Weber: 179) However, Weber's perspicacity is further foregrounded when he writes: 'This whole process of rationalisation, in the factory as elsewhere, and especially in the bureaucratic state machine, parallels the centralisation of the material

implements of organisation in the discretionary power of the overlord.’ (ibid)

So, Weber’s appreciation of technology goes well beyond physical mechanisms and their psychological effects. But whilst he argues that the technical milieu is controlled by the few at the expense of the many, he also foregrounds the specific effects of bureaucratic and technical organisation on individuals: ‘The universal phenomenon [of rationalisation] increasingly restricts the importance of charisma and of individually differentiated conduct.’ (ibid) Thus, Weber, like his academic heir Michel Foucault, sees that there exists a cultural matrix of technical operations which has the effect of making us less human. That Weber is writing about a form of psychic assault is plain enough, as is apparent to other commentators. In reflecting on Weber, for instance, Peter Berger writes: ‘The discontents of the modern world derive from rationalisation; that impulse of modern technology that imposes itself upon both the activity and the consciousness of the individual as control and limitation.’ (Berger: 181)

Jacques Ellul too sees that technology variously manifests itself and closes off as many horizons as it opens up. In his best known work, *The Technological Society*, Ellul writes: ‘The machine’s senses and organs have multiplied the powers of human senses and organs, enabling man to penetrate a new milieu and revealing to him unknown sights, liberties, and servitudes.’ (Ellul: 325) It is on the concept of servitude that *The Technological Society* focuses and according to Ellul, technique (that is: use of standardised means to attain predetermined ends) beguiles us by purporting to offer a marvellous escape - ironically from the kind of repressed life that technique forces us to lead in the first place.¹⁶⁶ ‘In the process’, writes Ellul, [we are] reduced to near nullity.’ (302) In a later conference paper, *Ideas of Technology*, he elaborates thus: ‘technique has become the new milieu; all social phenomena are situated in it’. (Ellul in Stover: 11) In the same paper he also notes that man’s beliefs, judgements, myths, and very cognition have been shaped by his technical environment and that technique, moreover, perverts the traditional moral and ethical milieux. ‘Nothing’, he adds, ‘is left untouched by technique.’ (ibid: 14)

It is a truth also apprehended by Lewis Mumford whose *The Myth of the Machine* is directly and decisively relevant here. In the chapter entitled 'Pioneers of Mechanisation', Mumford considers the rigid, formal 'rule' of the Benedictine Order and argues that in renouncing the human will, the monk became 'an integral part of...[an] etherealised and moralised megamachine.' (MM: 264) This transformation from human being to monastic functionary was achieved, of course, through the application of the most rigorous regime of prayer, fasting, and manual labour. As Mumford observes, when yoked together with systematic privations and renunciations, the Benedictine regime formed the perfect model for a capitalist factory culture which demands not just the body, but the mind as well. For Mumford, then, the machine could certainly colonise the consciousness.

This was, as noted earlier, a notion embraced by the Italian Futurists who ironically looked to the machine as a means to liberate the consciousness. And so, in *Destruction of Syntax - Imagination without Strings - Words-in-Freedom*, Marinetti declares: 'Futurism is grounded in the complete renewal of human sensibility brought about by the great discoveries in science. Those people who today make use of the telegraph...the bicycle, the automobile...do not yet realise that these various means of communication have a decisive influence on their psyches.' (Marinetti in Bozolla and Tisdall: 24) Not surprisingly, then, the motor-car became for the Futurists an emblem of a super-agency, whilst for other, more wary, writers it became a sign of the reified technological order, the rationalities that attend it, and the violence that it does on the human mind. Above everything else, then, the motor-car was for them a vehicle *par excellence* for foregrounding the technical consciousness.

The literary background

Kenneth Grahame was the first writer in English to deal with the effects of automobility on the mind, but he was by no means the first writer *per se* to suppose that technology could somehow invade the consciousness and turn a human being into a machine. As the ancient Buddhist legend related in *Ashokavadana* (or *Ashoka*) suggests, there

are some very old literary representations of this notion. In testing his hypothesis that ‘technological civilisation [invades] human fields where formerly other cultures flourished’, Panikkar examines the legend – which dates from sometime before the sixth century. (Panikkar: 237) The story begins by asking questions: ‘How is it that in the kingdom of *roma-visaya* (Roma) there are so many machine engineers; experts in magical technologies? How is it that the technocratic complex originates in the West?’ (ibid: 238) We are told that Roma’s machines have been constructed as instruments of protection and that the kingdom’s engineers are not permitted to leave. To cut a long story short, it transpires that one man tries to leave but that he is put to death by one of the machines. However, he has inserted into his own flesh plans for the machines.¹⁶⁷ These are to be retrieved by his son so that he might prosper in his ancestral city, Pataliputta. Once there, the king Ajatasatru employs the young man to build sword-weilding ‘engines in the shape of men’ in order to protect precious relics. Ajatasatru has a son whose son in turn serves the great Emperor Ashoka. We learn that Ashoka’s mission is to discover the now lost relics and he does so, encountering the formidable defences. A prize is offered for dismantling the weaponry, and stories of the challenge are spread far and wide. The king of Roma hears of the challenge and indignantly demands to know how it is that someone from outside his kingdom has such sophisticated arms. He then sends a box, allegedly containing jewels, to Ashoka. It turns out that only one man can open the box: the inventor of the sword-weilding engines. He does so, and a robot immediately cuts off his head before flying back to Roma. The story ends with these words: ‘Thus ends the treatise on the ways of transmigration.’ (ibid: 240)

Central to the text is the idea that while they are purportedly constructed as a means of defence, Western machines are nonetheless employed as instruments of destruction. Another, related, paradox developed in the tale is that whilst the inventors of these machines are purportedly free men, should an individual nonetheless choose not to serve, then one of his own machines will be sent out to hunt him down and annihilate him. To find, in such an early text, these two ideas that human beings are not only serfs of the machine but that they are moreover destroyed by the devices of their own creation, is quite

remarkable, although, as we will see later, another ancient Chinese story implies the latter of these notions. But the *Ashoka* legend goes further to say that makers of machines, and indeed Western peoples, who are broadly identified with technology, are somehow grown mechanical in the head - 'animated by an internal spirit' whilst their inventions develop a human dimension; a peculiar vitality in that they operate according to their own rules. (Panikkar: 239) According to the story thus far, Western machines are 'spirit-bearing engines' which may be steered by humans to a point but which once let loose may not even be controlled by their constructors.¹⁶⁸

The *Ashoka* legend then is certainly the earliest known text to anticipate the cosmomorph or cyborg: the half-mechanical and half-biological being so much the subject of Vorticism and today's science fiction. Moreover, we may also use this Buddhist tale as a starting point to consider how later writers have identified machinery with the development of what might be termed a technical consciousness: a mind attuned not to the world of intangible emotions but to an alternative, clinical, inauthentic reality governed by technique, or, as Martin Heidegger calls it, the spirit of technology. Furthermore, the *Ashoka* legend considers the kind of culture we get when people abandon or forget humanising values to enter into this perverse relationship with technology. Finally, and no less significantly, the tale foreshadows the nineteenth and twentieth century development of what Lewis Mumford calls the 'mega-technic complex', the cultural phenomenon anticipated by Weber, in which an infinite web of micro-techniques thoroughly and comprehensively subordinates human beings to the imperatives of institutional practise; practise which is emblematised, in the legend and in later texts, by physical machinery. So in this respect too, the *Ashoka* story really is seminal.

Of course, whilst not considering nearly as fully as the *Ashoka* tale the implications of high rationality, Confucius nonetheless characterised a real-world manifestation of the mega-technic complex in embryo when he observed that 'all over the empire carriages have wheels the same size, all writing is with the same characters, and for conduct there are the same rules.' (Confucius in Mumford: *MM*: 167) Here, Confucius acknowledges a tendency to taxonomy in his own

culture, though one should point out that he sees order as desirable. In the West, of course, we must turn to the monastic orders to see the evolution of similar patterns. For instance, as we have seen, a hallmark of the sixth century Benedictine Rule was the performance of strictly supervised daily work whilst the Cistercian Order demanded rigorous control over its members; control which included a very rigid timetable, regular engagement in repetitive tasks, and the certainty of severe punishment when deviating from such demands.¹⁶⁹ But prior even to European monasticism, two other great technical orders were in operation: the megamachines of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian cultures.

Whilst tangible evidence of Egyptian conquest and triumph may still be observed today, particularly in the Nile Valley, so great were the panoptic powers of the authorities that, as with the monastic orders, no literature of dissent ever surfaced - despite the fact that Mosaic Law did provide for the Hebrews to be released after seven years' slavery, if they so chose. We may never know then to what extent the minds of slaves were colonised by the technical spirit but there can be no doubt that these beings were commonly objectified, commodified, and subordinated; tied inescapably to the operations of a vast machine which demanded total obedience and not a little obeisance; valued not as feeling individuals but as functionaries with a certain and often very specific economic value.¹⁷⁰

However, in societies which permitted freer expression, a literature of revolt against machinery and technical orders did develop. Though muted, we may find some evidence of this resistance to technology in the medieval English lexicon. As early as Chaucer's time, for example, the word 'engyn' meant 'machine' certainly, but it also meant 'natural talent' or 'ingenuity': a particular kind of personal drive; a creative or cunning mental disposition. On the positive side then, there was a metaphoric link between technological constructs and perspicacity. But to be 'engyned' was also to be 'tortured' or 'racked' - in both physical and emotional senses.¹⁷¹ Etymologically then, the modern word 'engine' can be linked to a peculiar sort of cognition and to the persecution of the body. So whilst medieval literature appears not to have developed the machine as a symbol of political,

bureaucratic, or institutional technics, there is nonetheless evidence that mechanisms were equated with the tortured mind.

However, by the time we get to the nineteenth century (and the First Machine Age), we may find a flourishing literature of resistance. Moreover, and despite the lack of any empirical evidence, writers had established, in their own minds at least, quite specific connections between technology and human consciousness. No longer could machinery be taken at its face value. In an modern era when the megamachine of the ancient world was finding a new and more obvious form (there was now a vast array of physical machinery to complement the invisible apparatuses of the governing order), writers began to draw distinctions between technology as such and ‘the technological’.

It will be remembered from an earlier chapter that the initial reaction to the First Machine Age amounted to an almost romantic fascination. Machines, it was thought, would afford humankind all manner of liberties and agencies and so writers embraced technology as they might a Messiah. It was an attitude that was not to last long, although, as has been already noted, it was one nonetheless repeated when the Second Machine Age dawned in the late nineteenth century.¹⁷² However, with respect to the First Machine Age, the honeymoon was largely over by the 1840s; the early optimism of Emerson, Carlyle, and Dickens broken. Of course, just a little later, their voices of caution were supplemented by the warnings of Walt Whitman, Samuel Butler, and Samuel Clemens. And, later still, Wells and Kipling, who lived in the transitional phase between the First and Second Machine Ages, sounded their own notes of warning - though not before being beguiled by the promises of betterment and fulfilment offered by the technologies of the Second Machine Age.

Let us begin though, with the mid nineteenth century. Whilst the ambivalent attitude of Carlyle to the machine has been noted, his rhetoric and writing became increasingly critical of and deprecatory toward machines and machine culture. Describing his first ride in a locomotive, Carlyle is clearly impressed by the feeling of acceleration and conquest over nature but his imagery contemporaneously suggests that the machine is the child of Satan: ‘...snorting, roaring we flew: the

likest thing to Faust's flight on the Devil's mantle...' (Carlyle in Sussman: 25) This connection between technology and evil had, of course, been made much earlier (by Blake, Wordsworth, Hardy, and George Eliot for instance) but Carlyle was the first Westerner to see a metaphoric relationship between physical mechanisms and the structure of institutions.¹⁷³ More importantly, he was the first Westerner to quite explicitly make the connection between 'technology' and 'the technological' in that he supposed technology could impact on human habit, thought, and feeling. 'Men', he wrote, 'are grown mechanical in the head and in the heart, as well as in the hand.' (Carlyle in L. Marx: *MG*: 174) Whilst the *Ashoka* legend had, many centuries earlier, foreshadowed this apperception, here was a crucial insight: that the machine could invade and indeed colonise the consciousness; that it could influence content (the head) as well as form (the hand).

It was a thesis developed by Charles Dickens. As journalist, we remember that a young Charles Dickens enthused about the machine, but as novelist he wrote about technology in its social context. In his fictions then, an uncompromising picture emerges of the machine as the enemy of humanity: 'an emblem', as Sussman writes, 'of social evil.' (Sussman: 33) Specific technologies become, in Dickens, symbols of oppression and transport mechanisms are very commonly represented as such. The steamship of *Our Mutual Friend*, for instance, runs down Rogue Riderhood whilst the Camden Town railway excavation of *Dombey & Son* severs the entire community - shattering the emotional confidence of the local inhabitants:

Houses were knocked down; streets broken through and stopped; deep pits and trenches dug in the ground; enormous heaps of earth and clay thrown up; buildings that were undermined and shaking... .

(Dickens: *DS*: 62)

But it is in *Hard Times* that Dickens focuses on the effects of mechanisation on the psychic life. Here, a grim picture of a society which denies authentic Being emerges. Sussman points out that

Stephen and Rachel are dulled into an awful submission as a result of their repetitive work whilst the aptly named Gradgrind is enslaved to his own repressive, rational, and mechanistic doctrines. Blackpool, moreover, feels ‘the old sensation’ even after work has ceased. Indeed, the only person who appears to survive as an authentic being is Bounderby, ‘a squire figure insulated from the impulses of urban life’. (Sussman: 60)

It may be argued that *Hard Times*’ grim simulacrum of industrial and commercial rationality has never been equalled. Certainly, it is not until the modern era that we may find texts in which the technical spirit is so *systematically* emblematised. Ironically then, just as Whitman was promoting the steam engine as ‘no bad symbol’ of America, Dickens was foregrounding the mechanism as his primary motif of an aberrant culture:

‘...the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness...’

(Dickens: *HT*: 437)

In the meantime, in America, philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson had also altered his view of technology. In the mid 1840s he started to think that mechanisation was compromising aboriginal strengths; by the late 1840s, the steam engine, which he had initially welcomed into America’s garden, was disparaged by him as enslaving humanity: ‘It is’, he wrote, ‘the machine [which] unmans the user’. (Emerson in L. Marx: *MG*: 263) Like Dickens, then, Emerson took the steam engine as the symbol of his age in that it became for him a sign of high rationality, an emblem of industrial might, and a token of inauthenticity. Despite his initial belief that the technology might empower man, in retrospect he saw that : ‘Steam from the first hissed and screamed to warn him...’ (ibid)

So then, even the characteristic enthusiasm of Americans for technology waned. Commentators became disenchanted with the new industrial order and the philosophical positions of William Blake,



"LOOK MAMMA,
THERE'S A HORSE!"

*Fig. 1 The defeated horse as seen by Auto Week,
24-29 Jan. 1910.*



Fig. 2 Orio & Marchand's view of the horse, c. 1900.

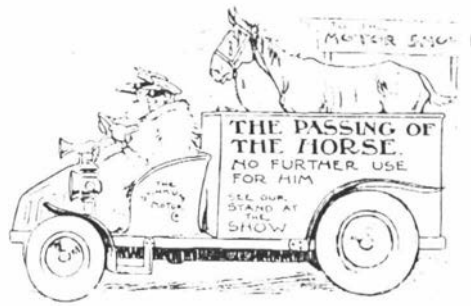


Fig. 3 Another view of the horse in a 1905 issue of Punch.



Fig. 4 This suggestive advertisement by Benz was one of the first to use sex appeal as a selling tool.

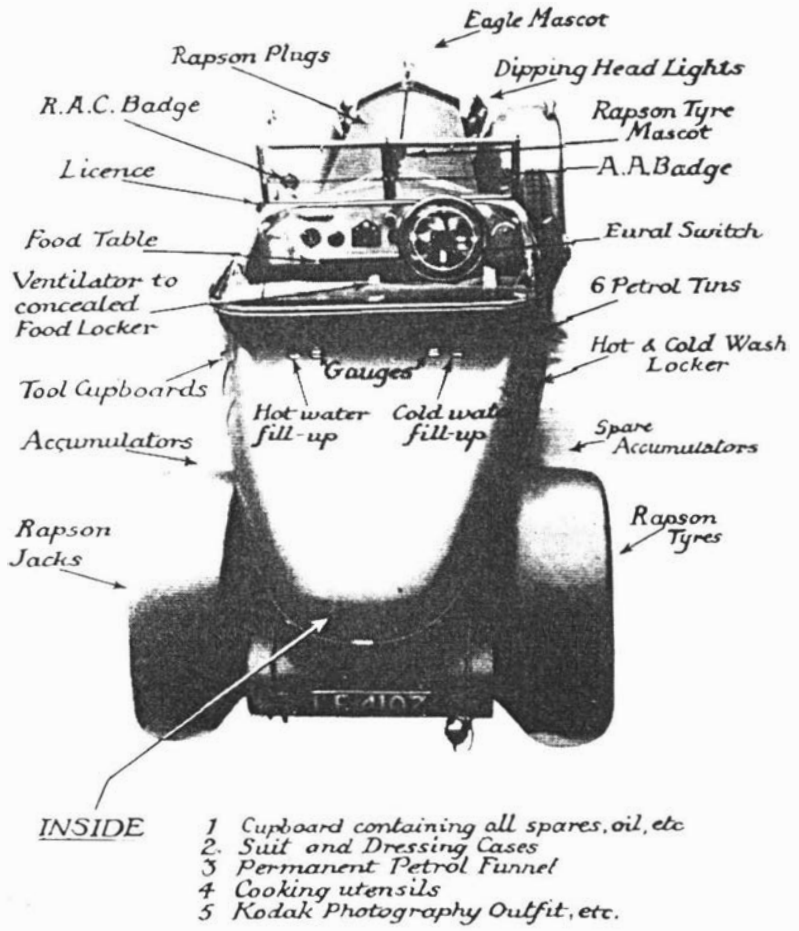


Fig. 5 A 1921 Rolls-Royce tourer – complete with special detailing required by the owner.



PROBABLE SCENE IN THE PROXIMITY OF POLICE TRAP, NOW THAT THE PRACTICE OF WARNING MOTORISTS HAS BEEN DECLARED LEGAL.

(1906)

Fig. 6. Police traps were much hated and the British Automobile Association was once very active in defending motorists against them. It is a service no longer provided to members!



Fig. 7 This 1899 advertisement for De Dion Bouton highlights the political and geographical freedom that the motor-car gave to wealthy women.

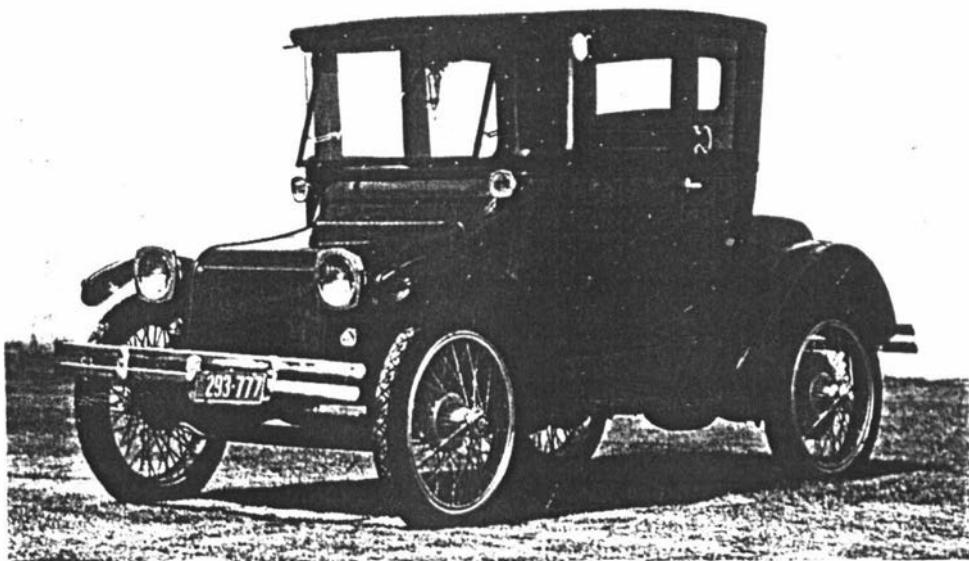


Fig. 8 A 1902 Baker Electric.

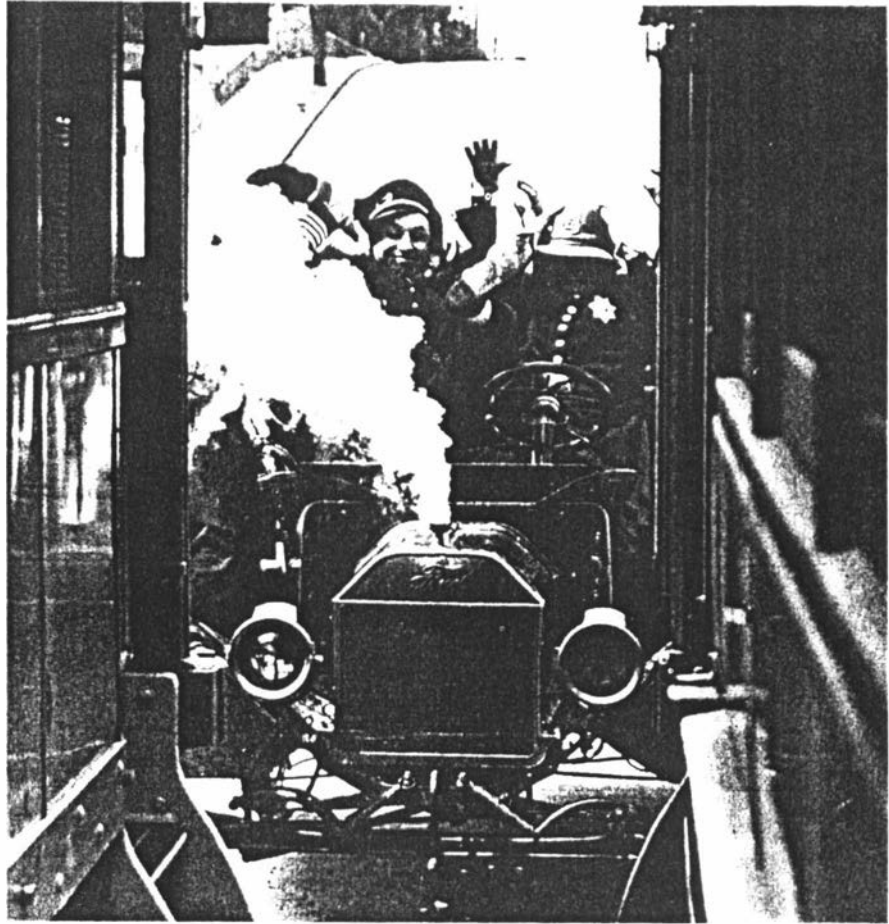


Fig. 9 Keystone Kops attempt to squeeze their Model-T
between two tram-cars.

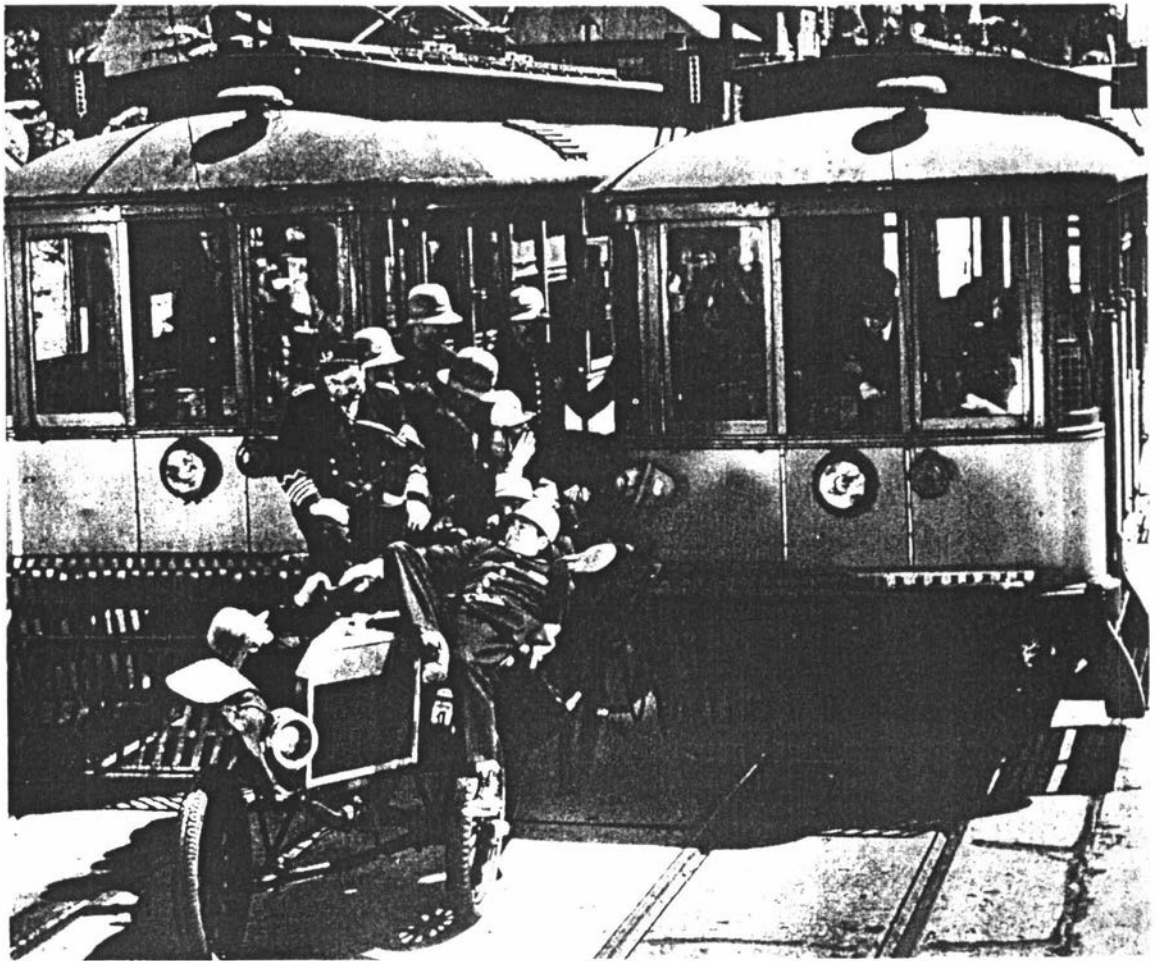


Fig. 10 They are successful. See previous illustration. The car was built to collapse.

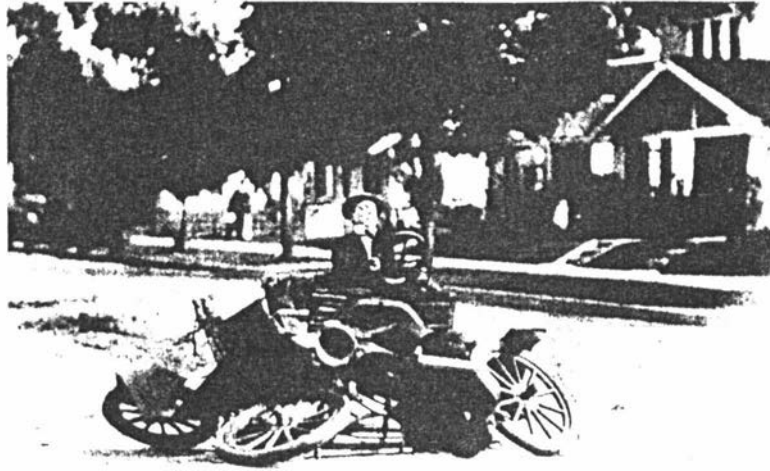


Fig. 11 An undaunted Buster Keaton remains at the wheel as his machine disintegrates around him.

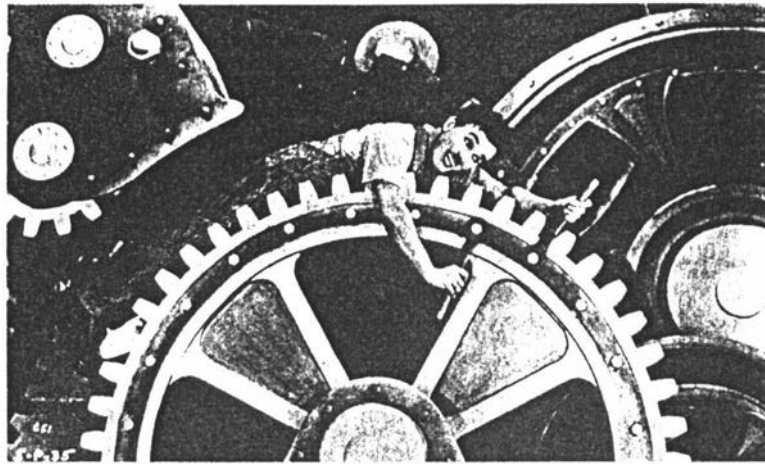


Fig. 12 Charlie Chaplin caught up in the cogs of a machine in Modern Times (1936)

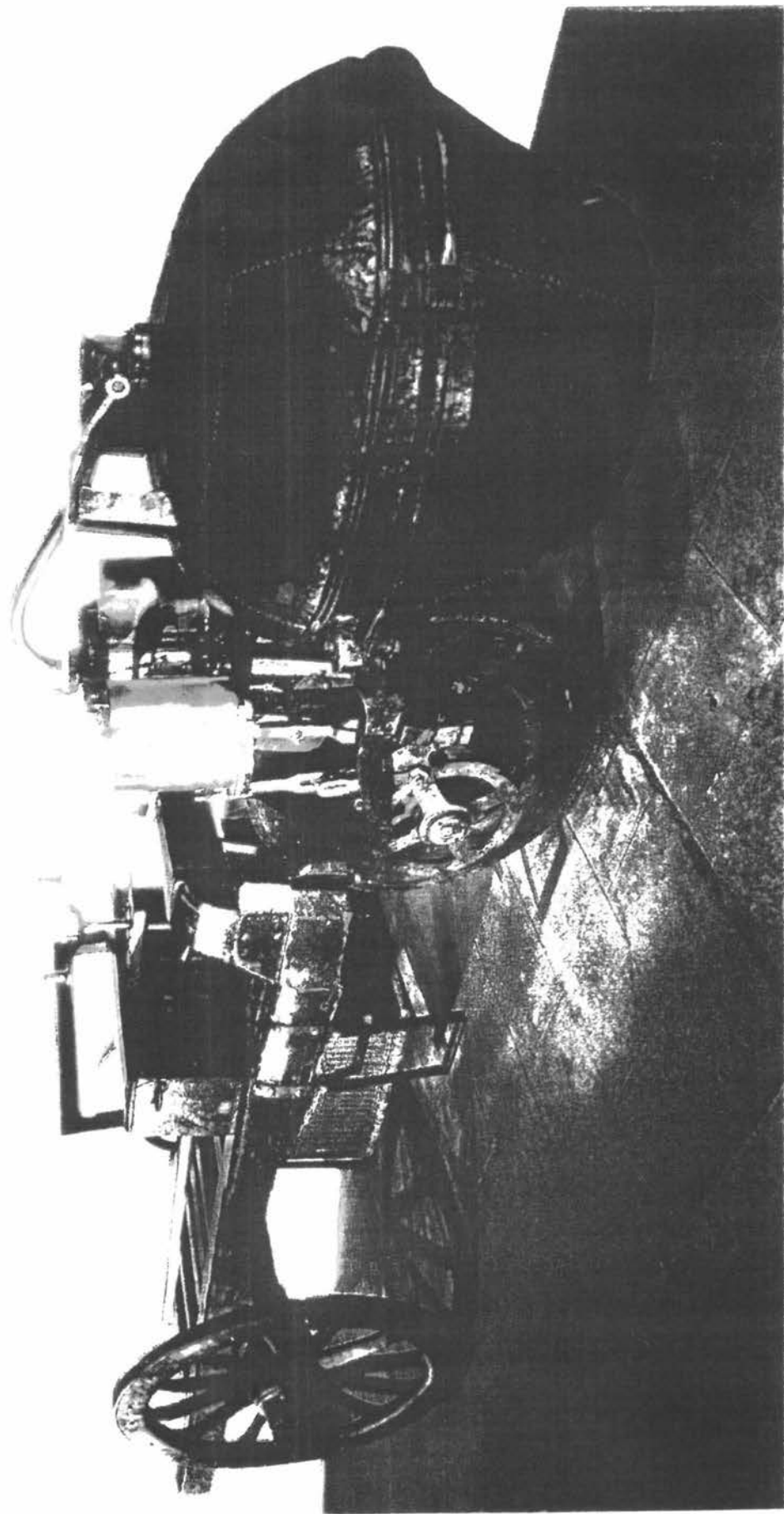


Fig. 13 Nicholas Cugnot made his first steam-car in 1763 and became the world's first motorist in 1769 when he demonstrated it to government sponsors. However, although only capable of a slow walking pace, the machine crashed and does not survive. In 1771 Cugnot built another vehicle, pictured here.

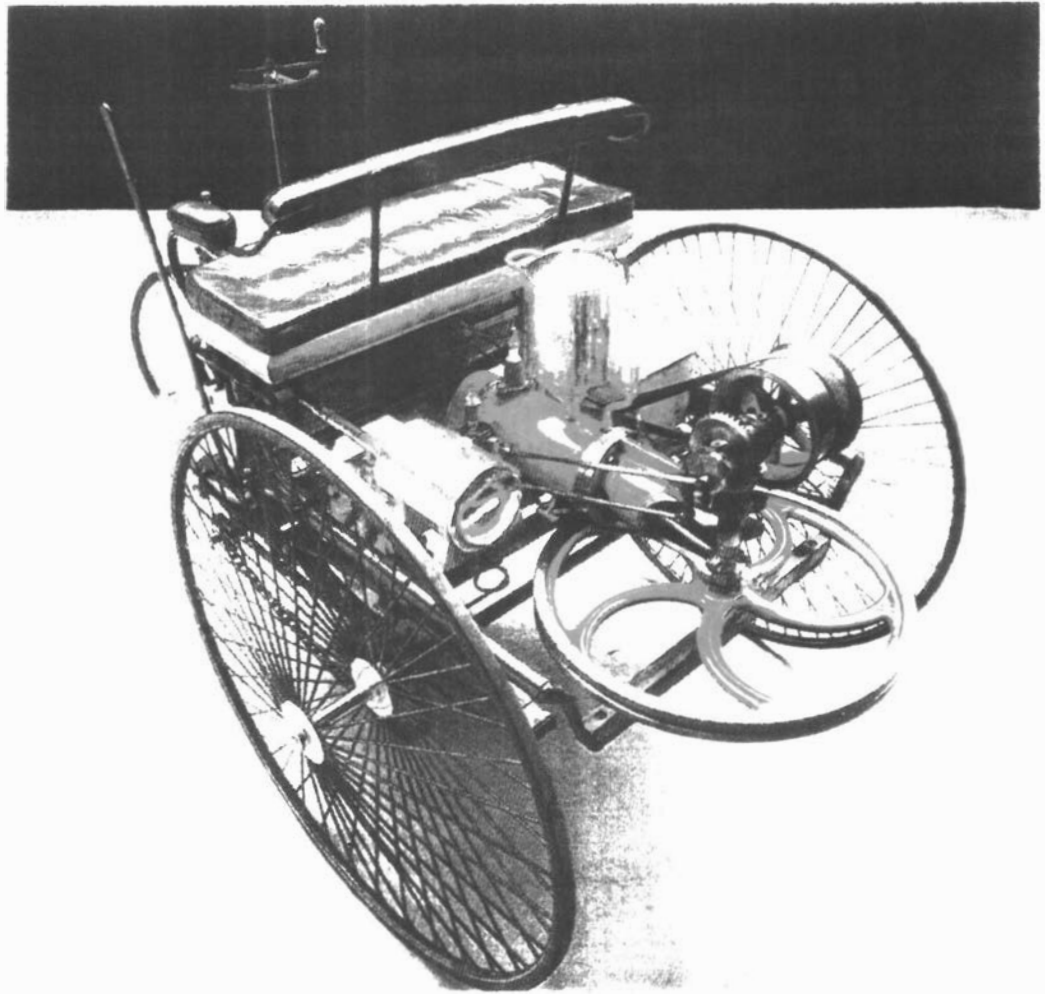


Fig. 14 The world's first motor-car, the 1.7 litre, single-cylinder, 3-wheeled Benz of 1885.

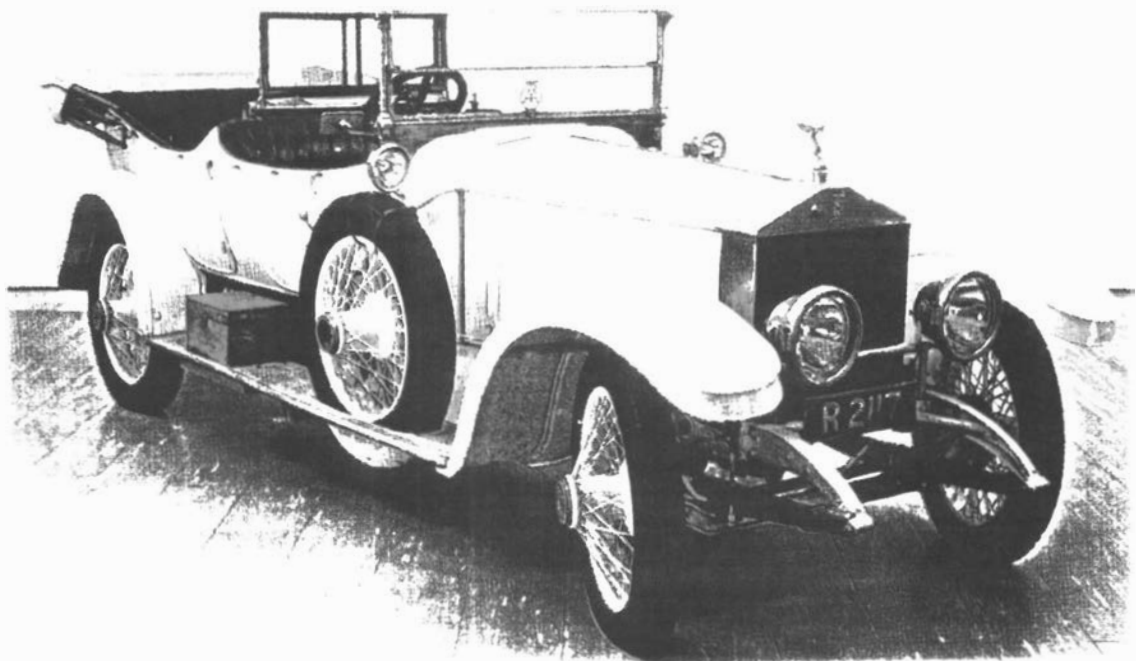


Fig. 15 A cream-yellow 1914 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost tourer. This car, displayed in the Turin Automobile Museum, has a green leather interior and is fitted with various accessory cupboards and boxes. Note the huge mudguards – a particular feature of the open tourer model.

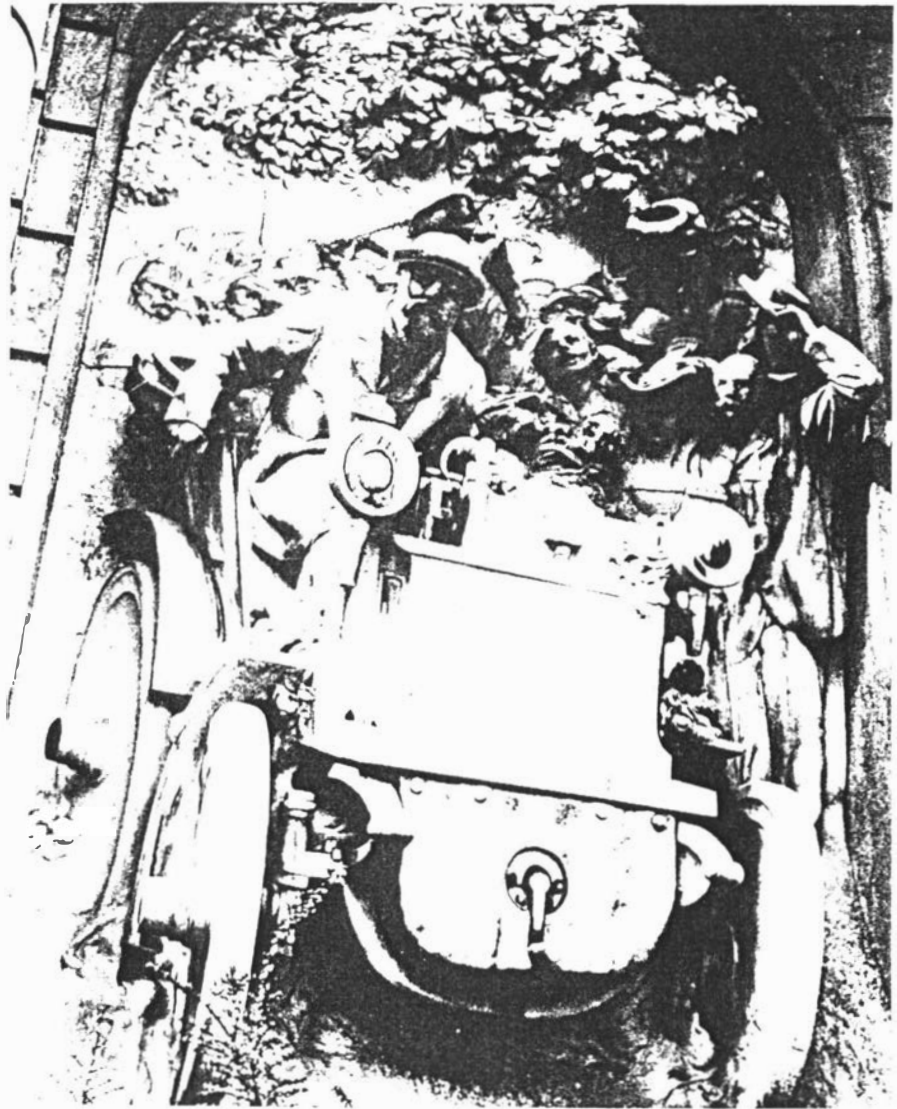


Fig. 16 Aimee-Jules Dalou's monument to Levassor (carved by Dalou's pupil Camille after the former's death). The monument stands at the Porte Maillot in Paris.



Fig. 17. The most famous motoring mascot, the Spirit of Ecstasy, adorns the radiators of Rolls-Royce motor-cars to this day.



Fig. 18 Andre Aucoc's Gordon Bennett Trophy reinforces the idea of winged triumph.

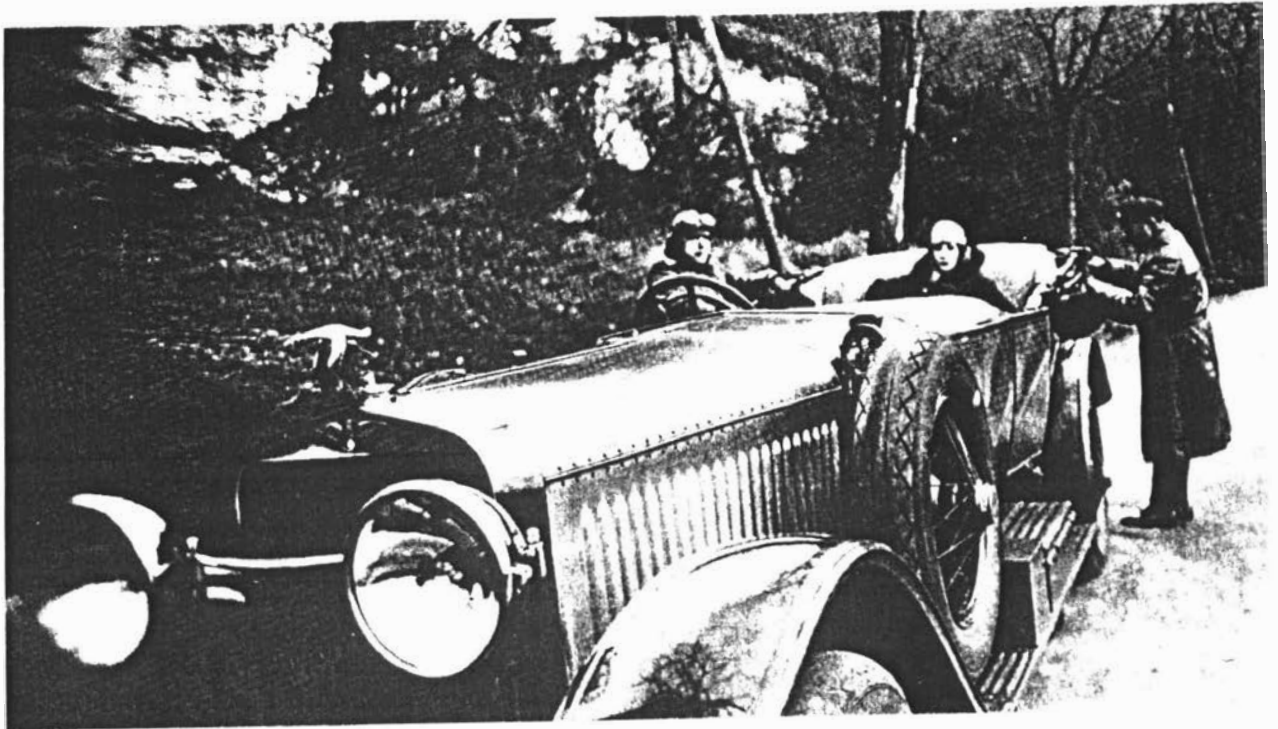


Fig. 19 Jacques-Henri Lartigue's Hispano Suiza 32 hp makes excellent use of single point perspective.



Fig. 20 Pirelli clearly want to cash in on classical imagery, but the horses seem reluctant to oblige.

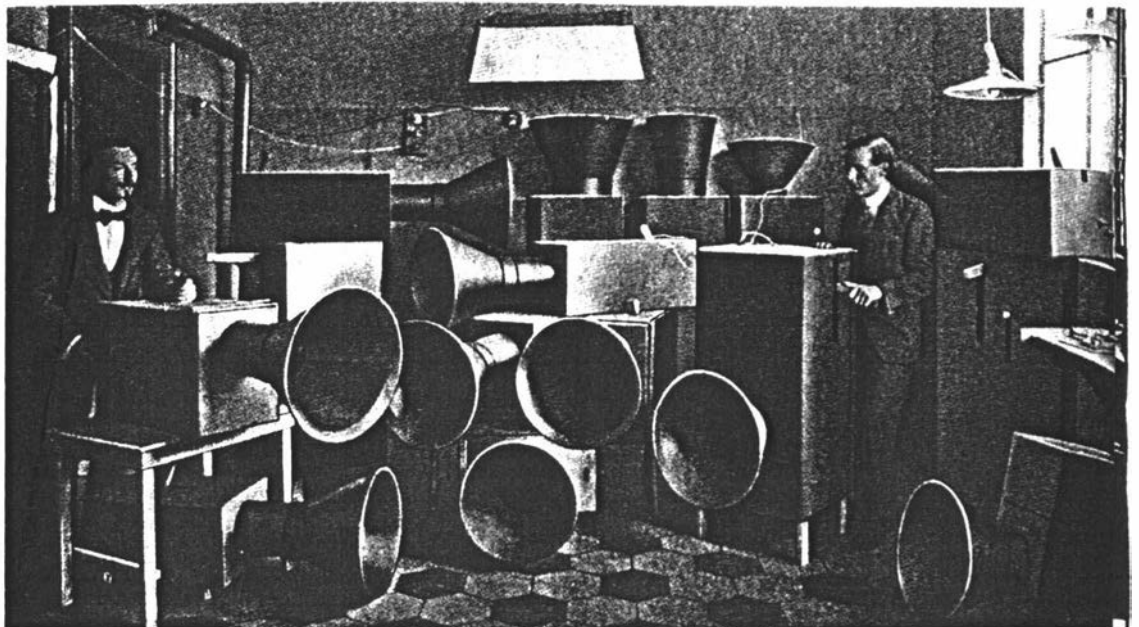


Fig. 21 Russolo (left) and assistant, Patti, with Noise Intoners.

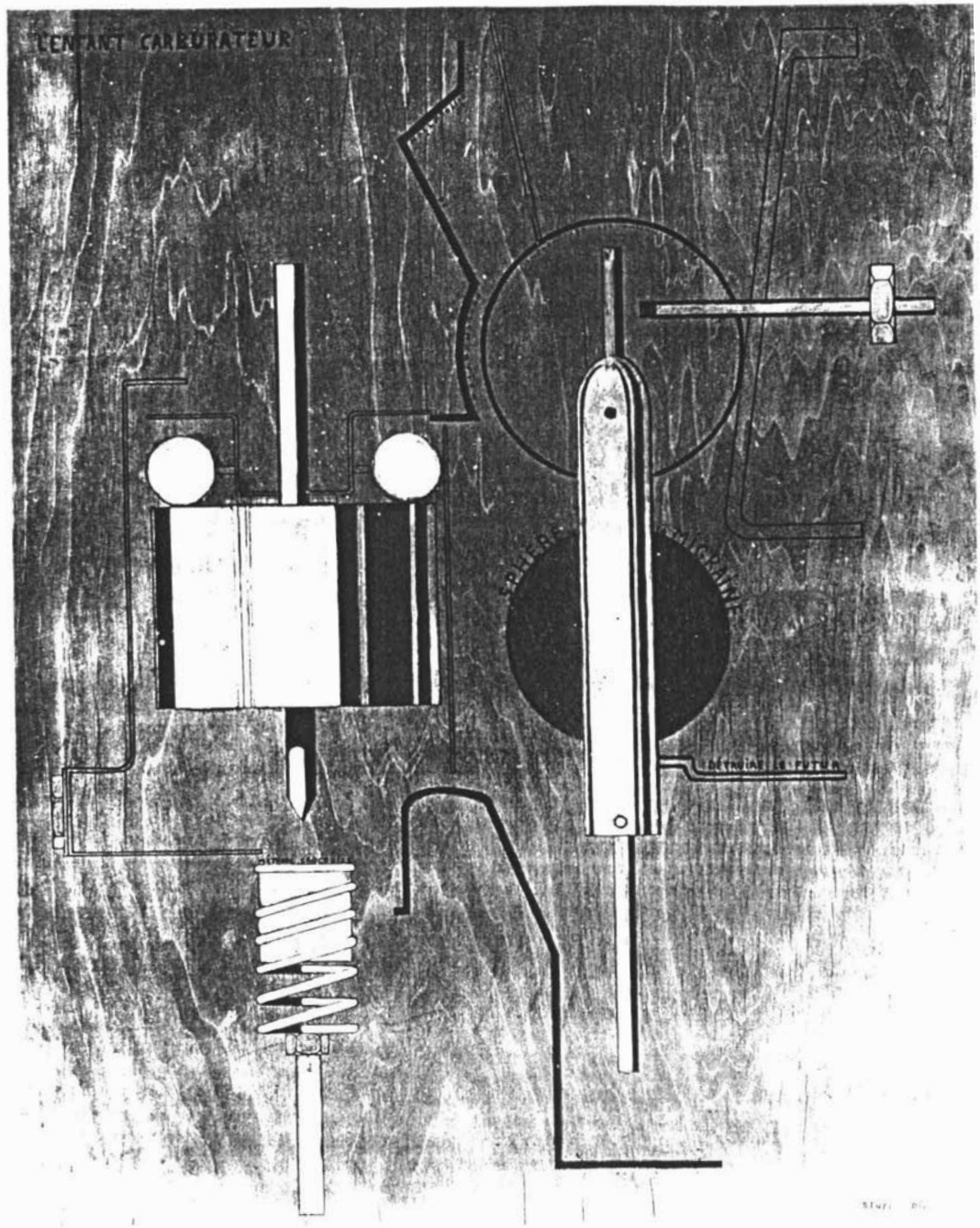


Fig. 22 Francis Picabia: *L'enfant Carburateur* (c. 1917)
Difficult to see is the hand-lettered observation:
'Destroy the future.'

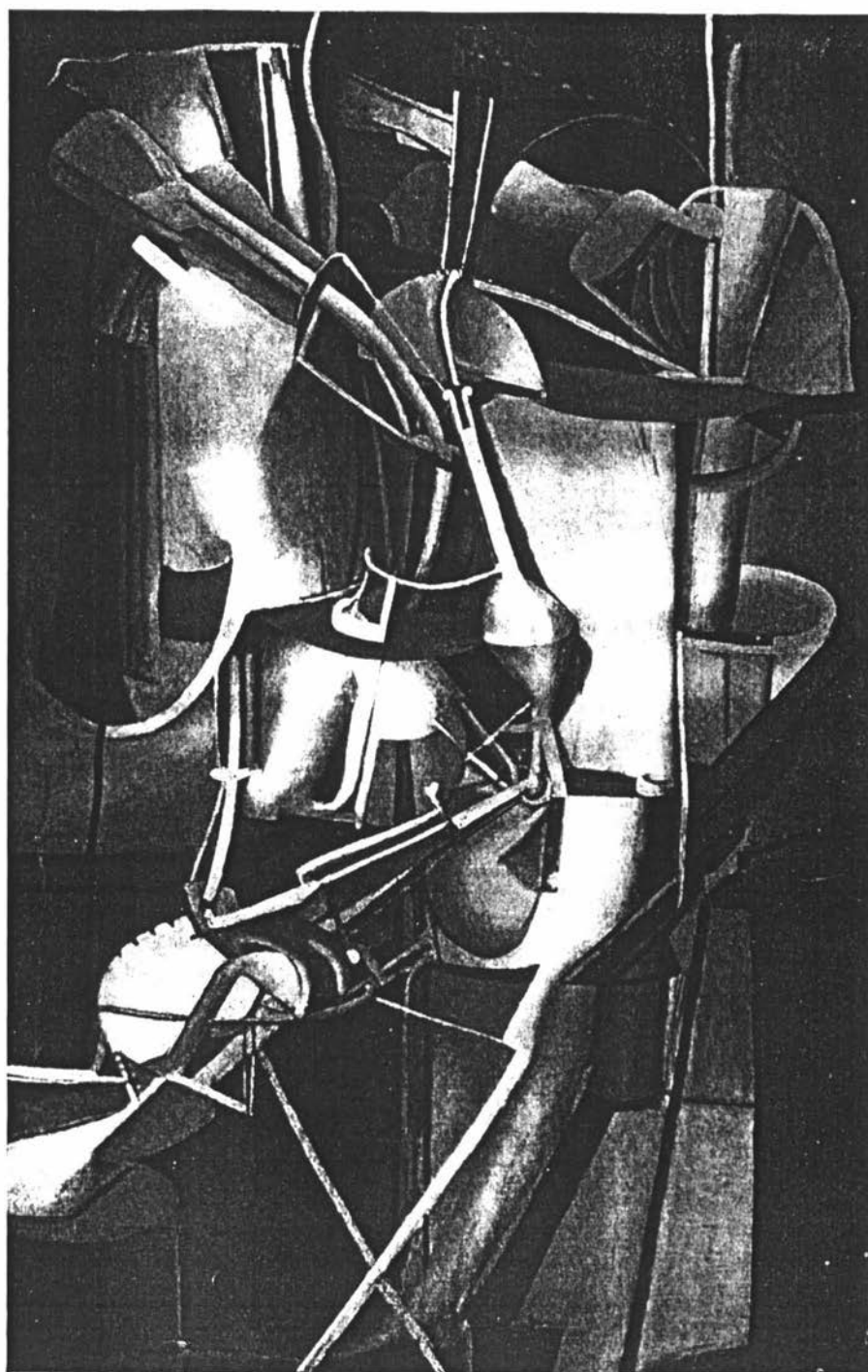


Fig. 23 Marcel Duchamp: The Bride. Oil on canvas.



Somewhere West of Laramie

SOMEWHERE west of Laramie there's a broncho-busting, steer-roping girl who knows what I'm talking about.

She can tell what a sassy pony, that's a cross between greased lightning and the place where it hits, can do with eleven hundred pounds of steel and action when he's going high, wide and handsome.

The truth is—the Playboy was built for her.

Built for the lass whose face is brown with the sun when the day is done of revel and romp and race.

She loves the cross of the wild and the tame.

There's a savor of links about that car—of laughter and hit and light—a hint of old loves—and saddle and quirt. It's a brawny thing—yet a graceful thing for the sweep o' the Avenue.

Step into the Playboy when the hour grows dull with things gone dead and stale.

Then start for the land of real living with the spirit of the lass who rides, lean and rangy, into the red horizon of a Wyoming twilight.



JORDAN
JORDAN MOTOR CAR COMPANY, Inc. Cincinnati, Ohio

Fig. 24 This 1923 advertisement for the Jordan Playboy is very well known. Suggesting speed, action, and panache, the advertisement generated excellent sales for the Jordan Motor Car Company.

PIERCE

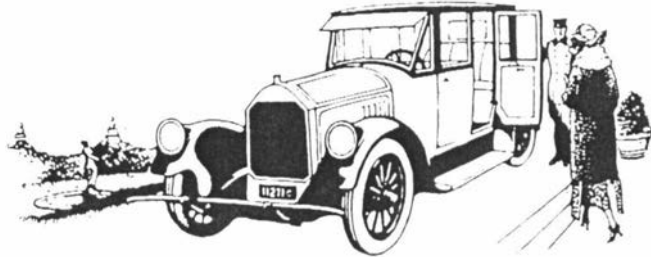
One undeviating incentive has always actuated this company in building motor cars. To build as finely as can be done; to approach even the smallest detail with infinite pains; to spare no time — no care; to eliminate the element of chance from even the most trivial part; to know, through every scientific means, that the Pierce-Arrow Motor Car you receive, whether today or tomorrow, is as nearly perfect in operation, in finish, in comfort, as is humanly possible. It follows, naturally, that Pierce-Arrow Motor Cars cannot be built in haste and that at times of increased demand, such as the present, immediate deliveries on all types of Pierce-Arrow cars cannot always be assured.

Open Cars \$5250 • Closed Cars \$7000

As B-B-B-B-B

Prices in Canada upon application

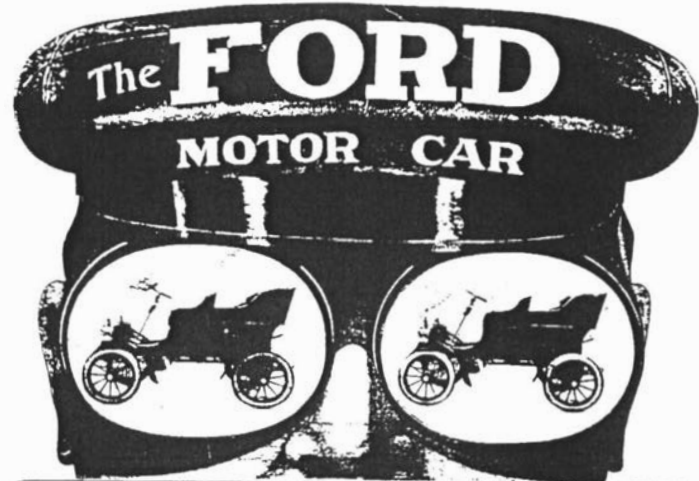
THE PIERCE-ARROW MOTOR CAR COMPANY
Buffalo, New York



This is the most sought for motor car that ever bore the Pierce-Arrow name. THE ENCLOSED DRIVE LIMOUSINE is instantly convertible from a chauffeur driven limousine to an open drive with passenger sedan.

ARROW

Fig. 25 Advertisement for Pierce-Arrow (c. 1920). The target audience is fairly obvious.



In the eyes of the Chauffeur

is the most satisfactory Automobile made for every-day service. The two-cylinder (opposed) motor gives 8 actual horsepower, and eliminates the vibration so noticeable in other machines. The body is luxurious and comfortable and can be removed from the chassis by loosening six bolts.

Price with Tonneau \$900.00
As a Runabout \$800.00

Standard equipment includes 1 inch heavy double tube tires

We agree to assume all responsibility in any action the Taxist may take regarding alleged infringement of the Selden Patent to prevent you from buying the Ford—'The Car of Satisfaction'

We Hold the World's Record.

The Ford '999' (the fastest machine in the world, driven by Mr. Ford, made a mile in 30.5 seconds; equal to 62 miles an hour.

Write for illustrated catalogue and name of our nearest agent.

Ford Motor Co., Detroit, Mich.

Fig. 26 This advertisement for Ford encapsulates the idea of the dehumanised autoist.

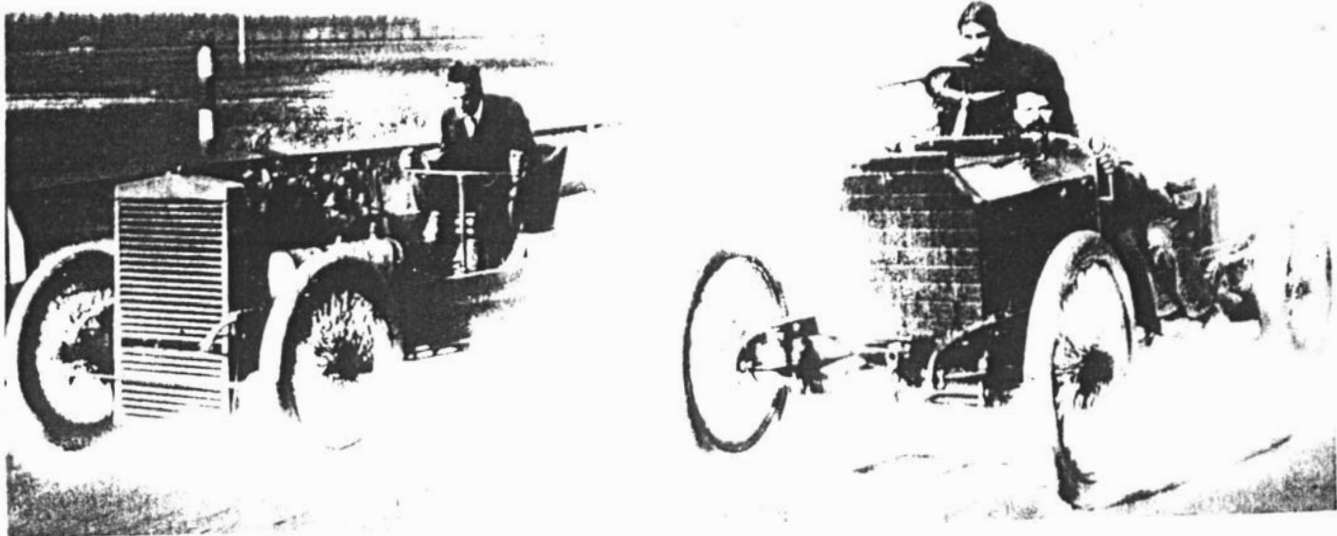


Fig. 27 Harold Wills and Henry Ford together built the 'Arrow' and the '999'. Here, Ford (left) is at the wheel of the 999 whilst Wills drives the Arrow.

Thomas Hardy, George Eliot, and the later Carlyle, Emerson, and Dickens - anticipating or echoing Sartre's notion of bad faith, Marx's theory of alienation, and Hegel's principle of self-estrangement - were, by the middle to late nineteenth century, in strong ascendancy. But whilst Dickens's *Hard Times* must be considered the essential nineteenth century anti-technology text, Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* of 1872 nonetheless highlights very well the hostile attitude writers now had toward machines and, more particularly, machine culture.

Physical machines, in *Erewhon*, become metaphors for institutional and bureaucratic technics - the English school system being one of several victims of Butler's biting satire. So, whilst *Erewhon* is an anagram of 'nowhere', the institutions represented in it are unmistakably British. However, it is not institutional hypostasis that Butler wishes to foreground but the fact that human nature is affected by technology. Like Dickens, Butler is concerned to show that machines may colonise the consciousness and that, according to some, technical apparatuses might one day dominate the world of human affairs¹⁷⁴.

And so, in chapter twenty-three, the last of the three 'machine' chapters in *Erewhon*, Butler puts forward the argument that a man internalises the forces that act upon him from without and therefore comes to behave 'as though he were a machine.' (Butler: 197) '[T]here is', writes Butler, 'an unseen choir of influences which have cast their spells around him, and which make it impossible for him to act in any way other than one.' (ibid: 199) It is these observations that give the text's anti-machine faction its significant victory over the proponents of technology - a victory which demands the wholesale destruction of all machines invented within the preceding 271 years.¹⁷⁵

This idea that the human consciousness could somehow be mechanised is also expressed by Mark Twain. Whilst in *Huckleberry Finn* the machine enters America's garden to murder creation, in 1906, when Twain was near the end of his life - and his propensity to pessimism had finally and unequivocally taken hold - he subtitled his privately published philosophical dialogue *What is Man*, 'Man the Machine'. By the time we get to the twentieth century then, virtually

all hope of a mechanised utopia had disappeared. Even H. G. Wells was reassessing his belief that the machine would emancipate humankind and so his mechanised utopias eventually fell under the shadow of his darker visions - in which the machine becomes the adversary of humanity. Besides, that Wells had long harboured certain suspicions about the machine is in evidence in the utopias themselves where it is endowed with a dreadful vitality.¹⁷⁶ However, by 1895 and the publication of *The Time Machine*, Wells was no longer in a mood to equivocate. The machine now came from hell:

Great shapes like big machines rose out of the dimness, and cast grotesque black shadows...I was afraid to push my way in among all this machinery...'

(Wells: *TM*: 80-81)

Moreover, in '**In Mankind in the Making**' (1903) and '**The Food of the Gods**' (1904) Wells speaks of the emotional damage brought about by mechanisation. Now, in both America and England, the machine had become the declared enemy of man and art. The dictum of Protagoras - that 'man is the measure of all things' - an adage accepted for over 2,000 years - was now called into question since it was becoming clear that the machine, and not the man, was the measure.

Of course, all this was largely a reaction to the First Machine Age (the Age of Steam as it is sometimes called) as well as to the expansionary, imperialistic phase of capitalism sometimes called the 'mid capital' era. But, at the end of the nineteenth century, a new age was dawning: the late capital era.¹⁷⁷ As we have seen, this new age brought with it a bewildering number of new technologies and the equally new phenomenon of mass production. Given what had happened at the beginning of the Steam Age it should then come as no surprise that humankind once again strained to enter into a relationship with the nascent technological order of the twentieth century.

The rebirth of rationalism

In the 1890s an intellectual revolution ushered in an age of reason not previously seen since the Augustan era. This revolution, which had its most immediate origins in the work of Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832) and which culminated in the bleak rationalities of world war, demanded an intellectual approach to problem solving and swept aside all romantic and intuitive modes of thought. So it was that the ‘scientific method’ became an indispensable part of every rational person’s lexicon. As Frederick Powell, one time Regius Professor of History at Oxford, asserts: ‘the treatment of history itself became ‘a science’.¹⁷⁸ (Powell in Cox & Dyson: 105) Even the business of literary criticism moved away from its impressionistic, descriptive origins to become more rigorously scientific. In Europe, high-formalism was on the rise and industrial methodology too was undergoing a profound metamorphosis. In a period characterised by increasing taxonomy then, Winslow Frederick Taylor, alias ‘Speedy’, found a ready audience for his radical ideas on work-place organisation.

Taylor, generally considered the father of scientific management, suggested that production efficiency could be greatly enhanced through the close observation of the individual worker and through the elimination of waste time and motion. According to Taylor, the task of factory management was to determine the best way for the worker to do the work and central to this philosophy was his idea that ‘With superfluous motion eliminated, the worker, following a machine-like routine, [becomes] much more productive.’ (*EB*: 29: 924: 2b) In effect, Taylor converted the work process from a relationship between man and machine to one between machine and machine - a scheme which took no account of the individual who was objectified as part of the production process. For Taylor then, the ends justified the means, though to be fair he did suggest that increased output needed to be matched by higher wages.¹⁷⁹

Taylor’s ideas were collected in his seminal work *The Principles of Scientific Management*, published in 1911 when the rationalist movement was in strong ascendancy. Promulgating an

infinitely rational industrial aesthetic, the book had a profound effect on the development of every capitalist nation in the world.¹⁸⁰ Factory bosses, who since the industrial revolution had objectified workers anyway, now had a formal liturgy to justify inhumanity. But an all-encompassing and thorough-going systematology like Taylor's meant that product could no longer be divorced from process. A growing mood of resistance, which manifested itself politically in the Russian Revolution of 1917, impressed upon working populaces everywhere the fact that products bespoke the servitude of those who participated in the production process. No longer could industrial output be divorced from the conditions of manufacture.

Nonetheless, in the decade following 1910, Taylor's principles were applied wholesale to industry in the United States and overseas. Moreover, Taylor's intellectual competitors, scientific management theorists Frank B. & Lillian M. Galbreth, assumed that workers were happy to submit to the relentless standardisation of their physical movements and cognitive processes. The Galbreths believed that the inherent advantages of machine production should be exploited to the full and they and Taylor found a model disciple in Henry Ford, a man who the *New York Times* would later call an 'industrial fascist'. (*NYT* in Carroll: 188) To this day, the motor industry remains the greatest exponent of assembly-line production and the motor-car the emblem *par excellence* of the reified technological order. The following account of the development of Taylorism in the early automobile industry along with an assessment of the scheme's various effects on workers will clarify just why, despite the fact that there was then no reliable evidence linking industrial practise to psychological maladies, the motor-car has been adopted by early twentieth century writers as their chief sign of high-rationality.

Fordism

The innovation of the mass-produced automobile is usually attributed to Henry Ford, but Ransom E. Olds actually made the first major bid for the mass-market with his curved dash Oldsmobile buggy of 1901. However, his machine suffered from reliability problems whilst Henry Ford's Model-N, which was being produced in limited

numbers using conventional methods, was met with considerable enthusiasm. As demand grew, Ford's initial approach was to simply double the number of men and work-shop machines, but in 1906 engines and chassis for his Model-N were still produced in separate shops and had to be taken some distance to his Piquette Avenue factory for assembly. Nonetheless Ford was well on his way to building the people's car anticipated in his famous words: 'I am going to democratise the automobile. When I'm through everybody will be able to afford one, and everyone will have one' (Ford in Pizer: 31)

So arrived the 'Model-T', a four cylinder, twenty horse-power machine driven by an internal combustion engine. It had two forward speeds, a reverse controlled by pedals, and a throttle on the steering column. Though hardly capable of a startling performance, the car was pleasingly economical with a fuel consumption of thirty miles to the gallon. Moreover, it was reliable - and cheap too, at \$850, despite its lack of windshield or top, elements Ford regarded as optional extras. The first advertisement for the car, in 1908, brought one thousand inquiries. Sales soared, and not long after Ford was in the enviable position of having to announce that the Ford Motor Company could take no new orders. Nonetheless, it must have been terribly frustrating for him to see demand burgeoning whilst having no means to satisfy it. However, by 1911, together with a hand-picked group of senior staff, the industrialist had developed a plan to speed up the rate of production.

His experience in and observation of Detroit machine shops provided the stimulus. Ford reckoned that the principles of scientific management which had been applied so successfully to consumer goods could be applied equally well to the motor industry and his move to the new and massive Highlands Park complex in 1910 afforded him scope for radical experimentation. Initially, however, operations were very similar to those at the Piquette Avenue site in that 'the cars sat on cradles while work teams swarmed around them, making [them] in batches of fifty.' (Lacey: 105) From here, the vehicles were fitted with wheels before being manually pushed around various work-stations. Whilst production time per unit fell somewhat, something had to change fundamentally if Ford was to have any hope of keeping up with demand.

Inspired by Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*, 1913 saw that major breakthrough: Ford borrowed and radically adapted Cadillac's concept of work-flow and installed a mechanised, rationalised conveyor-belt system. It was the world's first moving assembly line where conveyor speed was carefully calculated to ensure that assemblers had to hustle through their tasks to keep pace with it. Men were arranged in a line and assigned specific assembly tasks in the production of a fly-wheel magneto - a device that had taken eighteen minutes to build under the *Ancien Règime*. At appointed intervals the conveyor system moved the work upstream. Henry Ford, stop-watch in hand, immediately saw two minutes' production time saved per magneto; a huge economy. He refined the process, and eventually the assembly time for a fly-wheel magneto was cut to a mere five minutes. However, it still took over twelve man-hours to completely build a Model-T. Inevitably, the conveyor-belt approach had to be adapted to the auto body, and then the motor assembly.

Spurred on by his success with the magnetos, Ford arranged an experiment that is now part of modern industrial folk-lore. A rope was attached to a bare 'T' chassis that was slowly winched the full 250 meter length of the Highlands Park complex. As it moved past piles of strategically placed components, a team of six men which was compelled to follow the inexorable path of this chassis, picked up and added parts as required. Production time decreased and when Ford wound the winch faster it decreased again - to an incredible five hours and fifty minutes. When an automated assembly line was set up, ostensibly to eliminate this parody of men following machines, production time fell again.¹⁸¹ Moreover, Ford no longer had to employ specialists. In the best (or worst?) traditions of scientific management, work was broken down to a series of simple, repetitive tasks which anyone could do. This, combined with the mechanistic and isolated functioning of the workers, caused production times to plummet again. Price per unit dropped as well; to as little as \$500, a figure which put the 'T' within reach of the American middle class.

Factory management was well pleased with this result and, along with the fine-tuning of physical machinery, called for the precise

movements of workers to be analysed more minutely still. Inevitably, further economies were thus achieved. It was Henry Ford's words then, and not Taylor's, which became the maxim for modern industrial development: 'The man who places a part does not fasten it; the man who puts in a bolt does not put on the nut; the man who puts on the nut does not tighten it.' (Ford in Lacey: 109) By 1915, just one third of the way through the production life of the 'T', the massive Highlands Park factory was in full-flight: men worked in rhythmic synthesis with cascading conveyors, spinning belts, and huge wheels which turned and whined in what seemed to be an industrial firmament.

Edmund Wilson, who during the thirties recorded a visit to the Ford plant (then located in Dearborn, Michigan), was overwhelmed by the spectacle:

'Inside the toolroom, the wilderness of complex grey-painted machines screeching in the air like monotonous fowls with an overtone of shrieking - the steady progress of conveyors and slow cranes sliding overhead - dark overcoats hung up in long bunches - strung up so as not to obscure the light-travelling cylinder blocks - dodging the hooks of conveyors going in circles, turning corners, up and down - crawling chains, serpents, carrying joints and bones of the Ford skeleton - another toolroom - smooth-running belts - smooth grey paint - clean wheels - black iron forest of beams - an avalanche of spilling - whirring and grinding.'

(Wilson: *TT*: 57)

But whilst Wilson's metaphors 'crawling chains' and 'serpents' point to an attitude of utter deprecation, by 1915 Ford was exulting in his creation. Delighted with the mechanistic, efficient synthesis of man and machine, the industrialist spoke of the beauty of perpetual motion though in a more unguarded moment confessed that he 'regulated the

speed of men by the speed of the conveyor.’¹⁸² (Ford in Gartman: 94) And so, even those in control - that is those who impose technique – are victims of their own methodology.

While Ford’s combined techniques of repetition, standardisation, interchangeability, and minimisation of worker movement gave him unprecedented economies of labour and cut production time of the ‘T’ from an original fourteen hours to just ninety-three minutes, union opposition to the principles of scientific management was gathering momentum too. Condemning the practice of ‘speed-up’ and complaining, in particular, that Taylor’s methods denied the individual worker an autonomous voice, unions also argued that the system caused irritability, fatigue, and certain physiological and neurological maladies.¹⁸³ Moreover, since individuals were only involved in one small part of the production process, the unions were concerned too about the perceived loss of identification with the end product.

Whilst writers had for many years perceived the injurious nature of machine-tending, from the mid-nineteenth century sociological studies were emerging which reinforced their position (and that of the unions) more scientifically. Karl Marx’s work, of course, makes quite unequivocal connections between technicism and the development of a technical consciousness - albeit with strict reference to physical mechanisms. ‘The workman’, writes Marx, ‘...adapt[s] his own movements to the uniform and unceasing motion of an automaton.’ (Marx: 206) Perceiving a machine-tender to be a ‘mere living appendage’ of the machine tended, he adds that ‘factory work exhausts the nervous system to the uttermost, [doing] away with the many-sided play of the muscles, and confiscat[ing] every atom of FREEDOM, both in bodily and intellectual activity...depriv[ing] the work of all interest. (Marx: 207) And according to Engels, this ‘miserable routine of endless drudgery and toil, in which the same mechanical process is gone through over and over again, is like the labour of Sisyphus.’ (Engels in Marx: 207)

Of course, numerous studies since Marx’s *Capital* have highlighted this unique relationship between the mechanism and the mind with one of the more significant twentieth century tracts being

Stuart Chase's 1929 publication *Men and Machines*. In it, Chase writes: 'The initial effect of the Machine Age was to hurt the worker physically and mentally. It killed him, maimed him, infected, poisoned, and above all bored him, as perhaps no other culture has done'. (Chase: 166) . However, given its wholesale application of rational systems, it is not surprising that many subsequent studies, both formal and informal, have focused specifically on the automobile industry.

One of the more remarkable of the informal commentaries comes from French religious essayist Simone Weil. In the posthumously published *Waiting for God*, Weil describes her 'factory year' of 1934-35 when she took a job at the Renault auto assembly plant in Paris:

'As I worked in the factory, indistinguishable to all eyes, including my own, from the anonymous mass, the affliction of others entered into my flesh and soul. Nothing separated me from it, for I had really forgotten my past and I looked forward to no future, finding it difficult to imagine the possibility of surviving all the fatigue. What I went through there marked me in so lasting a manner that still today when any human being...speaks to me without brutality, I can not help having the impression that there must be a mistake...'

(Weil in Tomlin: 20)

Horrified to discover that the subjection of peoples existed as much in the modern world as it did in the ancient, Weil added that she had 'received for ever the mark of a slave, like the branding of the red-hot iron which the Romans put in the foreheads of their most despised slaves.' (Weil in Tomalin: 20)

Another of these informal studies followed in the late nineteen-seventies after French Marxist Robert Linhart infiltrated Citroën as an

assembly-line worker. In his *L'E'tabli* Linhart observes that employees at Citroën are allocated an invisible space in which to work and experience near panic when falling behind in their repetitive task. An extended metaphor of a river is developed as he describes the inexorable flow of machine after machine. 'A man', he writes, 'can work frenetically in order to earn himself a few seconds of rest before the next shell arrives in his space. On the other hand, if he works too slowly, he will slip downstream whilst still working at his task even as the next worker has begun his own.' (Linhart: 13-14) The result, as Linhart records it, is devastating. The new auto shell arrives and is already half-way into his space as he is entering that of the worker ahead. 'It is', he writes, 'the anguish of drowning.' (Linhart: 14)

Of course, in addition to the psychological scarring, terrible physical injuries were sustained by workers in the production of automobiles. Joyce Peterson's recent research into American automobile workers from 1900 to 1933 finds that among other harms, employees experienced terrible lacerations, lead poisoning, silicosis, nose-bleeds, skin ulcers, and burns.¹⁸⁴ In *Auto Slavery*, a study of the labour process in the American automobile industry from 1897 to 1950, David Gartman catalogues similar industrial atrocities, but, as the epigraph to his book suggests, there is rather more focus on the neurological and psychological disorders resulting from the assembly line.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, studies like Gartman's and Peterson's go some way to explain why, to quote Wayne Ellwood, 'Detroit is synonymous with two things: cars and violent death.'¹⁸⁶

However, in case readers are thinking that the above analysts and observers are driven by an ideology fundamentally antipathetic to market processes and that their findings are therefore questionable, it is interesting to observe that Henry Ford himself had a direct encounter with the psychological and social results of his own industrial methodology. Just prior to Christmas 1913, Henry Ford and son Edsel were walking through the factory 'when they came across two men, dirty, bruised and sweating, attempting to beat each other's brains out.' (Lacey: 116) The raw violence that Alexis de Toqueville thirsted after and found, albeit in embryonic form, one hundred years earlier in Michigan, here erupted as a full-blown psycho-industrial violence in

Detroit - right in front of the man who had always denied any relationship between conditions of work and mental health.

Richard Lacey observes that 'in those few moments Ford saw, perhaps for the first and only time, that his vast industrial monster was turning his men into ugly thugs.' (Lacey: 117) However, whilst Ford was shocked and uncharacteristically moved, the incident wasn't at all isolated. Peterson reports that there were many instances of faster workers beating up slower ones outside plants.¹⁸⁷ So, despite publicly maintaining that he had 'not been able to discover that repetitive labour injures a man in any way', Ford moved to double wages and reduce working hours. (Ford in Flink: *CC*: 86) The irony was, of course, that in so doing he failed to make any fundamental change to the *conditions* of work that caused the problem in the first place.

With the mass-production line then, came the rebirth of the totalitarian megamachine last seen in ancient Egypt and with Ford's Sociology Department came what Erving Goffman has called the 'total institution': the inevitable extension of the industrial order whereby an organism's inmates are organised into bureaucratically arranged blocks and wherein an infinite web of micro-techniques ensures undeviating obedience to a rational regime. The structures and philosophical imperatives of this system, moreover, are internalised by senior representatives of the machine who are rewarded with money or status (or both) for promulgating the organism's doctrines and aesthetics. So, it is via this network of rationalities that the total institution impinges on every aspect of a subordinate's life - depriving the individual of any sense of an autonomous self.

Little wonder then that the motor-car is seized on by the moderns not just as an icon of freedom and cultural pre-eminence but as a sign of an inhuman, inauthentic mode of being: a profound cerebral mechanistic. And of course, in modern fiction, the automobile also becomes a convenient emblem of high rationality in all its various guises. Moreover, and perhaps most significantly, the motor-car betokens that which we cannot control and as such emblematises methodologies and rationalities that in the end serve only themselves. And this, surely, is the great message of modern fiction: that, in order to

attain a truly authentic mode of self revealing, we must extricate ourselves from all manner of technical apparatuses since to surrender to the purely rational is to emesh oneself in the way of inauthenticity; to align oneself with what Martin Heidegger calls *das Gestell*, or the calculating frame of mind.¹⁸⁸

The technical daemon

Gestell, then, signifies a mode of being: a radical self-posing in which the technological triumphs over the human at the level of consciousness. It is not a fortuitous event, but rather a profound senselessness; an abandonment of Being - the climax of which we have come to term 'modernity'. In short then, modernity is all about the alienation of the individual - but not in the imprecise sense of a being lost in the midst of cultural mutability and dislocation but rather in the quite specific sense of humanity's surrender to the great mechanisms of culture among which are paternalism, militarism, academic institutionalism, industrialism, and commercialism. The irony, of course, is that this surrender is often self-willed in that people engage with a system in the naïve belief that it will somehow permit them an independent identity. This is what is so seductive about technicity: that it promises to give expression to the real person (by opening up new horizons for one) whilst destroying beings.

So then, rather than fitting into a system as an independent functionary, the individual is soon enslaved to and consumed by the machine since the technological has a way of sacrificing life to the powerful forces of high rationality. This is a central concern of Martin Heidegger's seminal essay '**The Question Concerning Technology**' - a systematic consideration of the relationship between technology and the notion of personal authenticity. Here, in what amounts to a *tour de force* of existentialist phenomenology, Heidegger points to a crucial distinction between '*die technik*' (technology) and '*das technische*' (the technological) where '*das technische*' refers to a process of instrumental rationality (insidious mechanisms of order and control) while '*die technik*' refers to an amorphous anthropological conception of technology - one which appears to accept technology at face value

and therefore as being desirable, or, at worst, relatively harmless. Whilst notions of driving forward, amelioration, and agency enhancement then are all central to the anthropological idea of 'technology', the existentialist seeks to uncover a deeper reality and thus reveal the ghost in every machine.

This distinction between technology and the technological becomes critical for us when we perceive that writers foreground specific 'technologies' (the steam engine, the mass production line, the aeroplane, the motor-car and so on) as *signs of* 'the technological'. Moreover, when we appreciate in turn that 'the technological' is not merely that which inheres in industry but indeed in every rational process, the implications of the distinction become all the more profound. Armed with this knowledge then, we may read modern fiction anew - appreciative of the fact that modern writers are attempting to reveal the insidious and ultimately destructive technical daemon behind cultural mechanisms. Of course, in order to illustrate their point, there is a focus on the particular and so specific emblems of rationality are foregrounded, the effects of technicity on individual consciousness being of paramount importance. But before examining representations of the technical consciousness in modern fiction, let us return, briefly, to Heidegger since he explains so eloquently the principle of personal inauthenticity first hinted at by Hegel.

What Heidegger argues so persuasively in '**The Question Concerning Technology**' is that when we engage in this perverse relationship with the technological, we effectively turn away from the self. Then, being left with no chance of achieving our innermost potentiality, we flee toward the world (Heidegger's 'publicness'): the way of inauthenticity. The result of this choice is *verfall* (fallenness, or the deep fall): a corruption of consciousness which comes about through one-sided technical development at the expense of humanising values. In German, the prefix 'ver' intensifies the verb and so Heidegger is suggesting a calamitous event; a fall that results in the deepest of all alienation: not merely the feeling of separation from society, but the dissolution of feeling altogether. Thus, technology's spirit has a function as 'a mode of revealing'; eliciting a consciousness

no longer human but fundamentally mechanistic - and, as such, completely inauthentic.¹⁸⁹ (Heidegger: *QT*: 13)

In reality, this ‘inauthenticity’ of Heidegger’s amounts to slavery; a renunciation of liberty which Rousseau thought equivalent to ‘surrender[ing] the rights of humanity’. (Rousseau: 389) However, whilst Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* concerns itself with slavery in its most fundamental sense, Heidegger’s assertion that ‘everywhere we remain unfree and chained to technology’ highlights that modern man is newly confined: no longer forced into servitude by political overlords but by the more or less subtle machinations of the modern megamachine. (Heidegger: *QT*: 4) The result, however, is no different to slavery in the old sense in that when the technological has fully colonised the consciousness there may be no hope of indemnity: the slave’s will to remain an independent agent is destroyed along with his ability to admit morality as a factor in his deliberations.¹⁹⁰

Moreover, as Jacques Ellul observes, ‘[a]s long as man worships technique, there is as good as no chance at all that he will ever succeed in mastering it.’ (Ellul in Stover: 27) Therefore, even the high priests of the machine (those who have most completely succumbed to the despotic, organisational gaze and internalised the culture of technology) lose their essential selves. Animated by a beguiling new spirit and carrying with them the trappings of high office, these disciples of the technological, these ambassadors of high-rationality, imagine themselves to be in possession of a truth so fundamental that no competing ideology or aesthetic should be tolerated. Here, then, is the political character of the technological that so appalled Marcuse, Ellul, and Foucault.¹⁹¹

So, when notions of the self are grounded in the technological, either per force or by choice, we are revealed not as real people but as amoral extensions or appendages of the machine. Such a mode of presencing amounts to an ironic concealment of true identity; a manifestation of the counterfeit. For Heidegger then, *machenschaft* ‘everywhere and always...lets Being be forgotten.’ (Heidegger in Loscerbo: 29) And so the technological, in all its guises, must be seen as facilitating an aimless squandering: ‘the last confirmation of the

hegemony of metaphysics in the form of Being's abandonment... .' (Heidegger: *QT*: 7)

Whilst Heidegger's conclusion is largely based on exhaustive, and sometimes strained, etymological examinations, Jacques Ellul's *The Technological Society* drives home the same thesis without resorting to such. Ellul, who argues that that technicism poses the greatest threat to a person's liberty and moral worth, draws the same distinction between 'technology' and 'technique' that Heidegger does where 'technique is the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency in every field of human activity.' (Ellul: xxv) The machine, then, is merely symptomatic of that towards which technique strives: pure *machenschaft*. Early in *The Technological Society*, Ellul asserts that '[a]ll-embracing technique is in fact the consciousness of the mechanised world' and that 'when technique enters into every area of life...it ceases to be external to man and becomes his very substance...progressively absorb[ing] him' (Ellul: 6 - 7) So, like Heidegger, Ellul is concerned to show that when an individual enters into a relationship with the technological, the essential, authentic self is lost.

'Technique, Ellul writes, 'is the instrument of performance.' (302) 'What is important', he adds, 'is to go higher, faster; the object of the performance means little. The act is sufficient unto itself. Modern man can only think in terms of figures, and the higher the figures, the greater his satisfaction. He looks for nothing beyond the marvellous escape mechanism that technique has allowed him, to offset the very repressions caused by the life technique forces him to lead. He is reduced, in the process, to a near nullity.' (ibid) Whilst this final statement is at odds with the writer's earlier claim that '[t]he individual who is a servant of technique must be completely unconscious of himself,' it nonetheless highlights the contention that a technical mode of presencing has nothing to do with authenticity.¹⁹² (138) In *Ideas of Technology*, Ellul concludes that 'the operation of technique is the contrary of freedom' in that 'technique is an ensemble of rational and efficient practices; a collection of orders, schemas, and mechanisms...a process...into which freedom, [the] unorthodox, and...the spontaneous cannot penetrate.' (Ellul in Stover: 18)

Peter Berger's exegesis on technology and consciousness details four central aspects of industrial production that explain, in rather more detail, just how such a falling away or loss of self occurs. At this point it is worth reinforcing that although Berger's work focuses specifically on industrial production, his findings may be applied to virtually any technical or bureaucratic apparatus since, as observed above, the rational spirit that inheres in industry may be found elsewhere. So, the technological is a cognate phenomenon, sharing not only an occidental ancestry in the form of the Mesopotamian megamachine, but also the attributes of mechanistic, reproducibility, and measurability - as well as the need for participation.

Berger identifies mechanistic as the machine-like functionality of the production process whereby the actions of the individual worker are intrinsically linked with machine processes. Secondly, reproducibility is identified as a correlate of mechanistic whereby no action within the production process is in principle unique. Thirdly, participation signifies divorce from end product (through specialisation) and those who control the production process (through hierarchical organisation). Thus, the principle of participation demands that individuals be objectified as part of a greater process; that they be anonymous; that they be independent yet unfree functionaries. Finally, measurability is Berger's term for the precise measurement of an individual worker's output.

It is through this production matrix that Berger says the worker becomes 'a componential self'; that technological production extends to identity; that the worker experiences a dual mode of Being: the essentially human and the essentially robotic - between which there is a profound tension. (Berger: 33) Moreover, Berger's thesis posits that for any authentic mode of self revealing to be possible, there must be 'a private world in which the individual can express those elements of subjective identity that cannot, and indeed must not, be expressed in the workplace.' (ibid: 35) He adds that 'the alternative is the transformation of the worker into a mechanical robot, not only in the work-performance role, but also on the subjective level of consciousness itself.' (ibid) Therefore, as the human acquiesces to the

imperatives of technicity, we indeed suffer the fallenness of which Heidegger speaks.

Moreover, as Charles Dickens points out, the same correlates of technicity (mechanistic, reproducibility, measurability, and the need for participation) that are so fundamental to industrial practise may be found too in the law office, in the Chancery, in the school house, in the church, in the hospice, in the prison, and in the military academy. These social institutions then, whose disciplines ostensibly promise redress, security, enlightenment, hope, well-being, or rectification, betray us in deepest consequence by laying claim not only to the body but to the private and fundamentally authentic self - and so to one's very value as a human being. Sociologist Jacques Ellul develops the same thesis. 'What is exhibited in the factory and elsewhere', he writes, 'is ultimate rationality, where mechanisms are brought to bear on all that is spontaneous.'¹⁹³ (Ellul:77) In such environments then, independence, creativity, and imagination are discouraged and are ultimately displaced by a technical consciousness carefully inculcated in the name of progress. Later in *The Technological Society* Ellul argues that modern society in fact organises itself in deference to technique in that there is no longer an emphasis on individual consciousness and agency but on social collectivism. The modern state, he writes, 'has abdicated its function as the defender of liberty; [has] renounced its role...in favour of technique' so that the individual is 'no longer able to disengage from the machinations of the technical.'¹⁹⁴ (Ellul: 305)

In terms of cultural ends alone, the technological then does not have democratic origins. Nor, as may also be seen from the above, does it promote the politics of self, despite the fact that specific technologies, all of which bespeak freedoms, are borne of individual endeavour. Ironically then, the philosophical roots of industrial practise may be found in totalitarianism and so the great institutions of the Western world, which, in order to most efficiently extend their power, have adopted and developed the rational systems of industry, exhibit the same injurious spirit as does manufacturing itself.¹⁹⁵ As Panikkar puts it: 'Power means order, order needs organisation, and organisation curtails your freedom'. (Panikkar: 243)

Given the inculcation of totalitarian methodology into social institutions, it falls, according to Herbert Marcuse, Jacques Ellul, Michel Foucault, Marshall McLuhan and others, to the makers of texts to unmask the rationalities that put individuals beneath the wheel. It is their task, they argue, to show forth the violence that inheres in establishments commonly deemed beneficent; to reveal the processes by which the authentic mind is colonised by the technical daemon; to bring to light the subtle machinations by which individuals are robbed of their very being. Whilst the methods of achieving these ends are many, the representation of machines as signs of bureaucratic technics and the careful juxtaposition of specific technologies with human figures are among those favoured by artists, film-makers, and writers.

The mechanised mind in the visual arts and in film

As has already been observed, the turn of the century artistic phenomenon known as Cubism is indebted to the culture of the Second Machine Age.¹⁹⁶ One of the movement's main proponents was Marcel Duchamp, a man whose obsession with machines was and is almost legendary in artistic circles: 'One day, in a shop window,' he once recalled, 'I saw a real chocolate grinder in action and this spectacle so fascinated me that I took this machine as a point of departure.' (Duchamp in Rubin: 17) However, Duchamp's initial fascination with and knee-bending to the machine changed when he defected from mainstream Cubism to champion Dadaism - a new and radical branch of Cubism (from the Dadaist perspective at least) which established much more profoundly than did even late Vorticism the relationship between mechanisms and the human mind. But whilst the two schools asserted the primacy of the mechanical over the human, unlike late Vorticism, Dadaism offered no truce with the technological and so the stoical embrace with which the former had greeted the machine was rejected by Dadaists who deplored one-dimensional modalities like positivism, pragmatism, scientism, categorisation, and rationalism.

For Dadaists then, the rationalist movement was responsible for warping the human psyche and so, whilst the Italian and Russian

Futurists were celebrating the agency enhancing capacities of the machine, the Dadaist's sought to rescue humankind from what it undoubtedly perceived as the tyranny of technology. According to Dadaists, technology had turned people into objects; into depersonalised, unfeeling appendages of 'the machine'. Moreover, it was machine culture, they thought, that had fragmented the organic unity of human experience. This is why, of course, Dadaist works are characterised by the so called 'mechanomorphic style': dismembered human figures and pieces of machinery arranged in juxtaposition. They are characterised, furthermore, by chance, by indifference, by irony, and, like surrealist works, by a polyphonic collection of discordant images. So, whilst there is scant evidence of the Dadaists having developed their conception of machinery to include institutional or bureaucratic technics, there is nonetheless an acknowledgement of 'the technological' in that machines are seen by them as emblems of a high-rationalism that destroys human beings.

For Dadaists, therefore, the responsibility of the artist was to de-objectify humanity and one of the principal techniques they adopted to achieve this end was the *estrangement* of technology: Marcuse's *verfremdungseffekt* whereby we might see technology in a new context and therefore become alert to its cultural meaning. In adopting and distorting certain symbols of the technological and placing them in deliberate relationship with anthropoid forms, Dadaists then were out not only to debunk machinery but to show that high rationality and humanity are incompatible; that eventually the technological will colonise the human consciousness turning the person into little more than a technical appendage. Whilst writers did something similar, a brief critique of three significant Dadaist paintings will suffice to demonstrate the efficacy of this *modus operandi* in the visual arts.

Just as Dickens had taken the steam engine as his sign of an aberrant culture, Marcel Duchamp's 1912 canvas '**The Bride**' (a proto-Dadaist work originally entitled 'Headlight Child'), Francis Picabia's '**L'enfant Carburateur**' of 1919, and Raoul Hausmann's '**Tatlin at Home**' of 1920, all employ automobile imagery to make the point that the technological finds its way into the deepest recesses of our being. Moreover, the mechanomorphic style of each work, which facilitates a

full expression of ideas that the Cubists could only hint at, makes clear that whilst the human world and the world of technique are one it is nonetheless an unhappy union.¹⁹⁷

Duchamp's 'Bride', for instance, is a tragi-comic collection of human and technical organs: genitalia, oesophagi, tubes, cogs, levers, and pistons. Because its componentry was so widely recognisable by 1912, Duchamp's choice of the motor-car ensured that viewers quickly took the point that the modern being is wedded not to the human but to the technological; that, having entered into this perverse relationship with technology, the modern being is objectified, dehumanised, and made redundant. The message of '**The Bride**' then is a universal one: that the technological reduces beings to mechanical functionaries and that we would therefore do well to regard all mechanisms with suspicion. So, for Duchamp - as for Picabia and Haussmann - the motor-car is a sign of annihilation; its destructive capacities emblematic of a far more pernicious undoing than that indicated by the chaos it causes on the road.

Like '**The Bride**', Francis Picabia's '**L'enfant**' is a cynical and satiric work the aim of which is to reveal technological hypostasis. But there is nothing recognisably human in the work: the unruly child of the modern world, it appears to suggest, is now more machine than person. In so employing machine iconography to criticise the modern condition, Duchamp and Picabia had gone well beyond the Cubists who had merely sought to have the phenomenon of machinery reflected in the *structure* of their work. Dadaism, however, privileges content over form and so '**L'enfant's**' representation of the automobile highlights a cultural disaster: the destruction of life - not physically, but emotionally and intellectually. Both '**The Bride**' and '**L'enfant**' therefore presented profound challenges to the academic tradition of Cubism.¹⁹⁸

By the time Rooul Haussmann completed '**Tatlin at Home**' in 1920 though, the techniques of Dadaism had won wide acceptance. Haussmann's work is emphatically Dadaist, his '**Tatlin at Home**' providing the era's most popular representation of the modern condition: the collision of high rationality and humanity. Mid-image is the steering wheel of an early motor-car. It is connected, via a dubious

arrangement of cogs and pulleys, to various industrial components. Moreover, the outlook of the would-be central figure is partially obscured by another wheel - the hub of which replaces his pupil. The implications are rather obvious, as is appropriate to popular art: The man struggles for some identity outside of the apparatuses which make up his milieu, but his efforts are to no avail. Indeed, he may have lost the battle for survival already as his blank, mechanistic gaze seems to suggest. Haussmann appears to be saying that our world is no longer dominated by human beings but by machines; that, having embraced technology, we have now become the servants of it; that any sense of home (for which read 'dwelling') has been obliterated; that technicity has won a comprehensive and inevitable victory over humanity.

Later, in the 1930s, Diego Rivera, the great Mexican artist and social critic, expressed his own view of the megatechnic complex in a series of starkly dramatic murals now displayed in the Detroit Art Institute. These depict auto assembly workers as machine-like cogs webbing their way through Henry Ford III's massive River Rouge plant - the world's largest industrial installation. More than any other work prior to the 1960s then, Rivera's frescoes confirm the place of the motor-car and the automobile industry as symbolic vehicles in the visual arts.

Of course, as has also been noted, film producers were keen to exploit the motor-car as a cultural sign as well. However, whilst certainly representing the automobile as an agency-enhancing machine, both Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplain were also concerned to show that humanity and machinery 'do not mesh smoothly'; that they are 'slightly out of phase...'¹⁹⁹ (George Basalla: **Keaton & Chaplin: The Silent Film's Response to Technology**: in Pursell [ed]: 231) Whilst Keaton's films adumbrate this notion, Chaplain's 1936 cinema classic, '**Modern Times**', uses the automobile as a vehicle of profound social protest. Through it and the particulars of its manufacture, Chaplain contends that big business both exploits and depersonalises the labour force.

In this black-comedy Chaplain is concerned to show that physical machinery may emblematises repressive cultural processes and

regimes as well as the development of a mechanistic consciousness. For instance, although hilarious, the scenes in which Chaplain tries to keep up with the pace of the conveyor belt satirically suggest the loss of human feeling that results when one is enslaved to industrial methodology. Similarly, the inclusion of an automatic feeding machine, whilst an obvious criticism of Henry Ford's regime, suggests that humankind no longer has control of the machine but rather that the machine has control of humankind. This idea, of course, also informs modern poetry and prose, but its irony here is particularly clear since cinema itself functions via a technical apparatus driven by pulleys, gears, and wheels.

The technical mind in modern poetry and prose

The notion that the consciousness could be colonised by the technical daemon then has a long history and, in the modern era, an awareness of the destructive potential of high rationality informs a variety of media and genre. Moreover, whilst railways remained significant signs of such rationality, the motor-car inevitably replaced the steam engine as the artist's chief emblem of the new technical order. Initially, as we have seen, the automobile was welcomed. After all, it facilitated multiple agencies and paradoxically seemed to bespeak the emotional restraint of the disciplined, rational society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But these technical modalities, whilst welcomed by the disciples of empiricism (including Rudyard Kipling) soon came to be disparaged by writers.

After a brief and intense romance, which, as has been observed, mirrored humanity's reaction to the technical constructs of the First Machine Age, the technical apparatuses of the Second were soon condemned as emblems of a counterfeit consciousness. Now, rather than emblematising emotional restraint and the orderly machinery of the mind, machines, and particularly motor-cars, came to symbolise cerebral mechanistic and the marauding, crippling forces of Weber's instrumental rationality. Kipling's changing attitude to technology roughly mirrors this sea-change of opinion from around 1910.

Rudyard Kipling originally took the machine as a sign of emotional restraint. As an ambassador of modern rationality he believed the machine to be a felicitous metaphor for the application of logic and for the correct functioning of the modern state - a body which he thought should benevolently dominate society and culture so that order might prevail. World War One, however, changed Kipling's point of view. That conflict, in which he lost his only son, caused him to disparage machines as signs of technical operations that had gone out of control - and particularly as emblems of a cold, mechanistic, and myopically deterministic sensibility. This new attitude is whimsically exemplified in the poem 'To Motorists', rendered as a parody of the pastorally inclined Robert Herrick:

Since ye distemper and defile
Sweet here by the measured mile,
Nor aught on jocund highways heed
Except the evidence of speed;
And bear about your dreadful task
Faces beshrouded 'neath a mask;
Great goblin eyes and gluey hands
And souls enslaved to gears and band;
Here shall no graver curse be said
Than, though y'are quick, that ye are dead!

(Kipling: 130)

However, it is a testament to the machine's seductive power that Kipling was later to be romanced by the aeroplane. But, by 1926, and the publication of *The Eye of Allah*, we may again see the explicit anti-machine themes that dominated his writing during and immediately after the Great War.

Kipling was by no means alone in his eventual condemnation of modern technics. Indeed, ideas that physical mechanisms may signify the feudalistic subjection of the body, a deadening of cerebral functioning, and a debilitating spiritual condition, increasingly inform texts from around 1910 when humanity's affair with the machine was

on the wane. From this point on, technical mechanisms found their way into books not as signs of life but increasingly as signs of destruction. So, whilst the pulse of the machine could be felt in modern literature well enough, as in other arts it increasingly came to signify an assault on the authentic mind; a brutal and unrelenting onslaught against humanity and, perhaps more significantly, an attack on humanising values. Now, where the machine informed the content, rhythms, and structures of texts, it represented something to be resisted.

What precipitated this sea-change of consciousness was the realisation that if the essential self were to be cancelled, humankind would be left with nothingness; the void anticipated by Rousseau and represented so hauntingly in Munch's *The Scream*, in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and, later, more whimsically, in Chaplain's film *Modern Times*. But by using the word 'void', we imply that the technical can bring about a complete cancellation of consciousness. However, as has already been observed, this is not so since the machine demonstrably promotes an alternative mode of self-revealing, albeit a wholly inauthentic, or counterfeit one. So then, Being is annulled but not being. Put another way, whilst technique does not cause the human being to disappear, it nonetheless seduces him or forces him to capitulate to its authority to the extent that he is no longer himself. Where the acquisition of a technical consciousness is so complete then, the human subject loses all sense of himself as an authentic, independent, thinking entity to become a mere functionary; a mere appendage of the prevailing technical order. And of course it is just this lack of self awareness, this abolition of Being, this modification of man's essence, this inauthenticity that writers such as Kenneth Grahame, D. H. Lawrence, E. M. Forster, and F. Scott Fitzgerald foreground so profoundly in their fictions.

It is well known that D. H. Lawrence disparaged the industrial and rationalistic culture which characterised the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But whilst Lawrence certainly demonstrates an awareness of the physically abasing power of machinery (and of the insensitive abstraction of the free market) he also acknowledges the powerful but invisible forces that are brought to bear in social institutions. And he sees that human feeling is profoundly

compromised when people surrender to technique.²⁰⁰ As for Forster and Fitzgerald then, physical machinery becomes for Lawrence emblematic of cerebral mechanistic and repressive cultural operations.

In *Sons and Lovers*, for instance, miner Walter Morel's dehumanisation is principally symbolised by the coarseness of his heavily scarred hands and the broken nails of his fingers. But in the case of his son, Paul, psychic alienation is more subtly emblematised through references to machinery, among other things. Anguished by the sight of the two collieries to be seen from the sanctuary of his mother's garden, Paul believes himself to be as much 'a prisoner of industrialism' as is his father. (113) Moreover, Paul is alienated by the 'the business world, with its regulated system of values, and its impersonality...' (116) However, the young man's developing technical consciousness, a phenomenon which Lawrence specifically identifies with masculinity, gains its ascendancy in the closing chapters of the novel where Paul is aligned with the urban world - where his new disposition is suggested through an identification with various transit technologies, especially bicycles and trams. Accordingly, his responses become increasingly automatic, rather than intuitive: 'These things came from him mechanically'; 'His body acted mechanically.' (262, 370) Even the sound of a heavy cart clanking down the road precipitates a 'mechanically' rehearsed conversation that he has with himself concerning the point of life.

Paul's fundamentally altered consciousness then is finally rendered as aloof, restless, and clinical - as signified by this proclivity for technical apparatuses. Ironically, he comes to feel 'most himself when...working hard and mechanically at the factory', the novel's finale reinforcing the tremendous psychic change in that Paul, symbolically atop a tram car, consciously chooses the 'city's gold phosphorescence' rather than yield to the incipient call of women. (489, 503) It is as if Lawrence is saying that we cannot, in the end, escape the imperatives of culture and gender since Paul had earlier been identified with the garden and female consciousness.

In *The Rainbow*, the mechanical apparatuses that invade the Brangwen's hitherto peaceful valley also seem to colonise the collective consciousness of its inhabitants: 'the rhythmic run of the winding engines...a narcotic to the brain...'; '...the sharp clink-clink-clink-clink-clink of empty trucks shunting on the line, vibrated in their hearts...'; '...the shrill whistle of the trains re-echoed through the heart...'. (13) Of course, this acquisition of a technical consciousness is also foregrounded with respect to individual characters in the novel. Anton Skrebensky, for instance, brings to Ursula Brangwen 'a strong sense of the outer world'. (290)

Ursula, who is in the process of rejecting the romantic impulses of evangelical Christianity, seeks a willing accomplice to her psychic transformation and Skrebensky, a military man, is an ideal choice for her. An independent, and pragmatic army engineer, Skrebensky has no sense of inner authenticity, but is rather reliant on external cultures and apparatuses to invest his being with meaning: 'To his own intrinsic life, he was dead.' (328) Skrebensky's consciousness then is emphatically attuned to the high rationalism of the army, to the imperatives of rank, and to the limited parameters of logic. And further emblematising his psychic condition is his identification with the motor-car and with steel. An ambitious, remote figure, Anton Skrebensky drives himself through life in the same way that he drives his cabriolet: brutally, with a steadfast will to conquer and acquire.

The house of industrialist Uncle Tom Brangwen too is an emblem of the technical consciousness in that the rooms of the dwelling connote a 'sense of hard mechanical activity, activity mechanical but inchoate...' (346) From the house, moreover, may be seen the coal pit over which Tom presides. It is 'the great mistress', as Lawrence disparagingly calls it; a palpable sign of the substitution of the natural for the unnatural; a metaphor for humankind's abandonment of Being in favour of a relationship with technique. The Wiggiston complex then has claimed the soul of Tom Brangwen who, like Henry Ford, is seduced by the Hegelian notion that we can only enjoy true freedom when we are perfect servants of a great power.

It is a common enough Lawrence theme, self-immolation, but Lawrence sees nothing laudable in any capitulation to the technical, let alone knee-bending to ‘...the proud, demon-like colliery with her wheels twinkling in the heavens...’. (350) Indeed, Lawrence makes it plain that those who celebrate such a surrender to technique do so because they have been utterly beguiled: ‘...human bodies and lives [were] subjected in slavery to that symmetric monster of the colliery. There was a swooning, perverse satisfaction in it.’ (350) Even Will Brangwen, Tom’s nephew, who actively resists the insidious tide of technique, works ‘swiftly and mechanically’ in response to this milieu. (116) But it is Ursula whose abasement at the hands of technique is most painfully rendered in *The Rainbow*.

Ursula does see the true spirit of the pit and recoils from it - turning to the education system in order to express her authentic being. But in so doing she of course becomes a serf of technique in the form of pedagogical rationalism - a wrong move confirmed by the grim details of her tram-ride to Kingston-on-Thames in order to take up an appointment:

She mounted into the wet, comfortless tram, whose floor was dark with wet...It had begun, her new existence.’ (368)

As often in Lawrence’s fiction, here a transport mechanism is used to signpost a crucial psychological moment. So, when ‘[t]he windows of the tram [grow] more steamy and opaque’, we properly infer a limitation of personal perspective. (368) Like Prufrock’s then, Ursula’s world is contracting, the details of the tram-ride appearing to suggest fading hope and compromised vision. The tram-ride is also significant in that whilst Ursula desires to be different she nonetheless finds herself one of the crowd; one of the many who are ‘...going to work...’ (369) Moreover, the profound sense of helplessness and inevitability evoked as she is ‘...carried forward, into her new existence’ confirms that far from moving into a world of professional idealism she is being ferried to a hell of sorts. (368)

The tram, therefore, has structural as well as semantic functions since it foreshadows the grim, prison-like architecture of the school, anticipates the institution's oppressive ambience, and provides a felicitous means by which Lawrence may shift to a consideration of academic technique. With respect to this last point, we must remember that the tram-car (like Skrebensky's motor-car) is a sign of the rational order, and so, within just a few pages of describing the mechanism and its ineluctable progress, Lawrence turns his attention to the school system - the powerful critique of which owes much to machine imagery.

Lawrence's appreciation of pedagogical technique certainly goes deep in that, like E. M. Forster, he perceives that individuals within the school system face serious threats to their emotional well being. Moreover, he sees that those who endure the rigours of the system do so either because they simply cannot apprehend that the institutional damages the individual, or because they lack courage, or because they have simply lost the will to resist. These are the individuals (the stupid, the meek, and the broken) who Lawrence sees as the tragic slaves of technique. But, whilst students are undoubtedly at risk, it is nonetheless the teachers whose capitulation to technique is foregrounded by Lawrence.

Thus, the senior teachers at Ursula's school are said to be 'thoroughly dehumanised'. (370) They have surrendered their humanity to the school and carry out their duties as automatons. One of these lost souls, Mr Brunt, is likened to 'a machine' and, in a later description of him, Lawrence writes: 'The man was become a mechanism working on and on and on. But the personal man was in subdued friction all the time.' (376, 383) The school's headmaster, Mr Harby, is identified as the source of institutional rationalism and stands 'like a wheel to make absolute his authority over the herd.' (377) Moreover, it is he, the factory boss, who encourages the staff to treat the students as one vast mechanical set rather than as individuals.

Despite all her aspirations and dreams then, Ursula too submits to the cultural imperatives of the 'evil system' and 'put[s] away the personal self, [to] become an instrument, an abstraction.' (405, 383) As

the weeks in this environment pass by Lawrence writes, ‘there was no Ursula Brangwen, free and jolly. There was only a girl of that name....’ (390) Inevitably, Lawrence resorts to machine imagery to foreground Ursula’s malaise: ‘So her face grew more and more shut, and over her flayed, exposed soul of a young girl who had gone open and warm to give herself to the children, there set a hard, insentient thing, that worked mechanically according to a system imposed...She had become hard and impersonal...’ (395) As she further submits to Mr Harby’s regime, Ursula’s teaching becomes increasingly mechanical; all sense of spontaneity lost along with all sense of personal authenticity: ‘one’s self was forgotten.’ (407)

Lawrence turns once more to mass transit technology as a sign of the dull routine to which his character has become enslaved: ‘Soon she would take the tram.’ (400) Later, Ursula herself observes that people on trains and trams appear ‘as dummies’ but despite these divinations, she nonetheless internalises the rigor and rhythm of work to the extent that she is psychologically maimed. (448) Her re-connection with Skrebensky then soon falters as the latter realises she is now a mere functionary and that his own authentic identity is profoundly threatened. Again Lawrence uses the tram to reinforce the significance of the moment: ‘He saw the horror of the City Road, he realised the ghastly cold sordidness of the tram-car in which he sat. Cold, stark, ashen sterility had him surrounded ... Now he found himself amid an ashen-dry, cold world of rigidity, dead walls and mechanical traffic, and creeping, spectre-like people. The life was extinct ... his life was a dry, mechanical movement.’ (457) ‘The horror of not-being possessed him ... He had no being, no contents.’ (458) In this moment of self awareness, Anton Skrebensky confronts the ‘sort of nullity’ that has thus far characterised his journey through life. (329)

Lawrence’s Mexican-American novel *The Plumed Serpent* deals with similar themes, although here the self unequivocally triumphs over *machenshaft*. Set in Mexico during the politically turbulent 1920s, *The Plumed Serpent* tells the story of Mexican resistance to American hegemony. Like Forster, Lawrence champions the sovereignty of the spiritual self; the individual, but nonetheless reinforces the cultural processes by which beings are denied authentic

expression. Like Forster too, he employs transit technologies as palpable signs of the madness of Western rationalism, collectivism, and materialism, and, again like Forster, he exploits the convention of the heterodiegetic narrative to pronounce ex-cathedra the evils of technology and the sanctity of aboriginal culture.²⁰¹

In the seventh chapter of *The Plumed Serpent* the narrator declares that the Indian ‘understands Soul’ but that when ‘connected with machinery’ falls victim to ‘the modern Spirit which makes Mexico what it is.’ (107) The narrator goes on to suggest that the automobile, Lawrence’s governing symbol of Western empiricism, ‘will make roads even through the inaccessible soul of the Indian.’ (107) So not only does the technical daemon invade the consciousness of the colonised, but that of the colonisers too. For Lawrence then, as for Forster and Fitzgerald, the West is spiritually corrupted by those maleficent elements that would turn a person into an unfeeling functionary: ‘a body full of mechanical energy, but with [a] blood-soul dead and putrescent.’ (*PS*: 125)

The West, it is argued, has fallen victim to its own technical conquests:

‘White people are growing soulless too. But they have conquered the lower worlds of metal and machinery, so they whizz around in machines, circling the void of their own emptiness.’ (*PS*: 130)

In *The Plumed Serpent* then, the cultural hegemony and spiritual bankruptcy of the Gringos (white people) is chiefly represented by machinery; in particular the motor-car which marauds through Mexico as an emblem of the ‘God-like power’ of the colonisers. (205) Two of these Europeans, Owen Rhys and Kate Leslie, are on a quest to give meaning to their lives but whilst Owen is swept with an American despair of not having really lived, Kate is ‘weary to death of American automatism’, of the arrogant monological certitude of her people. (85) She desires a spiritual fulfilment impossible to acquire in a materialistic culture which ‘smashes [one’s] soul.’ (38)

Don Ramon's percipience is more refined though in that he understands the more subtle process by which the consciousness is colonised by materialism. So, in the sixteenth chapter he tells Kate that 'England has woven her soul into her fabrics, into all the things she has made' without having left a place for spiritual expression. (220) Rather than smashing its way into the consciousness of people then, Ramon sees that technique has a more pernicious means of making its presence felt, his 'Hymns of Quetzalcoatl' expressing both this idea and the notion of cultural destruction that accompanies colonisation. His third hymn then speaks of the loss of the original Mexico: the acquisition of '...railways and...automobiles, / ...cities of stone...' (225) whilst the fourth, '**What Quetzalcoatl Saw in Mexico**', bluntly states that the wills of the invaders 'are like their machines of iron.' (241) Those commodities that the West holds up as triumphs of the technical civilisation are here condemned as '*dark things*': 'Trains and *camiones*, automobiles and aeroplanes.' (241) For Don Ramon, these are the signs of a shallow, destructive, mechanical Western consciousness; a consciousness to which too many of his people have surrendered:

'...and like so many Mexicans of that class...they made friends of judges and generals...and had motor-loads of rather doubtful visitors.' (*PS*: 372)

Indeed, for Lawrence, transit technologies are among the most destructive technical forms since they bespeak separation from nature, the drive to conquer, the will to destroy, the shattering of aboriginal rhythms, and, in the case of the public car, the sapping of creative energy. As Mellors tells Connie: 'Their spunk (he refers to all working people) is gone dead. Motor-cars and cinemas and aeroplanes suck the last bit out of them...It's a steady sort of bolshevism just killing off the human thing, and worshipping the mechanical thing.' (*LC*: 185) Of all Lawrence's characters though, it is the machine-borne Clifford of *Lady Chatterly's Lover* who embodies most completely these notions, his war wound symbolic of a crippling modern condition. In *A Propos Lady Chatterly's Lover* Lawrence writes: '...I recognised that the

lameness of Clifford was symbolic of the paralysis, of the deeper and passional paralysis of most men of his sort today.' (142-143)

Deprived of the bounty of human intimacy and shorn of natural rhythms, Clifford may only enjoy a certain freedom of mobility when confined to mechanical apparatuses. Thus, his whole being is ineluctably linked to motors, his wounded ego only able to find wider expression when he is conveyed by motor-car (to the colliery over which he is ostensibly master) or by motorised cart. But Clifford's brutish, churlish behaviour in these machines only serves to reinforce that he is a slave to technique as much as to his physical injury, which, as Lawrence observes, is best taken as an emblem of psychic paralysis anyway. Clifford's physical dependence on the technical therefore is one more confirmation of the fact that technique modifies everything it touches; of the fact that it takes the destruction of the authentic Being to release the savage, inhuman power needed for industrial organisation.

E. M. Forster's short fictions also commonly deal with the impact of technicity on the psyche and the need for humanity to counter technique. The author announces as much in his introduction to the 1948 collection where he writes that the modern fantasy should be a 'machine-breaker.' (*CS*: vi) Central to this anti-machine aesthetic is the idea that modernity proscribes being; that the technological daemon announces itself through the colonisation of human consciousness; that opponents of the machine are condemned and punished for their foolishness; that those who serve the machine do so in the naïve belief that through their obedience they might achieve personal authenticity.

Therefore, for Forster, the machine's seductive promises of betterment, fulfilment, identity, liberty, and luxury belie a pernicious sub-text whereby technique requires undeviating exactitude and bland homogeneity. The Machine, in all its guises, insists on obeisance; even worship - particularly when manifested as political or bureaucratic technics. In the fiction of Forster, Fitzgerald, and others of our period, representations of physical machinery are often signs of more subtle and destructive technical apparatuses - for example the operations of political bureaucracies, the machinations of military hierarchies, the exercising of ecclesiastical formulae, and the crude functioning of the

school system.²⁰² In short, the machine becomes a sign of instrumental taxonomy.²⁰³

Furthermore, the machine shatters natural rhythms, breaks human connections, annihilates our sense of space, and places humanity at several removes from its natural milieu. Moreover, it forces mankind to obey the very fixed schedules it purports to free him from, denies man his aboriginal strengths, and forces him to rely on its arcane operation for his very survival. Moreover, the machine is inimical to art and original thought. Finally, and this is again a common theme in modern literature, Forster proposes that the machine is eternal, universal, and invincible; that it takes on a personality and mind of its own and that it must proceed for its own sake. In creating the machine, Forster is saying that humanity has created a monster that it cannot control. So, whilst the motor-car is scarcely represented as a sign of *das Gestell* in Forster's short stories, a cursory examination of three texts will nonetheless suffice to illustrate these concerns that the author develops in his longer fiction - where the motor-car does play a more significant role as a narrative engine.

The story '**The Other Side of the Hedge**' explores the phenomenon of cerebral mechanistic and the notion of *vorgangigkeit* – that is, the possibility of rediscovering an authentic mode of self-revealing. As such, it is a tale about the counterfeit and the real. Briefly, the road becomes Forster's metaphor for 'progress': a symbol of a desultory destiny; an emblem of monotony and homogeneity; a token of contest, conquest, and 'tunnel vision' - in that those whose minds are attuned to it cannot see that there is any other mode of living. Yet, just beyond the bordering hedge lies a fantastic milieu from which the machine is effectively banned, and in which one might properly meet one's fellow man. The protagonist, who passes into this place, discovers that here 'one cannot advance: one cannot progress.' (CS: 32) He is disgusted at the agrarian inefficiencies exhibited by those engaged in 'gardening, hay-making, or other rudimentary industries.' (CS: 33) And so, despite the beauty of the enclosed garden and the civility of its inhabitants, the narrator's consciousness remains antipathetic to any sense of an authentic self, and so resists a mode of being that is wholly foreign.

Forster's hero then lauds science. He praises the banal spirit of emulation. He seeks out signs of competition. These, the narrator ironically asserts, 'are the forces that have made us what we are.' (ibid) His rejection of the pleasure therefore, is not to be read as a repudiation of the pastoral so much as a myopic obeisance to the myth of progress; a wholesale subscription to the idea that 'expanding, [and] developing' have some intrinsic merit. (ibid) In the end, however, the personal triumphs completely over the technical - something that Forster only admits in a handful of his fictional fantasies. In a moment of epiphany, the narrator forgets the destiny of the human race, as symbolised by the monotonous and dusty road, and realises, for the first time, his connection with humanity.

Forster's best known short story, ironically entitled '**The Machine Stops**', was written as 'a reaction to one of the earlier heavens of H. G. Wells' and again explores the destructive impulses of modern technics. (CS: vii) Rather than freeing us, in Forster's satiric anti-utopia the machine imposes a will of its own on humanity - ultimately reducing people to unthinking, unfeeling functionaries in a vast technical complex. Pitted against the machinations of this mega-machine is the percipient Kuno, the story's representative being who asserts the primacy of humanity. At the beginning of the narrative we find Kuno demanding direct dialogue with his mother rather than indirect intercourse through an electronic communication device. But Vashti, who has long since developed the calculating frame of mind, will not permit a word of criticism about 'the Machine' to be uttered. The stage is thus set for a clash between technical man and humanness.

The machine of '**The Machine Stops**' is a representation of the mega-technic complex. It is the 'Machine of the World': a vast physical and metaphysical contrivance which constrains human beings to dwell in a tenebrous under-ground; a device which, through various interposing apparatuses, filters human experience so that there is always an artificial barrier between people and phenomena. Forster's Machine is in fact a fantastic manifestation of the cold, unyielding, mechanical consciousness exhibited by both Charles Wilcox of *Howards End* and Ronny Heaslop of *A Passage to India* - men who evade the self and

paradoxically strive for identity (a worthless social ascendancy) by connecting themselves with the political and bureaucratic machinery of the day.

Vashti, of **'The Machine Stops'**, has similarly surrendered to the imperatives of technique and reads the 'Book of the Machine', presumably a manual, as if it were a holy text. She is one of many supplicants who bend the knee to *das Gestell* and utter the soothing refrain 'O Machine! O Machine!' thus enmeshing themselves in the way of inauthenticity to become one dimensional exponents of *das technische*. Unlike her son, Vashti unreservedly accepts the Machine's demands for homogeneity and its discouragement of personal connection - the latter being fundamental to the Machine's cultural and political hegemony. Indeed, Vashti's deafness to the Machine implies total familiarisation - an acceptance of the Machine only in terms of cultural noise: 'she did not notice the noise, for she had been born with it in her ears.' (121) Forster's warning is that like Vashti, we too may fall into the way of inauthenticity simply as a result of habitualised perception.

As already observed, mother and son are limited to indirect communication through a dish, the equivalent of Orwell's telescreen - a panoptic technology which permits viewing but no seeing: a device which '[does] not transmit nuances of expression...only...a general idea of people.' (CS: 118) The connection between performer and audience is similarly broken: Vashti's lectures (she is a representative of academic institutionalism) are delivered via the Machine thereby making redundant the need for inefficient congregation. The biological connection between parent and child is also severed in Forster's underworld where societal mores make physical contact between individuals a profanation. Moreover, and apart from this separation of beings, the Machine requires that humanity be divorced from nature - something Forster foregrounds through reference to rapid transit technologies.

En route, via air-ship, to meet her son, Vashti catches glimpses of the Himalayas and is 'seized with the terrors of direct experience' - although a metal blind enables her to shut out the real world and so

close herself off from her own origins.²⁰⁴ (122) However, the most telling single phenomenon is one of the fantastic shapes suggested by the Caucasus: the simulacrum of a prostrate man. Failing to see any lesson in this phantasm, Vashti hides the image behind the metal blind. Significantly, however, the blind is flawed and so a solitary star persistently peeps into the cabin - a symbol of nature's quintessential legitimacy in a world that seeks to shut her out. Similarly, technology's attempt to eclipse the sun (by outpacing the earth's diurnal revolutions) is represented not only by the swift passage of the airship but by a passing reference to the 'racing aeroplanes [that] had been built for the purpose.' (127) Ironically, the Machine's failure to so subvert the natural rhythms of the universe results in an eclipsing of another kind - the confinement of man in an artificial underworld well away from the stimulus of nature since it might promote an enduring sense of identity.

Coming later than either '**The Other Side of the Hedge**' or '**The Machine Stops**', Forster's story '**The Eternal Moment**' is a more subtle evocation of *das Gestell*. Like Fitzgerald, Forster often seized on the cultural significance of proper names and so characters like Mr Lucas, the burnt-out tourist in '**The Road From Colonus**' (whose name may well be taken from the English automotive bulb manufacturer), Mr Ford (for whom read Henry) in '**Other Kingdom**', and Colonel Leyland (as in British Leyland, the automobile manufacturer) of '**The Eternal Moment**', each exhibit a profound emotional inflexibility and a debilitating spiritual paralysis.²⁰⁵ Colonel Leyland is obviously a military man. His conservatism, acceptance of commercialism, respect for Teutonia, rigid self-discipline, and frankly expressed opposition to human relations contrasts profoundly with his travelling companion's impulsiveness and emotional incontinence. And so, whilst Miss Raby seeks to connect with other people, Leyland carefully maintains the mask of rational self-possession that his name implies and so denies his authentic self any expression. Whilst Miss Raby's social connections are a source of embarrassment to Leyland then, it is nonetheless clear that it is she who is an authentic human agent.

It is in his novels, however, that Forster best foregrounds the role that technicity plays in the acquisition of machine consciousness. It is a

theme which he gives voice to in his more private writing as well. In his personal diary, for instance, he begs that there be '[n]o more fighting, please, between the soul and the body, until they have beaten their common enemy, the machine.'²⁰⁶ In January of the same year he wrote that 'Science, instead of freeing man...is enslaving him to machines...God what a prospect.'²⁰⁷ In drawing attention to the relevance of such statements to his fiction, Forster asserts that *Howards End* is the story of the contest 'between money and death...the personal [and] the mechanical.'²⁰⁸ However, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that Forster's conception of the mechanical goes well beyond a consideration of mere technology; he is also concerned with manifestations of the technological.

In *Howards End* itself, for instance, the motor-car erupts through the narrative as one of several symbolic confirmations of the fact that the lives of the privileged are lived out as a kind of confidence trick; that everything looks substantial and dignified from the outside, but that beneath the surface lie deep emotional fissures and incapacity. So it is that Helen notes that a 'wall of newspapers and motor-cars' contributes to the impression of rational order that the Wilcoxes hold up to the world. (39-40) Indeed, such contrasts between image and actuality, rationalism and empiricism, imperialism and individualism are of profound significance in the novel since the Wilcox men are aligned with the former and the Schlegel women with the latter in each case. For Henry and Charles, the globe's motors are capitalism and enterprise, whereas the socialist Schlegels believe that human beings make the world go around. Whilst Forster makes it clear that philosophies of temperance, tolerance, and unbiased sexual politics are to be preferred over the crude and barbaric ideologies of imperialism, militarism, and materialism espoused so confidently, but so shallowly, by the Wilcoxes, he is nonetheless at pains to foreground what the proponents of enlightenment are up against.

In selecting a governing symbol of the technical order, Forster had to find something that would communicate the cold rationality of Henry Wilcox, and the characteristic aggression, commercial drive, and mechanistic sensibility of his son, Charles. The automobile was an obvious choice, and so Forster has Charles enter and exit the story in a

motor-car. Whilst an aside from the narrator asserts that the young man's pouring of petrol and sundry other ministrations to his father's machine are '...actions with which this story has no concern', Forster is actually very much concerned with connecting the Wilcoxes with machinery of all kinds. For example, in the eighth chapter of the novel we learn that Charles likes to travel and most enjoys 'a motor tour'. (31, 81) Much later, we learn that he is to join his brother, Paul, at Shrewsbury with a trio of motors. (208)

Moreover, at the beginning of the narrative, when returning in a motor-car from the railway station to Howards End, Charles and Juley Munt fight with the result that the former clenches his teeth and, in an effort to punish the woman, sends 'the motor swerving all over the lane.' (35) When they finally arrive at the house, Charles stands up in the machine, its motor still running, and rudely demands explanations from his younger brother, Paul, with respect to the latter's supposed liaison with Helen Schlegel. The automobile is therefore best seen as a kind of armour for the imperialistic, battle-ready Charles. However, it should also be regarded as an emblem of his energy, a symbol of his economic agency, a token of his vulgarity, a sign that he is associated with the outer rather than inner life, and a mark of his autocratic, aristocratic consciousness. It is, furthermore, to be taken as a sign of lost aboriginal strength since, as his father observes, the young man can scarcely move without the aid of the machine. As further confirmation of the extent to which Charles is dependant on the technical, we learn that he cannot even bathe without the aid of a mechanical apparatus: after an abortive motor-tour, Margaret watches Charles and his friend at the pool and notes that their lack of a springboard leaves them 'paralysed.' (217)

Rubber merchant Henry Wilcox too is variously associated with the motor-car.²⁰⁹ Like son Charles, for example, he prefers the 'motor-drive' over other forms of felicity. (198) However, Henry's identification with the automobile is more than merely casual in that the motor-car bespeaks the rationality of the industrial order with which he is associated whilst reinforcing the inexorable logic for which he is renowned: 'The management was excellent...one was conscious of his sensible and generous brain in the background.' (209) His rational but

nonetheless insensitive disposition is also foregrounded when, in transit by motor-car to Howards End, Henry apprises Doctor Mainsbridge of Helen's emotional state: "She always was highly strung," pursued Henry, leaning back in the car as it shot past the church. 'A tendency to spiritualism and those things, though nothing serious. Musical, literary, artistic, but I should say normal - a very charming girl.'" (282)

So, whilst Margaret earlier hears the 'heart of [Howards End] beating...loudly, martially...', the fact is that Henry Wilcox and his son are attuned to a different rhythm: the paternalistic beat of enterprise as is suggested by its pulsing, throbbing achievement - the internal combustion engine. (202) Moreover, when Margaret is startled by Miss Avery at Howards End, Henry Wilcox lapses into ironic hyperbole and reports that the sight of Mrs Avery was '[e]nough to make the car shy', his comment quite unconsciously identifying him with the new world. Henry's mechanistic, capitalistic consciousness is further foregrounded when, late in the novel, his wife finds him 'lying in a great leather chair' reminiscent of the interior of his motor-car: a 'luxurious cavern of red leather...' (330, 31). Margaret even observes that it is 'as if motor-cars had spawned.' (330).

It is pertinent, therefore, that the rubber merchant should say that 'our civilisation is moulded by great impersonal forces' since these are the very forces of which he is a component and proponent. (193) It is also significant that, at the end of the novel, the men (Henry Wilcox, Crane the chauffeur, and the symbolically named specialist Mr Mansbridge) are rapidly despatched to the motor-car when Margaret perceives that Helen is pregnant. (285) As they return to their machine, which has arrived, dues-like, to bear Helen to a place of healing, Margaret pushes her sister past the garden and back into the house. Nowhere else in the novel do we get such a striking identification of the motor-car with male consciousness and the house and garden with the female mind.

However, whilst Helen Schlegel resists technique with some measure of success, the same woman who is beguiled by the automobile is also 'warped' by memories of 'motor-cars oozing grease on the gravel...'. (308) For Helen, Margaret, and Mrs Wilcox, the

motor-car, since it bespeaks empiricism, rationalism, and conservatism, is a sign of all that is inimical to personal authenticity. Not surprisingly, therefore, all three women prefer the hired hansom or brougham as a mode of transport. Thus, they declare themselves to be happier with a slower pace of life; more attuned to the romance of the old world. It is a theme that is repeated, though less obviously, in *A Passage to India*.

In her essay 'Emptying and Filling Along the Existential Coil', Doreen D'Cruz writes this of *A Passage to India*: '[It] is constructed upon a double vision which encompasses two opposing verities - Being and non-Being.' (193) It becomes clear that D'Cruz's terminology does not match that of Martin Heidegger since the former argues that non-Being 'involves the cosmos in an undifferentiated muddle devoid of significance...: the Void' whilst Being is 'God's Unconsciousness...: the absolute One suggested by the Temple sequences.' (ibid) In further developing her thesis, she adds that 'matter is the conduit to the mystical verities.' (ibid) What is argued here is that in *A Passage*, the motor-car, 'matter' of some consequence in Forster's work, signifies the chaos of non-Being (as D'Cruz sees it), the colonisation of human consciousness by the technical daemon, and the phenomenon of cultural erasure.²¹⁰ The automobile is, therefore, aligned with the negative, nihilistic aspect of the twin verities about which D'Cruz writes. As such, it contributes substantially to the novel's extended play of opposites, something Forster enjoyed effecting: order and anarchy, swelling and shrinking, the general and the particular, lowland and highland, Indian and Englishman, men and women, assertion and negation, singularity and communality, stasis and migration, the personal and the mechanical, life and death.

Overall, the imagery of *A Passage* is more subtle than that of *Howards End*. Certainly, the motor-car's presence in the former is less obtrusive than it is in the latter, but it nonetheless plays an important part as a narrative, thematic, and structural vehicle. In *A Passage*, as in Forster's other fictions, the motor-car is sign of European machine consciousness. Moreover, it is an emblem of colonial oppression and cultural transference; an affront to the aboriginal rhythms of India. In general, then, it is Englishmen (or Indians who have capitulated to

them) who drive motor-cars in *A Passage*. However, before considering Forster's representation of these figures, it behoves us to note that both Europeans and the European world are commonly associated with images of straightness, regularity, and order in the novel. It will be divined that this is because these qualities bespeak European rationalism, the industrial order of the West, and the rigid formalism of the Raj.

In the great tableau of the first chapter of *A Passage*, for instance, Forster tells us that the 'criss-cross' roads of Chandrapore 'intersect at right angles' and are 'symbolic of the net Great Britain [has] thrown over India.'²¹¹ (10, 18) Aziz feels tragically 'caught in their meshes.' (ibid: 18) Moreover, after her romantic passage to India, Mrs Moore is disappointed 'to find only a gridiron of bungalows...' (26) Furthermore, the railway, another of the novel's many symbols of colonial oppression, for a time at least, runs 'parallel' to the 'shifting panorama' of the Ganges. (9) In addition, Major Callender's residence is chiefly characterised by its formal, square 'compound' (18) Turning to personalities, Forster notes that the European women are unattractive, plain, and 'angular' whilst Mr McBryde, the District Superintendent of Police, says that it is necessary for all Europeans to 'toe the line' for fear of weakening the collective power of the Raj. (67, 168) Indeed, Forster variously foregrounds that idea that, with the exception of Mrs Moore, the Europeans are not independent agents, but merely functionaries: simple, unsophisticated appendages to the Raj's machinery.

Ronny Heaslop, the City Magistrate, is one of these European Gods of the machine. But the great mechanism to which he is more fundamentally bound is the British judicial system. Accordingly, Ronny is variously described as 'busy', or 'hard-worked'. (46) He says that he is '*driven* with work' and accuses others of not knowing 'what work is'.²¹² (48, 49) He claims that he's in India 'to work' and adds the ironic complaint that he's 'dead with all this extra work...'. (50, 82) Of course, Ronny *is* in a sense 'dead'. Certainly he is a mechanical, linear thinker; a career man, and a slave to 'his duty': a sad 'product' of his public-school education. (50) Like his father, then, Ronny is also a man of infinite 'common sense' with the 'religious inclinations of a fifth

former'. (150) He lacks personal agency and maintains only the most stultifying of human relationships.

The imperatives of work (to which Ronny has surrendered) prevent him from developing socially, his language is monochromatic, and the only thing that his infantile mind appears to engage with and enjoy is bureaucracy. Herein lies the danger for Ronny: as the narrator observes, 'where there is officialism every human relationship suffers.' (207) Ronny's death, then, is the death of the personal self in that he has become a mere functioning component of the Raj's legal machinery; an exponent of bureaucratic technics; an 'administrator', as the narrator sardonically calls him.²¹³ (89). His technical consciousness may be seen too in his rigorous application of the interiorised, self-regulatory gaze which is so much a feature of professional life. As a sign of the sensibility that Ronny has acquired then, Forster associates him with technical apparatuses - especially the motor-car.

The most significant episode involving Ronny and automobiles may be found in chapter eight when he and Adela ride in the Nawab Bahadur's car. When the machine hits something and goes off the road, Ronny, who only moments earlier had dropped his stiff-shirted affectations in order to connect with Adela, reverts to type and makes an exhaustive search for empirical evidence of the animal they are supposed to have struck. Enigma, then, is unacceptable to the City Magistrate, as is again evidenced at the Marabar caves which he proposes be 'numbered in sequence' so that they might be stripped of their aura. (195)

Heaslop's proposal implies a European rationalism that is completely insensitive to the spiritual significance of the caves themselves and of India more generally. So, as far as Ronny is concerned, the caves are somewhat confusing merely because they look alike. In the wake of the 'calamity' that purportedly takes place at the caves, moreover, Ronny puts into operation the inflexible, insentient machinery of the justice system since he is sure that it will confirm his findings and Adela's subsequent accusation: 'Continuing their work, the wheels of Dominion now propelled a messenger...to the Magistrate...' (171) When Adela later suggests that these wheels be

halted, Ronny asserts that 'the machinery has started' and will 'work to its end.' (201) Indeed, the wheel specifically (and machine imagery generally) become part of a metaphoric matrix that Forster employs to illustrate the inflexible and destructive nature of judicial technics - especially as manifested against Indians.

One of the most critical images of the Indian being beneath the wheels of the Raj may be found in the twenty-second chapter of *A Passage* where Nureddin steals his grandfather's motor-car and drives Aziz, who is out on bail, into a ditch. Both men are hurled out of the automobile, Nureddin's face is cut open, and, despite his complete lack of wrong-doing, Aziz is thrown back in jail under the additional charge of disturbing the peace. The event is critical because it echoes an earlier episode in which the Nawab drove over a drunk Indian in his motor-car.²¹⁴ Forster's subtle connection here between physical machinery and the European judicial apparatus is then felicitously effected although the correspondence is reinforced just a few pages on when Adela begs Ronny to withdraw the charges against Aziz.

Miss Quested's appeal for Ronny to cancel the case is made on the basis of how good men are to women in India. Citing Miss Derek's borrowed motor-car as an example, Adela implies that men usually have a habit of riding rough-shod over women - a truth that Ronny's dismissive response to her request confirms. Moreover, his use of the machine as a metaphoric vehicle for the idea that it is now too late to stop the wheels of justice points to the inexorable progress of bureaucratic technics, to Ronny's cognitive inflexibility, to his penchant for teleology, and to his insentient obeisance to cultural and institutional mechanisms.²¹⁵ As if to reinforce the point, in the next breath Forster has Ronny change the subject to speak of steam-ships. These correspondences then are carefully crafted and are an integral aspect of the novel's structure.

Even Fielding, who for much of the story gives us hope of an untainted cultural connection between East and West, remains caught up in the machinery of the British Raj. As College Principal, for instance, he is an exponent academic rationalism; a rigid code that promotes the kind of consciousness that allows one to hold oneself

‘sternly aloof.’ (27) Indeed, the signs of Fielding’s ultimate failure to connect with aboriginal India are there from the beginning. Even his title of College Principal, for example, is dismissed by alter ego, Godbole, as a mere ‘creditable appendage’. Moreover, that the Indians are known by their proper names rather than by such titles - the Collector, the Collector’s wife, The City Magistrate, the Civil Surgeon, the Superintendent, the police people, and so on - suggests the extent to which the English have succumbed to institutional imperatives and have thereby lost themselves.

Of course, there are Indians in *A Passage* whose cultural (and therefore personal) authenticity is also compromised as a result of complicity with the Europeans. The Nawab Bahadur, for example, is said to have ‘great possessions’ and so deprecates anarchy or any threat to the political status quo. (37) As implied above, his motor-car, surely one of his treasures, is a clear sign of his privilege and of the fact that he has enriched himself at the expense of his own people.²¹⁶ The terrible irony of the Nawab’s situation is, of course, that in so acquiring the trappings of success valued by the West, he must endure the disapproval of his own people and live out his life in the knowledge that he has betrayed both them and himself. His elegant but ‘debauched’ grandson, moreover, has sold out to the West in a similar way and so it is pertinent that he is foregrounded only in relation to his grandfather’s death machine.²¹⁷

This loss of self, as expressed through the acquisition of a machine-like consciousness, is a theme also represented in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s fiction - particularly *The Great Gatsby* where the automobile emblematises both humanity’s creative impulse and its submission to the perfunctory and the rational. Whilst ineluctably connected with the wonder of the Rolls-Royce then, the hero’s submission to routines and schedules is paradoxically suggested through his association with this and other machines. Of course, this dichotomy is highlighted by the fact that Gatsby’s car does appear differently in different lights – just like its owner who offers to the world a golden image of himself, but who, on the inside, is blue.²¹⁸ It is for this reason that the motor-car becomes such a striking sign of inauthenticity. Moreover, Gatsby’s schedule, examined by Nick toward

the novel's conclusion, suggests an inauthentic, 'join-the-dots' approach to life; the notion that so long as one adheres to a predetermined pattern (like changing the gears of a car in the prescribed order) one's passage through the world will go smoothly. However, the distinguishing characteristic of *Gatsby* is, as his customised vehicle also suggests, difference. And so, in order to see the quintessence of mechanical consciousness in the novel, we must look elsewhere.

While the most tedious order of human activity is hauntingly represented in that first, and most famous, description of the Valley of Ashes, George B. Wilson is the figure in *Gatsby* who most completely expresses the idea of *das Gestell*.²¹⁹ Wilson's passional paralysis and physical lethargy are foregrounded, among other things, by the dilapidated Ford which lies, forgotten, in the corner of his garage, by his mechanical and despairing drawl, and by his curiously rhythmic groaning over the body of wife Myrtle. Keath Fraser finds this sound to be an 'orgastic call emitted in mechanical jerks' - a sign, surely, that Wilson's consciousness and sexuality have been permanently abased by his environment. (Fraser in Bloom: 64) Significantly, only automobiles elicit a spark of interest from Wilson but the irony, as suggested above, is that these are signs of the technical spirit to which he has acquiesced.²²⁰

As noted earlier, Tom Buchanan is another whose being is expressed through technical images. But whilst the dynamism of his character is emblematised via subtle references to automobility, his movements too are sudden and violent. For instance, he breaks his lover's nose with 'a short deft movement'. (39) As his identification with the automobile further suggests, Tom is something of a mechanical monster and characteristically thrusts his way through life. His phrasing, moreover, is mechanical and clipped. Therefore, whilst Tom's restlessness and his on-the-go, take-over disposition are foregrounded through the motor-car, so too is his cerebral mechanistic and the fact that he likes to think of himself as an exponent of the rational, scientific order. Of course, the muted technical imagery also highlights his tendency to react predictably - much like a marionette. When emotionally unsteadied, for example, Tom becomes aggressive - pushing himself past people or seeking to

overtake them on the road. It is, then, interesting to note that he exhibits the same consciousness as Meyer Wolfshiem - the underworld 'tactics man' who, when under stress, moves in jerks.²²¹

Other characters, of course, also have their cerebral mechanistic foregrounded through the automobile. For instance, we have seen that narrator Nick Carraway's technical consciousness is emblematised through the motor-car. Nick's world, we know, is the world of the observer; the voyeur, but it is also the world of the dishonest social scientist: the critic who imposes rules on the natural order so as to make it conform to a predetermined set of expectations. So, given the moral 'brakes' that Nick claims to apply so vigorously to his own instincts, it comes as no surprise that he favours a world which stands 'at a sort of moral attention...' (13) Fitzgerald's employment of automobile imagery with respect to Nick therefore highlights an inflexible, machine-like consciousness: a mind which is emphatically attuned to the rational order and a psyche which is essentially monochromatic. Jordan Baker, of course, is another figure effectively depersonalised through close identification with the motor-car, but, as with Nick, it is a propensity to drift, a certain psychic homelessness, which the automobile appears to more thoroughly foreground. So it is with Fitzgerald's earlier novels and his short fiction.²²²

However, to be certain that the motor-car is a universal sign of technique and technical consciousness, we would expect to find it similarly represented in other modern texts. And so we do. In *Man and Superman*, for instance, and as Shaw's stage directions affirm, Tanner's consciousness is attuned to the rhythm of his automobile: '*when he is manipulating the car his movements are swift and sudden.*' (73) Moreover, Tanner himself announces that he is 'a slave of that car', a reference, one suspects, to more than pecuniary servitude. But the real slave of the machine appears to be Tanner's chauffeur, Straker - a man whose name is derived from the Old English 'streccan' - a curved metal plate forming part of the metal rim on a wooden wheel. Quite apart from the cultural resonance of his name, Straker's claims that the automobile liberates humankind fall ironically flat when it becomes clear that his happiness in life is predicated on the performance of the machine for which he is responsible. In fact, his

preoccupation with the car is total. Whilst his obsession with speed records has already been considered, a stage direction, which Shaw commonly uses in order to pass sardonic comment, tells us that Straker is '*preoccupied with the car*'. (3) Indeed, he virtually lives in the machine and can barely bring himself to think or talk about anything else.

As the epigraph to this chapter suggests, Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* also foregrounds the notion of machine consciousness. When the Toad is so unceremoniously deprived of his motor-car and imprisoned by Badger, Mole, and Ratty, the creature arranges his bedroom chairs in rude resemblance of a motor-car, sits on the foremost of them, crouches forward, and proceeds to make mechanical noises. Grahame's intention is plain: to highlight that the Toad has become an extension of his machine; that he is driven not by reason, but by other engines that promote an inauthentic mode of being.

Less whimsical is Sherwood Anderson's *A Story-teller's Story* which contains the bleak hypothesis 'that the giving of itself by an entire generation to mechanical things [is] really making all men impotent.' (375) Anderson's divination, then, is more akin to Lawrence's: that is, that the machine will ultimately unman the user, reducing the Being to the status of being. Whilst Anderson foregrounds the seductive promises of the motor-car (as well as its capacity to compromise the authentic mind) one may also observe the destruction of Being in *Howards End* where images of 'grimy trees and...traffic' are employed to suggest Helen Schlegel's spiritual crisis and slow slide into anonymity. (275)

Such employment of the automobile to foreground the phenomenon of cerebral mechanistic may also be found in *Mrs Dalloway*. In this, Virginia Woolf's most deliberately crafted novel, Peter Walsh's separation from Clarissa is emblematised by strikingly different representations of the two characters' consciousness. So it is that Clarissa's 'Bloomsbury' predilections are contrasted with Peter's industrial mind. In parallel scenes of crucial significance, Clarissa looks through Hatchards' shop window whilst her disconsolate and hurt admirer, a rather inflexible man who is said to have 'a turn for

mechanics', looks through 'the plate glass window of a motor-car manufacturer...' (54) Of course, this particular expression of *das Gestell* is foreshadowed early in the novel when Woolf writes: 'The throb of the motor engines sounded like a pulse irregularly drumming through an entire body.' (17)

But of all the moderns prior to 1925 it is T. S. Eliot who sees with greatest clarity (and who articulates with greatest economy) that the tedious rhythm of the machine may, in the worst of circumstances, find its way into the deepest recesses of Being. And so, in post war London, the milieu in which '**The Waste Land**' is set, we find the 'human engine' scarcely ticking over. (Eliot: 71) Appropriately, the characteristic meter of 'The Burial of the Dead', as the first part of the poem is called, is that of dirge:

'Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many
I had not thought death had undone so many.
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
Flowed up the hill and down King William
Street...'

(65)

As the dull pulse of the poem suggests, Eliot's '**Waste Land**' figures are caught on a treadmill of old habits and old doubts. The deliberate metrical blandness, moreover, reinforces Eliot's conviction that modern society is more attuned to the rhythms of the machine than to those of nature and in further foregrounding this, he takes the motor-car as an emblem of a culture content to idle in neutral:

' At the violet hour, when the eyes and back
Turn upward from the desk, when the human
engine waits
Like a taxi throbbing waiting
...'

(71)

Finally, for a more complete modern literary representation of this encompassing technological framework we must go forward to 1932 and the publication of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Here, in a milieu in which human beings are created in a factory environment and in which the exclamation 'Ford!' becomes a sort of curseless invocation to the industrial spirit, the automobile and the assembly line suggest the kind of modern industrial and bureaucratic nightmare anticipated by Weber. Indeed, there are few texts from any period in which this totalising vision of mechanistic overwhelms in quite the same way, but among them are Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* and *Dombey and Son*, D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, E. M. Forster's *The Machine Stops* and *A Passage to India*, Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*.

The dehumanised driver

We have seen that the submission of the human to the mechanical is variously represented in modern art and modern literature. However, one of the most striking manifestations of fallenness is the ostensible dehumanisation or objectification of the driver when attired in full motoring paraphernalia. Prior to the advent of the closed car, male motorists were obliged to wear heavy coats, leather caps, goggles, gaiters, and gauntleted gloves whilst women had to kit themselves out just as thoroughly. The effect of all this garb was marked. Not only did the autoist appear as some sort of malevolent creature, but, being effectively masked, was able to conceal normal emotional responses. This is a psychological phenomenon well known in acting circles where the wearing of a mask enables the player to fully assume the role of the criminal.²²³ The fully kitted-out motorist then, features regularly in modern fiction where the roles reserved are those of the technically animated villain or deity.²²⁴

Whilst Bernard Shaw's Tanner observes that Henry Straker is the 'New Man' who cares 'for nothing but tearing along in a leather coat and goggles...' it is nonetheless Kenneth Grahame who first seized on the psychological significance of motoring garb. (Shaw: *MS*: 81) In

The Wind in the Willows, Badger tells his friends that Toad of Toad Hall's hideous habiliments 'transform him from a (comparatively) good-looking Toad into an Object...' (84) By way of confirmation, moments later, arrayed in goggles, cap, gaiters, [and] an enormous overcoat', Toad comes 'swaggering down the steps, drawing on his gauntleted gloves.' (85) At this moment it is clear that the Toad is not in full possession of himself. Rather, he has succumbed to the intrinsic meaning of his attire and is transformed into the arrogant autoist of the high road. Significantly, however, when stripped of these habiliments his confidence dissipates:

'A good deal of his blustering spirit seemed to have evaporated with the removal of his fine panoply. Now that he was merely Toad, and no longer the Terror of the Highway, he giggled feebly...'

(86)

Naturally, this idea that motoring attire objectifies the wearer and confirms a dubious psychic condition is foregrounded in a range of modern texts. In *Howards End*, Charles Wilcox is depersonalised by his 'goggles and gloves' whilst *Man and Superman's* Tanner is similarly made larger than life at the beginning of the second act. Of course, as previously observed, the begoggled driver of the Locomobile in Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* provides a modern manifestation of the *Deus* (as does Nancy Derek, the female autoist of Forster's *A Passage to India*) whilst D. H. Lawrence's Hilda is turned into 'a goggling, inhuman, unrecognisable creature' as soon as she dons the motorist's 'disguise'.²²⁵ (LC: 210)

Finally, in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, a novel in which references to motor technology are largely incidental, the 'trial' of Bloom is made all the more comical when 'sex specialist', Malachi Mulligan, arrives to give testimony attired in a 'motor jerkin [and] green motor goggles'.²²⁶ (486) By turning Mulligan, the would-be saviour of Bloom and God of the machine, into a comic object, Joyce echoes the bathos employed so

effectively by some of his Greek forebears.²²⁷ However, Joyce contemporaneously demonstrates an awareness that the attire of the serious autoist confirms a mechanistic consciousness, and, since it echoes the paraphernalia of the flier, a psychological propensity to take flight; a desire to remain, at all costs, on the move.

Moving on

“The poetry of motion! The real way to travel! The only way to travel! Here today – in next week tomorrow! Villages skipped, towns and cities jumped –...”

Kenneth Grahame - *The Wind in the Willows*

Homelessness and the automobile

At the end of chapter one, it was observed that the motor-car might become a second, or even alternative, home. Certainly, there is evidence, in the texts of Forster, Fitzgerald, and others, that the automobile may become a more or less permanent residence. However, with the exception of Shaw, who did, for a time, virtually live in his own machine, writers foreground the idea that when people abandon their dwellings and take to the road, they lose not only their sense of perspective, but their very sense of identity. And when that happens, they argue, all sorts of abominations occur. However, before focusing on literary representations of the deracinated autoist, we may profitably turn to Russian writer Illya Ehrenburg whose *The Life of the Automobile* provides us with an excellent starting point from which to consider the relationship between the moving motor-vehicles and human consciousness. ‘Cars don’t have a homeland’, Ehrenburg writes. ‘Like oil stocks or like classic love, he adds, ‘they can easily cross borders.’ (12)

In his *For Love of the Automobile* Wolfgang Sachs also acknowledges that the motor-car permanently speaks of elsewhere adding that it therefore intensifies the ‘rushing and nervousness, haste

and impatience [that] flicker through the urban dweller's feeling for life... .' (161) In an essay written for a 1970 edition of *Playboy Magazine* Alvin Tofler puts it another way: '...we seem to be always en route; never at our destination', adding that as 'acceleration has become a primal social force in our time; transience, its social concomitant, has become a primal psychological force.' 'The speed-up of change', Tofler writes, 'introduces a shaky sense of impermanence into our lives...our links with *place* are also growing more transient.' (FS: 98) ²²⁸ Lewis Mumford, that other prolific commentator on modernity and its discontents, claims that for the modern world there is 'only one attractive destination: farther away.' (MM: 173)

Of course, these commentators are echoing far older expressions of disquiet. In his *Conquests of Tamburlaine*, for instance, Christopher Marlowe writes of a humanity 'always moving as the restless / Spheres' whilst Goethe, in his *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's Travels), writes: '*Dort wo du nicht bist*', which may be loosely translated: 'You feel you would be happy somewhere else'. Whilst Goethe is specifically concerned with Meister's restless spirit, his words are nonetheless profoundly applicable to the twentieth century: an era in which people have become increasingly obsessed with travel and movement. We shall see, for example, that both E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald highlight the idea that the autoist who lives on the road has no stable sense of self. Indeed, it is these two writers who most plainly see that such deracinated beings present another manifestation of *das Gestell*.

In the first chapter of this thesis, it was observed that by 1911 Birmingham decorators were complaining that people were 'living more in hotels and on the roads' and were neglecting to maintain their houses.²²⁹ But whilst tradesmen, in both England and America, were undoubtedly suffering from a re-prioritising of spending, they were by no means alert to the full cultural significance of the change they were witnessing. Really, it was not a 'change' at all; it was a complete transformation during which a relatively settled population turned into a mobile, itinerant one. In his *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Martin Heidegger foregrounds the immense psychological costs of a migrant life style.

‘The truck driver is at home on the highway, but he does not have his shelter there...’ writes Heidegger when distinguishing between feeling at home and *being* at home. (145) Accordingly, we may be beguiled into thinking that we can live authentically when we do not reside, but, in reality, it is only in ‘putting down roots’, that we may truly manifest an authentic mode of self revealing. Heidegger’s analysis is, as often, based on etymology. He finds that the nuances of the verb ‘bauen’ (to ‘remain’ or ‘stay in one place’), are largely lost to us - although he argues, perhaps not so persuasively, that they survive, to a limited extent, in the Old English noun ‘geber’, from which he claims we derive the modern English word ‘dweller’.²³⁰ Whatever the etymological truth, Heidegger’s argument is that ‘[m]an’s relation to locations, and through locations to spaces, inheres in his dwelling’ and that ‘[t]he relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling, strictly thought and spoken.’ (*PLT*: 157) The lost nuances of the verb ‘bauen’, he writes, are that ‘man *is*, insofar as he dwells’; that dwelling is the essential characteristic of authentic being. (ibid: 160) By implication, to be permanently mobile is to permanently compromise one’s being.²³¹

In considering humankind’s need to dwell in order to maintain an authentic presence, it is instructive to read Neil Smith’s remarkable paper ‘**Homeless/global: Scaling places**’ which explores the ‘Homeless Vehicle’ of artist Krzysztof Wodiczko. This device, inspired by the supermarket trolley, is said to meet the basic needs of the evicted. It is a ‘home’ on four wheels. It has a sleeping compartment and its conical nose, ‘satirically redolent of a rocket’, folds down to become a wash-basin whilst a lower compartment is designed to accommodate belongings. (Smith in Bird: 89) The Homeless Vehicle is at once art and utility: ‘an impertinent invention that empowers the evicted to erase their own erasure.’ (ibid) Intended as a part remedy to an undesirable social phenomenon, the vehicle is perhaps the twentieth century’s most depressing acknowledgement of the problem. Its ironic architecture is an absurd reminder of humanity’s need to dwell - yet it sets the evicted free in space. Doubly ironic is the fact that the erasure of being goes on anyway since municipal

authorities, who contest the right of Homeless Vehicle owners to occupy public places, simply move them on.

Returning now to the automobile proper, it has been observed that it is the incarnation of anticipation and as such bespeaks a permanent desire to be elsewhere.²³² Even the stationary motor-car suggests imminent departure. For some, like Jordan Baker and Myrtle Wilson of Fitzgerald's *Gatsby*, the automobile is the modern chariot that will bear us away from suffering – or, indeed, from ourselves. For others, like Gatsby himself, it is the means by which, as Tom Henley put it, one might be 'the master of [one's] fate / ...the captain of [one's] soul'. However, as has also been noted, in offering to us its chrome-plated promises of progression, conquest, and transcendence, the motor-car conceals sinister meanings among which is the destruction of consciousness observed by writers such as E. M. Forster, F. Scott Fitzgerald, D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, and T. S. Eliot.

The homeless mind: England and Forster

In Eliot's poetics, transit technologies, and motor-cars in particular, variously imply: potential, the inflexibility of fixed route or schedule, mechanistic determinism, rampant materialism, or cultural dominance. Moreover, in Eliot's work, the mechanised journey is represented as a counterfeit for a more profound spiritual transcendence in turn signified by the 'still point' of the poet's '**Four Quartets**'. So, whilst the potential of the '**The Waste Land's**' throbbing car is certainly realised as the kinetic energy of moving machines in '**Four Quartets**', Eliot's point is that people are undertaking the wrong journey. Rather than seeking spiritual enlightenment, they instead align themselves with the things of the world. For Eliot, then, the modern being is devoid of authenticity and, as the descent into the underground in 'Burnt Norton' reinforces, the result is a living death:

Descend lower, descend only
Into... / Internal darkness.../...
This is the one way, and the other
Is the same, not in movement

But abstention from movement; while the
world moves
In appetency, on its metalled ways
Of time past and time future.

(Eliot: *FQ*: Burnt Norton III: p. 193)

As F. R. Leavis notes in *The Living Principle*, Eliot ‘registers his recoil from mechanistic determinism’ - a determinism foregrounded as ‘an inhuman, meaningless drive.’ (181) In Eliot’s work, human identification with the mechanical can only lead us in one direction: away from ourselves, thereby reducing the likelihood of us acquiring an enduring sense of identity; limiting the chances of our ever finding an authentic mode of self revealing. For Eliot, the modern person clings to the illusory and the counterfeit, the obsession with transit a manifestation of the homeless mind. And so: ‘We shall not cease from exploration / And the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time.’ (Eliot: *FQ*: Little Gidding V: p. 222) Moreover, then, Eliot’s poetry highlights that, in the end, escape from ourselves is at best temporary in that when the journey is ended, we are still there - faced with overwhelming questions.

Driving, therefore, satisfies the human urge to move forward whilst making it possible to evade ourselves - albeit temporarily. However, the characters in Eliot’s poetry fail to perceive the limitations. Rather, they believe that to be in transit is to be making progress, to be striving toward some higher identity. But progress, as Emerson once observed, is not amelioration, and Eliot pursues this fruitful irony by highlighting that movement is in fact hell whilst stasis equates to heaven. So, in ‘**Choruses from ‘The Rock’**’ we are told that ‘Endless invention, endless experiment, / Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness...’ (Eliot: 161) Accordingly, after the toil of six days, the seventh offers no prospect of rest and contemplation - only the imperative to ‘motor / To Hindhead, or Maidenhead.’ (Eliot: 161-62) Eliot’s Sweeney drives home the point. In ‘**Fragment of an Agon**’, Sweeney’s dream is of an island paradise from which are banished the telephone, the gramophone, and the automobile: ‘There’s no motor-cars

/ No two-seaters, no six-seaters, / No Citroën, no Rolls-Royce.' (Eliot: 130) Here, only dwelling is possible.

E. M. Forster and Virginia Woolf are similarly critical of a culture that refuses to stand still. Technology, Forster argues, robs us of aboriginal strengths whilst influencing our psyches in such a way as to cause a profound perturbation: 'Men seldom moved their bodies; all unrest was concentrated in the soul.' (Forster: *MS*: 124) Whilst his short fictions certainly foreground the manifold peculiarities of machine culture, *Howards End* is nonetheless the first of Forster's major works to represent and explore the homeless mind.²³³ Recognising (perhaps before any other major twentieth century author) that changes in the tempo of life necessitated changes in literary representations of culture and consciousness, Forster here turns to transport technologies to signify both the pace of modernity and psychological manifestations of the technological.

In considering these aspects of the novel, David Dowling writes: '*Howards End* is full of movement and trains.' (*BA*: 61) Trains, of course, are emblematic of flux - though there are in fact many more automobiles than locomotives in the novel. To summarise Dowling's point though, transit technologies in *Howards End* suggest restlessness: 'a culture as is implied by the advertisements of anti-bilious pills.' (29) Put another way, *Howards End* explores a society in which those who seek to dwell are displaced by those whose proclivity is for 'progress.' Accordingly there is much focus on milieux torn apart by the impersonal forces of urban renewal and expansion. The novel, then, is an attempt to connect with the spirit of Edwardian England although the romantically inclined Forster himself experienced the same feeling of defeat that Margaret Schlegel does when she observes that it is 'impossible to see modern life steadily and see it whole.' (161) Nonetheless she tries: '...she attempted to realise England.' (204) However, her inability to connect with the new *zeitgeist* could not be more bluntly represented: 'She failed...' (ibid)

So, whilst the women of *Howards End* seek to inhabit and dwell, the men, as we have seen, are generally identified with physical technologies and the mechanisms of social change. For them, to dwell

is to fail to progress; to falter at the hurdles of life and so Henry Wilcox's signature phrase, 'Now we'll be off' comes to epitomise the cultural and commercial drives of the new order. (198) Elsewhere we are told that Henry is 'a destroyer...ever in motion'; that he is 'always moving, and causing others to move... .' (315, 323) We have already seen that Henry's son, Charles, suffers from the same restless disposition as his father but the younger man's malaise is chronic. So much is Charles a victim of technique that he only seems in possession of himself when at the wheel of a fast moving automobile. But ironically, as is the case with Grahame's Toad, the capering consciousness thus acquired is both artificial and transitory.²³⁴

For all his furious driving, Charles does not seem to get anywhere. Indeed, his intensity at the wheel of his open automobile signifies nothing less than a debilitating inner vacuum: an unstable sense of self, an inability to develop and sustain profound social liaisons, and an incapacity to connect with physical environments. Helen Schlegel realises this very point: that 'the whole Wilcox family [is] a fraud, just a wall of newspapers and motor-cars...[behind which is] panic and emptiness.' (39-40) Of course, Margaret comes to the same conclusion. Whilst the narrator informs us that Charles 'live[s] for the five minutes that have passed, and the five to come', Margaret reflects that the Wilcoxes 'have no part in the place, nor in any place.'²³⁵ (245, 246) Of course, Margaret does make connections with place, which is why Ruth Wilcox identifies her as a spiritual heir for Howards End. For instance, when Margaret is forced to leave her Wickham Place residence owing to the expiration of the lease and the fact that the building is to be torn down, she sees that her memories are inextricably interconnected with the dwelling: '...the house was suddenly ringed with pathos. It had seen so much happiness...' (165)

The homeless mind is similarly foregrounded in Forster's *A Passage* where the extroverted Nancy Derek puts us in mind of Fitzgerald's Jordan Baker and D. H. Lawrence's Hilda. For instance, both Nancy and Jordan drive borrowed automobiles, form personally advantageous and shallow relationships, are given to empty exclamations, and are unsettled. Moreover, both are widely travelled. Nancy Derek, a 'free lance' of 'tearing spirit', steals her Mararajah's

motor-car and uses it as a means of frivolous entertainment. (88, 89) Mrs Moore calls her an ‘unsatisfactory and restless [person], always in a hurry, always wanting something new...’ whilst the narrator labels her solipsistic, narcissistic, and ‘pleasure-loving.’ (155, 177) As with Jordan Baker then, Nancy Derek’s persistent identification with the automobile underscores and emblematises a shallow personality - and a profound rootlessness. Finally, the aimlessness of the Nawab Bahadur is also foregrounded through the automobile. One may scarcely read over the narrator’s sardonic comment that the Nawab’s life will ‘run on as before’ the accident on the Marabar Road - that is, to no particular purpose. (91)

In Virginia Woolf’s fiction the motor-car also signifies wanderlust. Most notably, in *Mrs Dalloway*, Peter Walsh’s restlessness is signified by his identification with the motor-car whilst the rushing traffic in the novel generally signifies the rootless condition of modern society. In *Jacob’s Room*, automobiles are similarly emblematic of cultural and individual restlessness. For example, when grid-locked motor-omnibuses at Mudie’s corner lurch forward ‘every single person [feels] relief’ since there is no longer a need to confront the present. (63) Thus, the moving machine confirms the sensibility of ‘[a] homeless people, circling beneath the sky... .’ (65) So, as the motor-omnibus is ‘theirs’, so too are the ‘vans...and the railway... .’ (ibid) Later, when Woolf narrows her narrative focus to foreground the individual, we find Fanny Elmer attempting to connect with Hampstead Garden only to be thwarted: ‘The motor-cars hooted on the road. She heard a far-away rush and humming. Agitation was at her heart.’ (117) The ‘humming of...wheels’ then destroys her attempt to dwell and Fanny’s mind finds itself once more attuned to the dubious rhythms of progress. (118) At the novel’s conclusion (when the narrative focus has widened again), and in what is one of Woolf’s most typically ambiguous finales, stalled traffic once more throbs and hums. As some may read it, the hiatus is a sign of hope but surely, since the diction so precisely echoes that of the fifth chapter when the traffic jerks forward again, Woolf is reminding us that it is the will of the modern world not to dwell but to restlessly drive on.

In D. H. Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent* the 'rootlessness and transitoriness' of modern life are also symbolised by conveyance technologies. (112) Lawrence, speaking ex-cathedra as omniscient narrator, declares the automobile to be the 'real insanity of America'; a sign of the eternally restless modern spirit. The 'perpetual rush of machines, motor-cars and motor-buses' recorded at the start of the novel's seventh chapter is one of numerous references to the new consciousness acquired by a Mexican people whose natural sensibility is characterised by a 'slumbering, quiescent power'. (112) Don Ramon's Fourth Hymn of Quetzalcoatl then scorns those peons who 'go rushing in a train'; who ride fruitlessly about 'in the camion... .' (241)

Lawrence also uses transit technologies to foreground psychic restlessness in *Women in Love*. Late in the novel, for example, Ursula asks Birkin: "And where are we going?" "Anywhere", he replies with the narrator adding the sardonic comment: 'It was the answer she liked.' (320) At the beginning of the fifth chapter, moreover, Rupert Birkin's abstracted, deracinated consciousness is emblematised by his perpetual movement, by train and automobile, between Nottingham, Oxford, and London: 'He moved about a great deal, his life seemed uncertain, without any definite rhythm, any organic meaning.'²³⁶ (p.54) But Birkin's identification with transit technologies does more than foreground his rootlessness. The railway and the automobile are also emblems of his rationality; his implacably cold, inflexible, and profoundly academic consciousness. Here, therefore, as always in Lawrence's fiction, the automobile is a powerful symbol of instrumental rationality.

Mine owner Gerald Crich is also a victim of the technological. A restless man, he is, like so many of Lawrence's anti-heroes, of the firm opinion that stasis is a snare; a delusion; a 'horrible deadly prison'. (Lawrence: *WL*: 99) So, as his identification with his motor-car suggests, Crich is a proponent of 'progress'. Moreover, his automobile bespeaks his definition of industrial organisation: the application of 'perfect instruments in perfect organisation...[which] by relentless repetition of given movement, will accomplish a purpose irresistibly,

inhumanly.’ (239) The will to drive forward, then, characterises the ‘half-automatised’ Crich. (119)

Ironically, however, the motor-car also signposts a deep anxiety borne by Crich: the feeling that he has been marginalised by technology. Accordingly, ‘...running about in his motor-car’ no longer appeals to him, since the activity fails to relieve the despair that threatens to overwhelm: ‘He could go out in the car, he could run to town. But he did not want to go out in the car...he was suspended motionless, in an agony of inertia like a machine that is without power.’ (279) So, in subscribing to the myth of progress, Gerald Crich succeeds only in making himself a slave of technique. As is the case when one attempts to control language, the technical order has its way of striking back at the would be controller.

The homeless mind: America and Fitzgerald

Alexis de Tocqueville, who landed in America in the Spring of 1831, wrote this of the Americans: ‘...a restless, calculating, adventurous race which sets coldly about deeds...and which trades in anything’ (de Toqueville in Lacey: 3) Within weeks of his visit, de Toqueville had divined that to be American is to be mobile and essentially non-conformist. Perhaps it was cultural commentary such as this that moved early twentieth century American writers to highlight the homeless consciousness of American people? Certainly, modern American fiction foregrounds the express train and, more particularly, the automobile as crucial elements of the American experience. But in the fictions of William Carlos Williams, John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and William Faulkner, there is an acknowledgement that whilst the motor-car and motoring are not the root of restlessness that they are, nonetheless, major symptoms of the malaise.

Fitzgerald’s fiction, in particular, is full of restless figures. In his short story ‘**Dice, Brassknuckles & Guitar**’, Fitzgerald’s southern gentleman Jim Powell is represented as the quintessential American ‘drifter’ - meandering, uncertainly, toward other horizons. Insouciance

informs his character then - as is suggested by his lazy gestures and indifferent driving. He is said to be going North 'after a fashion' and elsewhere waves with 'a careless gesture' before announcing to Amanthis Powell that he and his boy are 'tryin' New York'. (*SS*: 238, 240) Similarly, in '**The Ice Palace**', Clarke Darrow and his would-be girlfriend Sally restlessly drift into Tarleton, Georgia, in an old Ford whilst later on the fuzzy and 'listless' consciousness of Gordon Bellamy's wife, Myra, is emblematised by her wearing of 'a fur automobile hat.' (55)

With his first full length fiction, *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald wanted to capture the spirit of a restless generation. When the novel was published in 1920, it met with an enthusiastic reception largely because it was accepted, at least by the younger generation, as an honest portrayal of the condition of American youth. Of course, Fitzgerald saw himself as the spokesman for his generation. In the manuscript to *This Side of Paradise* he wrote: 'I'm trying to set down the story...of my generation in America and put myself in the middle as a sort of observer and conscious factor.' (Fitzgerald in Brucoli: *EG*: 84) The following that *Paradise* gained during the mid to late twenties among young Americans was then due to the fact that it heralded a revolt against establishment norms.²³⁷ But in assessing the novel's limitations, Edmund Wilson writes: '...its intellectual and moral content amounts to little more than a gesture - a gesture of revolt.' (*SL*: 28) Nonetheless, as the first popular American manifestation of the European *entwicklungsroman*, *This Side of Paradise* made very novel, if not altogether convincing, use of modern iconography to communicate its themes. Together with the fact that it struck a chord with its target market, its stylistic felicities were enough to secure it a following and Fitzgerald a reputation as a writer.

Significant to the imagery employed, the text's hero, Amory Blaine, is a character with a propensity to 'waver at crucial moments.' (13) Brought up in a culture 'rich in all arts and traditions [but] barren of all ideas', Blaine epitomises the careless, cosmopolitan consciousness of the twenties but also that sense of "New Freedom" searched for by de Toqueville and claimed, on behalf of a generation, by President Woodrow Wilson. It is a mixed consciousness primarily

foregrounded through express trains, motor-cars, and roads. At the beginning of the story, Amory, cast as a latter-day picaresque hero, is in characteristic mode; he is on the move. By age ten, he has 'done' the country, accompanied by his bored and restless mother, in a private (rail) car. Early on we learn that Amory's motivation is to 'pass'; to get ahead, but moments later we find him in his mother's 'electric', frustrated by her slow and careful driving. (28)

Generally, however, the automobile in *Paradise* is a sign of the will to revolt against the establishment, a token of insouciance, and an emblem of a shiftless, homeless disposition. And so, in 'Spires and Gargoyles', Amory and his friends pile into a stolen car and ride out, for no particular reason, to Deal Beach. There they drift purposelessly for two days before deserting the machine - returning to Princeton 'via the Fords of transient farmers.'²³⁸ (85) Sometime after, the same group take two motor-cars 'to New York in quest of adventure'. (91) On the way back from the city, we find Amory's consciousness once more attuned to the road, the would-be bohemian forming the ghost of a poem in his mind as the car speeds through the night toward catastrophe. It is worth noting too that the shiftless consciousness of Amory's various girlfriends is also underscored through references to the road or to automobiles. Eleanor, for example, has an 'esprit that hint[s] strongly of the boulevard': romantic, fast, and restless. (222)

This 'on the road' theme is continued in 'The Egoist Considers' where Amory discusses with Monsignor Darcy the possibility of leaving Princeton. In the process of quite half-hearted deliberations, Amory dishonestly claims to have gone 'thoroughly into the destruction of his egotistic highways' before lamely and ironically suggesting that if it were not for 'this tiresome war' he would 'like to travel.' (107) That Amory's consciousness wavers toward an indeterminate 'beyond' is further underscored when his reading preferences are revealed in 'Narcissus Off Duty', the final section of Book One of *This Side of Paradise*. Here it transpires that Amory favours the work of arch egoist George Bernard Shaw, a man who invested his entire being in the myth of progress and whose own ego was at one with the limitless road.²³⁹ The second part of *This Side of Paradise* is entitled 'The Education Of A Personage' and, in keeping with the *entwicklungsroman* tradition, we

again find Amory Blaine on the road - ostensibly in search of an identity. Here, he complains that the Great War has 'sort of killed individualism out of [his] generation' and, like Joyce's Dedalus, seeks to raise his consciousness through art. In attempting to immortalise and sanctify his liaison with Rosalind Connage, a girl who rejects him, Amory employs the imagery of the street and the motor-car (quoted earlier) to frame the poignancy of the moment.

The simile is unconscious testament to Amory's general sensibility: his quintessential wanderlust and his alienation. It is, moreover, an ironic sign of the young man's unspoken materialistic yearnings and his desire to be rescued *Deus ex machina*. Of course, the symbolically coloured 'shining green auto-bus' that Amory earlier dreams of is another psychological manifestation of this craving. The protagonist even confesses his hope that 'its stick of candy glamour might penetrate [his grey] disposition.'²⁴⁰ (137) Later, in the same section of the novel, he complains bitterly that his life, once 'an even progress along a road stretching ever in sight', is now 'a succession of quick, unrelated scenes... .' (223) And later still, just as Amory is again reflecting on the pointlessness of his life, a taxi appears to reinforce his jaded consciousness and rootless malaise:

'Another dawn flung itself across the river; a belated taxi hurried along the street, its lamps still shining like burning eyes in a face white from a night's carouse.'

(254)

Here then, and as is often the case in modern fiction, the motor-car enters the text as an essential sign of emotional disposition.

Toward the end of *This Side of Paradise*, having had his name published for improper sexual connection, having lost his girl to the wealthy, reliable (but ineffably dull) J. Dawson Ryder, and having been informed that his income from his mother's failed speculation in the street-car market is to cease, a disconsolate Amory Blaine wanders the streets and contemplates his failures. It is here, within fifty miles of Manhattan, that a passing motor-car slows down beside the shambling

figure. Amory looks up to behold 'a magnificent Locomobile' and is hailed by one of the two God-like figures inside. The dream machine, faintly anticipated in Amory's flight of poetic fancy concerning Miss Connage, is another of Fitzgerald's *Dei ex machina*. The divine machine is heading West, in the direction of hope, as one of its occupants indicates with a 'sweeping, lateral gesture.' (257)

Predictably, and quite unlike the youths who ditch their car before heading West, Amory Blaine abandons none of his materialistic predilections.²⁴¹ That he rides declined in the extraordinary luxury of a Locomobile whilst giving voice to a purported anagnorisis serves only to suspend any sympathy that we may have had for him as an alienated, tragic, and disaffected wanderer. Indeed, his Wellsian words ring hollow as he glides comfortably in the limousine, bemoaning the commercial sensibility that he sees afflicting married Americans and berating the fashion conscious 'Mrs Newspaper, Mrs Magazine, [and] Mrs Weekly' - beings whose ambitions he sarcastically disparages.²⁴² Amory's rambling, hypocritical, and otherwise embarrassing thesis then widens as he drops into cliché, condemning America's failure to match the pace of change demanded by an increasingly interdependent culture. He speaks critically of the 'restless generation' of which he is a part, and espouses the socialist idealism so rooted in the American mind but so absent from political reality. In the end, after he is dropped near the awe-inspiring Ferrenby estate eight miles from Princeton, Amory looks out over a frost-bitten Jersey landscape and offers the following assessment of his 'new consciousness': 'I know myself - but that is all.' And it is with this utterance, whether Fitzgerald knew it or not, that Amory Blaine's self-deception is complete.²⁴³

Of Fitzgerald's second novel, *The Beautiful and Damned*, Edmund Wilson writes: '...we feel that he [Fitzgerald] is moving in a vacuum; the characters have no real connection with the background to which they have been assigned; they are not part of the organism of New York as the characters, in, say, the short story **Bernice Bobs Her Hair** are part of the organism of St. Paul.' (*SL*: 30) Here, Wilson's otherwise remarkable critical insight seems to have abandoned him since it is just this separation from place that Fitzgerald is seeking to foreground. The novel's hero, Anthony Patch, and heroine, Gloria

Gilbert, are characters of dubious moral worth: their surrender to technique and commercialism seems to have seriously compromised the efficacy of their consciences and, as an emblem of their insouciance and their rootlessness, they are closely identified with the automobile.

The text's most seriously deracinated figure is Gloria Gilbert, a young woman whom her mother says has '...no sense of responsibility' and who '...goes, and goes, and goes.'²⁴⁴ (42) Indeed, Gloria, who yearns without questing and journeys without arriving (in the sense that she fails to gain any significant insight), is marked by a profound rootlessness. For instance, in the opening chapter, on one of her dates with the hapless Anthony Patch, she petulantly demands that they 'go somewhere!' (66) It transpires that the 'going' is to be made possible by a taxi and 'with an air of having a definite place in mind' the shiftless Gloria instructs the driver to 'go over to Broadway...' where they happen upon the 'Marathon' cabaret. (ibid) Once inside, Gloria settles in among the flibbertigibbet socialites, the 'careless violins', the 'casualness of the cabaret performers', and the 'colloquial carelessness and familiarity of the waiters.' (69) 'I belong here', Gloria ironically murmurs, adding: 'I'm like these people.' (70) Later, Anthony, temporarily animated by Gloria's bird-like spirit, suggests that they 'take a taxi and ride around a bit!'²⁴⁵ (95) Later still, as another sign of Gloria's penchant for the ephemeral and the transitory, she is juxtaposed with the 'newest and most beautiful designs in automobiles...out on Fifth Avenue...' (116)

Gloria's restlessness is further reinforced through her inability to settle on a home. Friend Richard Caramel observes the shiftless instability of the couple and makes numerous suggestions as to where they might dwell, proposing, among other possibilities, upper New York. But Gloria protests with the ironic words:

'Too cold...I was there once in an automobile.'

(156)

The couple's condition is finally and unequivocally asserted by their purchase of a 'cheap but sparkling new roadster', a machine in which

they are to search for a dwelling. (158) En-route they drive to towns sprinkled along Post Road, north of New York, and visit various acquaintances, 'mostly Gloria's, who all seemed to be in different stages of having babies...' (167) However, these home makers bore Gloria to a point of nervous distraction and so they drive on - ostensibly in search of a place of their own. Significantly, they pass a farmer, who, it transpires, they have already passed a dozen times before. He sits in his wagon 'in silent and malignant symbolism.' (173) An archetypal rural American who has long since put down roots, he is contemptuous of the couple's senseless backwardsing and forwardsing. Not long after this, and in what is one of Fitzgerald's most striking images of lives lacking direction, Gloria swings the roadster off the highway and drives down a rather doubtful side street. She aims, of course, to assert her agency by leaving the predetermined line (the main road follows train tracks) but in so abandoning convention goes off the rails completely and ends up nowhere: 'Its macadam became gravel, then dirt...scarred with deepening ruts and insidious shoulders of stone... .' (160) By the end of the second book of *The Beautiful and Damned*, the chronic nature of the couple's rootlessness cannot be doubted. Anthony and Gloria are now domiciled at the Ritz, a hotel which is a veritable monument to the transitory life styles of the wealthy.

However, the restlessness of American culture is highlighted nowhere better than in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* where the novel's numerous references to transport technologies (hydroplane, motor-boats, sail-boats, yachts, commuter and intercontinental trains, ferry-boat, barge, ocean liners, trolleys, motor-cycle, taxis, public cars, and, particularly, motor-cars), highlight the homeless consciousness of its characters.²⁴⁶ *Gatsby* is full of references to restlessness. The word 'restless' itself works as a motif in the novel (it is used eight times) whilst water and sea images complement the impression of insouciance and flux. In the third chapter, for instance, Fitzgerald develops an extended sea metaphor to describe the movements of the pitiful aristocrats who invade Gatsby's lawns. Among the words used here are: 'floating', 'spilled', 'tipped', 'dissolve', 'sea-change', 'swirls', and 'eddies'. (42-43) However, as noted above, it is the automobile that

contributes most to the impression of restlessness that informs the text, a fact observed, though only in passing, by a number of commentators.

For example, Robert Long's analysis of *Gatsby* includes the scantily developed but nonetheless useful observation that through the motor-car Fitzgerald 'contributes to an impression of externalisation, of lives without internal direction...' (Long: 145) The motor-car, then, is an eminently suitable icon for those in states of 'continually disappointed anticipation'; for those 'in sheer nervous dread of the moment itself.' (Fitzgerald: *GG*: 17) To this end, it may be observed that a good number of the characters in *Gatsby* have names that are predicated on the automobile - or at least on the idea of travel. Like Charles Dickens and T. S. Eliot then, F. Scott Fitzgerald exhibits what Marius Bewley calls 'a remarkable clairvoyance in seizing on the cultural implications of proper names.' (Bewley in Lockridge: 43) It is no accident, therefore, that the shiftless, restless narrator, Nick Carraway, has the words 'car' and 'away' at the root of his name. Actually, the name 'Carraway' has a range of associations apposite to the notion of drifting. 'Caraway' is an airborne seed whilst a 'carrack' is a fifteenth or sixteenth century merchantman galleon. A 'caravel', moreover, is the name of another trading vessel - this time from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The sailing associations are tenable given *Gatsby's* extended sea imagery and the fact that Nick comes to New York to make a fast dollar trading in the bond market. Finally, the word 'carrefour', though rarely used, means 'crossroads' whilst 'Carraway' also suggests 'caravan', the 'residence' of the homeless.

Of course, Carraway's 'old Dodge' bespeaks, as do all automobiles, a certain restlessness. A self-confessed drifter, Nick drives north-west to make his fortune in the bond business and welcomes the 'constant flicker of men and women and machines' since they satisfy 'the restless eye.' (57) These words 'constant flicker', which so completely suggest agitation and transience, are repeated in the fourth chapter when Nick observes vehicles moving over the Queenboro Bridge. Indeed, we may often find Nick 'on the road', or in a carriage, or on commuter trains. (9) He certainly sees himself as a 'pathfinder' and 'guide' and identifies strongly with the fast-moving

world of motion pictures. (43) Nick's background also highlights the appropriateness of the automobile as a sign of his consciousness. A graduate of New Haven, he participated in the 'Teutonic migration' known as the Great War and 'came back restless'. (9) He then shifted from the Midwest to the east where he proposed, ironically, but appropriately, to live in 'a commuting town'. (ibid) Significant too, is the fact that Nick is a renter, and not an owner - not that those who 'own' in Fitzgerald's world can be said to truly dwell. However, perhaps the most pertinent assessment of Nick is that he is himself one of 'the pursued, the pursuing, the busy, and the tired' that he speaks of to Jordan as they ride through Central Park in a victoria coach. (77)

Jordan Baker, of course, is the novel's ultimate drifter - as her name implies. Alluding to 'Jordan Playboy' and 'Baker Electric' automobiles, her name also echoes the make Studebaker, a mid to up-market motor-car of the era. Fitzgerald may have had in mind this company's famous and luxurious open-topped touring 'Big Six' of 1920. Motoring columnist and automobile aficionado, Tad Burness, refers to this machine as 'a 126-inch wheelbase model stacked [with] such features as a jewelled 8-day clock, hand-buffed leather upholstery,...a glove box and extension light in the tonneau'; all very fitting to the sybaritic Jordan Baker who is expressly identified with the open car. (Burness: 230) In addition, 'Baker' may refer to the luxurious Baker Fastex upholstery used in up-market American motor-cars during the twenties. Returning briefly to the matter of Jordan's identification with the open car though, it should be observed that the very architecture of the sports-car suggests emptiness and therefore may allude, albeit obliquely, to the moral vacuousness of those who drive such vehicles. This would certainly apply to Lawrence's Hilda, Forster's Charles and Henry Wilcox (and Nancy Derek), and Fitzgerald's Amory Blaine, Anthony Patch, Gloria Patch, Daisy Buchanan, and Jordan Baker.

Indeed, the motoring connection is critical to our reading of the character of Jordan Baker, a young lady who, despite giving the impression that she is secure and settled, dreads the prospect of stasis; never wishing to be 'stalled.' (117) Jordan's 'hard and jaunty' body, which seems to take its cues from automobile architecture, is,

moreover, said to assert itself with 'restless movement'. (23) Of course, Jordan's restlessness is also emblematised by her penchant for driving from destination to destination without staying anywhere for more than a few months. Among other locales, she has been to Asheville, Hot Springs, Palm Beach, Warwick, Hempstead, and Southampton. (147) She is said to move listlessly 'between hotels and clubs and private houses...' and Tom paternalistically complains that '[t]hey oughtn't let her run around the country...' (147, 23) In addition, the shifting, wandering consciousness of Jordan Baker is symbolised by her declared proclivity for simply riding around. In chapter seven, for example, she tells Nick to go on; that she is hot and will 'ride around and meet [him] after.' (119)

But the automobile also underscores Jordan's chronic sociopathy, a condition in which a person is: gregarious, restless, mendacious, careless or irresponsible with the property of others, generally unattached, and unmindful of hurtful or even violent behaviour.²⁴⁷ A sociopath, moreover, will commonly exhibit several identities or quite contradictory personality traits. Whilst Jordan's engaging but superficial personality is openly apparent and her wanderings well foregrounded, she also cheats at golf, leaves the top of a borrowed cabriolet down and then lies about it (Fitzgerald puns on the golfing phrase 'bad lie' to emphasise the transparency of her dishonesty), drives terribly (in other people's vehicles), and fails to connect meaningfully with any character except Nick. Her disregard for the feelings of others is also manifested in her callous rumour-mongering, her eavesdropping, and, most importantly, in her cavalier behaviour on the road. Of course, she also pivots between two identities: the apparent and the real. First of all, in chapter one, and in what is more than a casual allusion to her trick on the settee, Nick calls Jordan a 'balancing girl'.²⁴⁸ (20) Furthermore, the very name 'Jordan' is valid for both sexes and thus reinforces her somewhat androgynous appearance. In addition, we have seen too how the name Jordan Baker echoes that of both the conservative Baker Electric automobile and the more sporty and aggressive Jordan Playboy.²⁴⁹ So Jordan, like Gatsby himself, is a performer: at one level an inauthentic, dangerous charlatan and at another a being who is, after all, 'all right'.

Daisy Buchanan's name does not in any way interface with the phenomenon of automobility. Indeed, she gives every outward appearance of being settled. For example, she tells Nick that the move she and Tom make to West Egg is 'permanent'. (11) Moreover, she and Jordan contemporaneously plead immobility in chapter eight: 'We can't move', they say. (ibid) Indeed, when Nick meets them in the novel's first chapter he is struck by their static appearance on the sofa, but even here it is 'as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house.' (13) The characteristic flightiness and insouciance of Daisy is more profoundly, but also more obliquely, emblematised by the motor-car - especially when she takes the wheel of Gatsby's machine with its cruel, wing-like fenders.²⁵⁰ Her psychic agitation is also highlighted by the 'turbulent emotions' that Nick sees possessing her and by her claim to have 'been everywhere'. (21, 22) Moreover, Daisy's rootlessness is underscored through her relationship with her husband, Tom, another being who is, as we have already seen, defined by his automobile and aggressive driving habits. For instance, she and Tom honeymoon for three months as they drift through the South Seas. They spend at least one Spring in Cannes and some time in Deauville and Kapiolani but return to the United States where they 'drift here and there unrestfully'. (11) Their Georgian mansion, which is itself a testament to deracinated culture, is said to 'float' on the sound and their marriage is considered to be an accident. Of course, Tom too is restless. Like Gatsby himself, he yearns for the past and has the words 'restless' or 'restlessly' applied to him several times in the novel. Significantly, he hails from Chicago, but comes East having spent a year in France 'for no particular reason.' (11) Whilst Tom's belligerent, pugnacious nature and identity as a take-over man are underscored through the automobile then, so too is his restiveness.

Myrtle Wilson's inconstancy is also suggested by the automobile.²⁵¹ Like Gatsby's, Myrtle's whole being strains toward new (though strictly worldly) horizons. A vital and vivacious woman, she is cruelly trapped inside her worn out husband's broken dream and seeks a better life. Ironically the generic 'automobile' that has imprisoned her in a mean garage for eleven years eventually turns up promising to deliver her to greener pastures. Doubly ironic, then, is that the motor-car will destroy her. Yet, as has been hinted in the first section of this

thesis, the death-car betokens the very 'otherness' that she so yearns for. To this extent, and it is a theme that will be developed later, one cannot dispose of *Gatsby* (or any other novel discussed) simply through a consideration of classical binary oppositions. Myrtle's restlessness is, after all, an expression of her desire to cling to something and someone else.

Less complex, however, is Myrtle's sister, Catherine - also one of the novel's homeless figures. Whilst giving additional expression to the theme of sexual anarchy that periodically erupts through the narrative, Catherine, who is said to live 'with a girl friend', is of no fixed abode. (32) As she resides 'at a hotel', she is to be numbered among the profoundly deracinated beings in *Gatsby*. (ibid) Meyer Wolfsheim is another of these uprooted figures. A notional Jew, Wolfsheim is an archetypal wanderer whilst Klipspringer too foregrounds the idea of cultural displacement and homelessness. The young Greek, Michaelis, is another being who is removed from his original milieu, his rootlessness further reinforced by the fact that he runs 'one of those all-night coffee joints' which, in the twenties, sprang up all over America to service the needs of a migrant, motorised population.²⁵² As further testimony to the restlessness of the American people, there is also that last, pathetic, guest who arrives at Gatsby's mansion having 'been away at the ends of the earth.' (171) Finally, since it also suggests Fitzgerald's theme of inauthenticity through homelessness, the nomenclature of the guests who arrive at Gatsby's party merits close attention. Many of these agitated, unsettled figures take their names from automobiles, or associated phenomena.

There are, first of all, the Chromes (who, like so many of the characters in *Gatsby*, present a shiny facade to the world), the Hornbeams (loud and prying), and Eckhaust Cohen (who is presumably full of hot air). Then there is Mrs Ulysses Swett (whose aristocratic double-barrel surname, satirically undercut by its anticlimactic second part, suggests the global wanderer of Classical literature), the Baedeker girls (named after the famous travel guide), Mr Sloane (his namesake Alfred Sloane of General Motors), Gulick (for which we may read Buick - the US automobile manufacturer), the Backhyssons (redolent of backfiring), P. Jewett (after the popular American automobile of the

twenties called the Jewett, and, perhaps, the European Jowett motor-car - which was imported into the United States), and, finally, the Dennickers (suggestive of the Dennis automobile company). Even 'Rot-gut Ferret', whose name is not emblematic of automobility or the culture of transit, having been 'cleaned out' at cards, wanders disconsolately in Gatsby's garden deeply concerned that 'Associated Traction' should 'fluctuate profitably [the] next day.' (61)

That this mock-epic catalogue of guests reads like a celebration of chaos, misrule, and disfiguration is no accident. Whilst two of the guests have been killed or maimed by transit technologies, and therefore highlight the fact that identification with the technological can hurt us physically, all epitomise emotional instability and psychic restlessness. Moreover, that their names are fading out on an ageing train time-table is very significant since the guests themselves are shallow nomads who are also languishing away to nothing. These characters, then, many of whom find their way to Gatsby's house in automobiles and trains, are morally bankrupt and rootless representatives of modern America. In a sense, they have a modern disease from which not even the magnificent owner of the mansion is immune.

Gatsby's classically inspired residence is described as 'an elaborate road-house' by Nick. (63) Elsewhere, it is said to be reminiscent of a French hotel and certainly the hero's many guests treat it as such. However, road-house or hotel, the emphasis is on transitoriness; not on dwelling. Gatsby's misplaced mansion then is a monument to the hero's pecuniary achievements, his social aspirations, his deracination, and his restless consciousness; a consciousness attuned to another world in which poor ghosts 'drift...about.'²⁵³ (154) With respect to these latter points, every aspect of the property's architecture speaks of other eras and of elsewhere, its vast, haunting rooms and wide, empty hallways communicating the inner emptiness of its owner. So, in the fourth chapter Gatsby confesses to 'drift[ing] here and there' and we learn too that he has circumnavigated the American continent with that other restless visionary and explorer, Dan Cody.²⁵⁴ We also learn that Gatsby fought in the Great War, that he studied for a time at Oxford, and that he spent some time wandering Europe. It is

significant, then, that in Gatsby's library Owl Eyes finds a copy of *The Stoddard Lectures*, one of the few volumes that is cut.²⁵⁵ Also significant are Gatsby's personal nervous habits which suggest profound inner tensions and restiveness. For example, he is 'never quite still; there [is] always a tapping foot somewhere or the impatient opening and closing of a hand.' (63) At the point of the meeting with Daisy, moreover, Nick notes that 'Gatsby's foot beat[s] a short, restless tattoo...' (122)

However, Gatsby's restlessness is most completely foregrounded through transit technologies - including Daisy's white roadster, his own hydroplane, his yellow station wagon, and, finally, his 'gorgeous' Rolls Royce.²⁵⁶ Whilst something is made of the fact that Gatsby and Daisy go to 'out-of-the-way places' in her white car, Fitzgerald is at pains to highlight the profundity of the hero's association with his Rolls-Royce and so, in the fourth chapter, Gatsby is to be seen delicately balanced on the dashboard of his machine 'with that resourcefulness of movement that is so peculiarly American...' (145, 62) Bearing in mind the multiple images and illusions that the Rolls-Royce yields up, the automobile reflects perfectly the fact that it is impossible to form a single, stable impression of the hero. One of the more subtle but poignant reminders of this is in the seventh chapter when Tom looks around at assembled guests to see if they 'mirror' his disbelief of Gatsby's Oxford story. Given Fitzgerald's faculty for employing associative diction we should refer to Nick's memorable description of Gatsby's car in which its 'labyrinth of windshields' are said to '...[mirror] a dozen suns.'²⁵⁷ (63) Fitzgerald's point is that people are disingenuous; as with the Chromes, all we are offered are surface images - never an authentic revelation of being. Of course, the careful, classical pose that Gatsby strikes on the dashboard of his car communicates just such a feigned identity.

So, in *The Great Gatsby*, the motor-car foregrounds compromised connections – particularly those between beings and those between people and the land. However, in combination with a cleaving to the technological, it is the severing of this second connection that contributes most fundamentally to the loss of an authentic consciousness. So it may be said that, since he does not

dwelling, Gatsby has no earthly identity. At one level, then, the hero's motor-car emblematises the profound restiveness that makes it impossible for people to form a stable impression of him. However, as has been suggested earlier and as is implied in the word 'earthly', the motor-car also bespeaks those other, spiritual horizons to which Gatsby's being is steered. Therefore, whilst the hero may be condemned as one who offers to the world at large no authentic mode of self-revealing, Nick's final assessment of him is correct since it is in the 'silver pepper of the stars' and in the world of dreams that Gatsby has his true identity. However, whilst we will come later to the matter of resistance to the technological, it is, at this juncture, germane to reinforce that modern writers commonly foreground the automobile as a sign of the technical order and all that it implies: publicness, and a mechanistic, thoroughly deracinated consciousness.

Outpacing ourselves

The epigraph to this chapter, taken, as always, from Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, foregrounds two major themes: the cultural deracination already dealt with, and the idea that whilst allowing us to access other places, the automobile paradoxically prevents us from connecting with them at a most fundamental level. Modern technical accomplishments, then, have made possible conquests over both time and space that the Victorians, for example, never thought possible.²⁵⁸ However, as we will see later, the automobile may well take us into the garden, but such is the speed of the machine that we cannot actually apprehend the countryside. Lewis Mumford refers to this as a 'miscarriage of modern technics' and notes that at the bottom of such a travesty is 'the notion that power and speed are desirable for their own sake, and that the latest type of fast-moving vehicle must replace every other form of transportation.' (*CH*: 507) Ellul adds that the repressed individual believes that he has found meaning in what is ultimately meaningless. 'Modern man', he writes, 'expresses his will to power in records that he has not established himself.' (*Ellul*: 303)

However, not only do we lose out in terms of failing to connect with place; we fall victim, as well, to a trick. As Forster's Kuno perceives, 'we have annihilated not space, but the sense thereof.' (SS: 133) 'Distances', as the protagonist of Forster's *The Longest Journey* tells us, 'still exist'. (299) Yet even T. E. Lawrence was beguiled by the illusion: '...petrol makes light of the deserts, and space is shrinking to-day, when we travel one hundred miles an hour instead of five.' (OA: 89) In defence of Lawrence though, it must be said that the increase in speeds between 1825 and 1925 was such that one could not help but be caught up in the excitement. In 1825 itself, the first steam locomotive mustered a top speed of thirteen miles an hour whilst by 1880 a steam-car achieved one hundred miles an hour. By 1930, however, that speed was quadrupled. With respect to street legal motor-cars, achievable speeds rose from some twelve miles an hour in 1885 to about one hundred miles an hour in 1925. When Forster published *Howards End* in 1910, larger cars were commonly capable of seventy-five miles an hour.

As suggested above, these increases in performance were to have significant consequences. In the first of a two-part paper for *Playboy*, Alvin Tofler observes that 'the accelerating rate of man-made change may already be the most stable fact of human existence...'²⁵⁹ (FS: 94) This, he argues, poses a fundamental question: 'Does man the organism possess the adaptability to survive the traumatic consequences?' (ibid) 'What is inevitable', continues Tofler, 'is culture shock: the queasy physical and mental state produced in an unprepared person who is suddenly immersed in an alien culture.' (ibid) Further into his seminal sociological exegesis he concludes: 'we are biological organisms with only so much resilience; only a limited ability to absorb the psychological and mental punishment inherent in change.' (FS: 97) In a subsequent essay, '**Coping with Future Shock**', Tofler considers the phenomenon of the 'wound up man' in which we encounter distressing images of beings in severe states of distress, bewilderment, and anxiety. (Tofler: CFS: 89)

In *Steppenwolf*, Herman Hesse writes that: 'Human life is reduced to real suffering, to hell, only when two ages, two cultures and religions overlap.' (Hesse: 28) He goes on to say that 'there are times

when a whole generation is caught in this way between two ages, between two modes of life and thus loses the feeling for itself...' (ibid) This 'tragic doubleness', noted too by Leo Marx, is something that Henry Adams was equally conscious of, his essay '**The Virgin and the Dynamo**' effectively a story of a life tragically altered by technology.²⁶⁰ Stephen Spender expressed the same concern. 'The art of the past', he writes, 'is attached to traditions, values, symbols, objects, nature, which had, until modern times, a relative stability. Modern art moves within a world which, in all these respects, is shifting.' (Spender: 143)

Whilst Spender, rather naïvely, employed the locomotive as a sign of the times, for Hesse and for Adams the motor-car became a potent symbol of the new accelerative thrust; an emblem of an increasing tempo that so many were to find disorientating. As noted earlier, Wolfgang Sachs seizes on the automobile as a symbol of the age as well. Like Hesse, Sachs is aware that in the first part of the twentieth century there occurred a momentous collision between different modes of temporality - what Sachs calls 'a sharp perceptual contrast between the age of the automobile and the era of the horse, and between the experience of individual mobility and reliance on the railroad.' (Sachs: 7) Whilst Sachs' *For Love of the Automobile* is a strictly cultural study, the author does acknowledge that artists sought to express what was to be one of the most significant cultural clashes of the century. Of course, we have seen that writers of the First Machine Age, who experienced something broadly similar, sought to represent the new rhythms of technology in their poetry and prose as well.

Dickens' *Dombey and Son*, for example, admirably conveys the new sensations of speed afforded by the locomotive. Dombey himself is disturbed by the experience of the train ride and the rhythm of the Dickens' language bespeaks rising acceleration and increased pace: 'Away with a shriek, and a roar, and a rattle...flashing out into the meadows for a moment...ever flying...' (*D&S*: 280) From the train, a nauseated Dombey receives fleeting impressions only.²⁶¹ As in E. M. Forster's fictions, nothing stays in view long enough to be absorbed and reflected on. For Dickens as for Forster then, when characters climb into the machine, it is often in the hope of making a visual connection

with what is passed by. But they are cheated: the machine hurries on, driven by those with a timetable to keep or a blind desire to simply move on.²⁶²

The narratives of hurry: Forster & Fitzgerald

It has been determined already that modern life is fast, and that those caught between the age of the motor-car and the relative *ennui* of the late Victorian period often had difficulty accepting the haste of the technological society. Whilst Bernard Shaw applauded acceleration, Forster's Rickie bemoans 'the modern spirit': the 'excrescence' of towns; the 'hurrying'. (*LJ*: 299 - 300) Although there are no motor-cars in *The Longest Journey*, Rickie's reaction to modern life nonetheless signifies the direction that Forster was to take in his later novels – and particularly in *Howards End* where the automobile erupts through the narrative as an emblem of cultural disorientation. We have seen that on the way to the Wilcox estate (in Henry Wilcox's motor-car), Margaret Schlegel observes that '[i]t is impossible to see modern life steadily and see it whole...' (165) Later, on a motor-drive through Hertfordshire to Hilton, Margaret muses that a modern world which needs detailed examination does nothing to facilitate such focus and concentration: 'Perhaps Hertfordshire is scarcely intended for motorists. Did not a gentleman once motor so quickly through Westmorland that he missed it? And if Westmorland can be missed it will fare ill for a country whose delicate structure particularly needs the attentive eye.'²⁶³ (198)

Reflecting that Hertfordshire is England at its quietest and most contemplative, Margaret imagines that if Drayton were alive he would write a new edition of '*Polyolbion*', lamenting that the nymphs of Hertfordshire were 'indeterminate of feature, with hair obfuscated by the London smoke.'²⁶⁴ (198) We do well to remember that all this takes place in the context of a motor-journey and that whilst the chauffeur is frustrated by the heavy traffic of the Great North Road he is still moving 'quite quick enough for Margaret...who [has] chickens and children on the brain.' (ibid) Indeed, her sense of disorientation is as profound as Henry Wilcox's confidence. Whilst for Margaret the

landscape merges and congeals, for Henry the sensation of speed is merely a sign of an advancing civilisation; an index of technological mastery: 'The motor's come to stay...one must get about', he says, just prior to reprimanding his fiancée's lack of attentiveness to the passing scenery. (ibid) On another leg of their journey, to Howards End itself, Margaret loses 'all sense of space' and it is not until she is free of the machine that her focus returns and she can see the earth again: 'Then the car turned away, and it was as if a curtain had risen.' (199, 200)

Interestingly, at Howards End, Margaret 'recapture[s] the sense of space which the motor-car had tried to rob from her.' (201) Here, where she is to put down roots and dwell '[s]he remember[s] again that ten square miles are not ten times as wonderful as one square mile, that a thousand square miles are not practically the same as heaven.' (ibid) She remembers too the 'phantom of bigness' that her father had warned against and forgets 'the luggage and the motor-cars, and the hurrying men who know so much and connect so little.' (204) We may see the same idea represented in D. H. Lawrence's fiction which argues that technology, whilst promising us in one sense a greater connection with the land, in fact robs us of any potential relationship with it. In *The Rainbow*, for example, Ursula Brangwen's motor rides with Anton Skrebensky defamiliarises the local milieu she knows so well: 'She saw the familiar country racing by. But now, it was no familiar country, it was wonderland.'²⁶⁵ (305) Like Margaret, Ursula wants to get out of the automobile and enjoy the land directly, but the machine appears to imprison her: 'Ah, if only she and Skrebensky could get out, dismount into this enchanted land...But she was here with him in the car..' (305)

Finally, with reference to *Howards End*, on his way home from the Schlegel's residence, Leonard Bast turns into the ironically named Camelia Road and sees 'cheap blocks of flats...old houses being demolished - bricks and mortar rising and falling...[the] whole panorama of urban decay and renewal.' (59) A disturbed Bast is observing 'the architecture of hurry', as Margaret Schlegel later puts it. (116) As we will see, and as the word 'hurry' itself suggests, Forster was aware that the motor-car had a significant impact on urban development and that it therefore made its own contribution to the severance and dislocation of communities. He believed too, that the

concomitant loss of houses was tragic since it is in dwelling that people have their Being. This point is of central significance to *Howards End* the place and *Howards End* the novel and so, when the narrator laments the spiritual bankruptcy of the Schlegel's ground-landlord whose 'motor-cars grow swifter [and whose] exposures of socialism [grow] more trenchant', we may make the connections that Forster encourages us to make in the novel's epigraph and see that the commercial drive is no substitute for home. (155)

Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned* are relatively slow-moving narratives. However, they literally speed up when journeys are undertaken in the motor-car. The former novel begins with a tedious ride in Beatrice's Blaine's embarrassing electric and concludes, in a section appropriately entitled 'Going Faster', with a swift ride West in an open tourer. The ponderous crawl of the outdated electric and a preference for train travel are signs of Beatrice's Victorian consciousness whilst the sleek limousines and racers that Amory rides symbolise her son's twentieth century sensibility. 'Modern life', declares Amory, whilst speeding Westward, 'changes no longer century by century, but year by year, ten times faster than it ever has before -...'. (SP: 261) In this novel, then, whilst there is no sense of disorientation, there is nonetheless a recognition that the tempo of the modern world is far faster than that of the old. In *The Beautiful and Damned* there is again no sense of nausea but once again Fitzgerald foregrounds the clash between different modes of temporality. One of the many reasons for the failure of Anthony and Gloria's marriage, then, is that the former's consciousness is attuned to the medieval era whilst Gloria prefers the bustle of modern life.

We may observe the same conflict in *The Great Gatsby* where it is Jordan who runs in time with the rhythm of the new age whilst the more cautious Nick prefers to take things more slowly. Of course, Gatsby himself lives at an extraordinary pace, and Nick observes that following his life is 'like skimming hastily through a dozen magazines.' (65) Finally, whilst the novel does not promote any particular feeling of disorientation on the part of motorists or passengers (save for Nick's implied queasiness when Jordan is driving), the many references to rapid transit technologies in the novel and the emphasis on time

passing, including Gatsby's nervous glances at his watch, reinforce the new zeitgeist.

The machine in the garden

It is noted above that when the motor-car enters the garden, we ironically lose the ability to appreciate nature. However, as Forster, Fitzgerald, D. H. Lawrence, Kenneth Grahame, and others tell us, something much worse happens: the garden itself gets damaged – or completely destroyed. It is an idea that finds embryonic expression in Elizabethan literature and which turns into a major theme of the Victorian, Romantic, and Modern eras. We begin with Shakespeare. *The Tempest* may be taken as something of a prologue to both English and American literatures of cultural criticism in that the idealised landscape of the new world is still populated with the likes of Caliban, Antonio, and Sebastian whose plebeian and mechanistic consciousness rides rough-shod over the finer sensibilities of everyone else. As Leo Marx points out in his seminal book, *The Machine in the Garden*, at the very least *The Tempest* checks our susceptibility to pastoral idealism.

Moving forward to the Romantic era, whilst Tench Coxe, in his 1791 '**Report on Manufactures**', argues that mechanisation is merely an extension of power already latent in the environment, and so 'belong[s] there,' others formed a quite different view. (Coxe in L. Marx: *MG*: 158) Just as Shakespeare's *Tempest* may be considered something of a prologue to the literature of cultural criticism then, William Blake's 'And was Jerusalem builded here / Among these dark Satanic Mills' may be regarded as being representative of an entire sub-genre that treated the machine as the implacable enemy of the natural and sacramental worlds.²⁶⁶ This idea that the machine is an unwelcome intruder on natural settings is picked up forcefully by John Ruskin, who, in his *Art and the Machine*, argues that technology is inimical to nature. He writes that when the machine enters the great garden of the world that the land is 'blighted utterly into a field of ashes.'²⁶⁷ (Ruskin in Sussman: 92) Moreover, in his lecture '**Modern Manufacture and Design**' delivered on the first of March 1859, Ruskin said: 'For our

own England, she will not, I believe, be beasted throughout with furnaces...I trust she will keep her green fields, her cottages...' (Ruskin: 127)

As naïve as that wish now seems, it is a vision cleaved to still – although art has increasingly been used as a vehicle not to celebrate the beauty of the natural world but to protest, and express horror at, the invasion of the garden by the machine. Of course, a literature of protest grew up too and in America, where the presence of technology was keenly felt, Mark Twain took up his pen to show the world the effects of mechanisation in America's garden. As in England, the earlier optimism of de Tocqueville, Emerson, Whitman, and Timothy Walker was replaced with uncompromising visions of technology that had gone out of control. In Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, then, the tranquillity of a river trip, during which Huck and his companion contemplate the cosmos, is shattered by a pounding steam engine that breaks up the lads' raft:

'We could hear her pounding along... All of a sudden she bulged out, big and scary, with a long row of wide-open furnace doors shining like red-hot teeth, and her monstrous bows and guards hanging right over us...she come smashing straight through the raft.'

(Twain: 309)

Similarly, Frank Norris's 1901 novel *The Octopus* contains a graphic description of a steam train smashing through a herd of sheep. Of course, whilst the steam engine was a leading symbol of the post eighteenth century industrial order, its successor, the motor-car, inevitably emerges as the enemy of nature in the twentieth century.

The corollary of mass automobilism is mass penetrability, and the corollary of mass penetrability is mass destruction of the environment. Whilst the despoliation of the environment is obvious to us today, tyre carcasses, pieces of broken car, food-wrappings, drink bottles, flattened remains of animals, neon signs, and billboards were already littering landscapes between 1910 and 1925. Not only this, but tourist cabins, roadside coffee shops, garages, second-hand car lots, and auto dump-yards were springing up too. Moreover, as commerce ironically chased after the automobile, roadside signs got bigger (and more garish) whilst curbs began to sprout hand-cranked gasoline pumps to fuel the ever increasing number of machines on European and American roads.

On top of all this, automobiles using the roads that dissected rural milieux threw up staggering amounts of dust – more than enough to match the smoky, highly toxic emissions from their exhaust systems, where fitted of course. Finally, then, the peace and tranquillity of country life was rudely shattered by the often horrendous noise of unsilenced machines, by backfiring, by the groaning of horns, by the roar of cylinders, by the hiss of acetylene lamps and steam, and by blow-outs. Little wonder that artists like photographer Jacques-Henri Lartigue despaired of ‘countries ruined by progress.’ (Lartigue in Naylor: 583) Of course, Lartigue was not alone in voicing his concern. However, before examining the machine in the garden theme as it is represented in Forster and Fitzgerald’s fictions generally, it is germane to foreground three quite specific nuisances that troubled a good many commentators. They are: dust, noise, and the visual pollution of roadside signage.

A highway to hell

During the mid nineteenth century, the condition of major European roads improved greatly as engineers came to appreciate that a good transit system consisted of ‘a well-drained, compacted sub-grade (to support the traffic load) and a coarser wearing surface of small stones.’ (EB: 26: 321: 1b) However, country roads everywhere remained virtually impassable through to about 1910. James Flink

records that even by the 1920s, ninety percent of roads in the United States were unsurfaced, muddy tracks that were impassable for much of the year.²⁶⁸ Most other roads, in England and America, were, as noted above, macadamised. However, since they pot-holed easily, these macadam roads were the bane of the cyclist's life and it was they, more than autoists, who called for road-mix to be used. But mixed aggregate and bitumen was not employed until the late nineteen-twenties and, as automobiles got heavier, the macadam surfaces cut up very quickly indeed. As a consequence, motor-cars often showered pedestrians with stones and kicked up alarming amounts of dust.

An English doctor's 1902 notebook suggests that the problem was very considerable. 'On my country rounds, I am often choked by the awful dust from the roads,' he writes. (in Thie: 37) A year later, in 'The Graphic' of 25 April 1903, and under the rather uncompromising sub-heading 'Selfishness', the magazine's new motoring columnist writes: 'It is quite as easy to pass a carriage on a dusty road at a moderate speed as to race past and smother the occupants.' (539) Whilst dust was a common cause of complaint to the police, Anthony Bird cites the case of an infamous sergeant who found it quite useful. In 1905, he contrived to trap a car he could not even see for the dust it was displacing: 'Rather than timing the vehicle itself, he actually timed the dust cloud behind it.' (Bird: *RV*: 211) In 1906, as we have seen, Rudolf Diesel fondly recalled how he roared through a village, smothering residents in veritable layers of dust. By 1908, the roading situation was little better and so, in *The Wind in the Willows*, Kenneth Grahame writes: 'the...motor-car...flung up an enveloping cloud of dust'. (26) As all readers of the story know, it is such a thick cloud that the trio of Ratty, Mole, and the Toad are 'utterly enwrapped' by it. (ibid)

Other writers, too, sought to foreground the nuisance of dust in their texts. In *Man and Superman*, for example, Tanner observes that Straker is covered in two inches of dust and in *The Seven Pillars*, T. E. Lawrence writes of the streets of Damascus being watered 'to lay [down] the terrible dust of three war years' lorry traffic.' (685) In Hesse's *Steppenwolf*, moreover, placards express the hope that 'the grass may grow again, and [that] woods, meadows, heather, stream, and

moor [may] return to this world of dust and concrete.’ (210) But it is in E. M. Forster’s *Howards End* that the scourge is most prominently highlighted. At the beginning of the novel, Mrs Munt gets dust blown into her eyes (ironically she is not seeing things the way they really are with respect to Paul Wilcox’s brief relationship with her niece Helen) and Charles turns around to survey, with some satisfaction, the enormous cloud of dust his father’s car has kicked up: ‘It was settling again, but not all into the road from which he had taken it. Some of it had percolated through the open windows, some had whitened the roses and gooseberries of the wayside gardens, while a certain proportion had entered the lungs of the villagers.’ (32-33)

Whilst Charles’ comment, ‘I wonder when they’ll learn wisdom and tar the roads’ reflects a contemporary reality, it also underscores the fact that he accepts no responsibility whatever for either the environment or the people who live in it. (33) It is little wonder, then, that Margaret sees the Wilcoxes as ‘[c]onquering heroes’ who have ‘swept into the valley and swept out of it, leaving a little dust and a little money behind.’ (246) In finalising her judgement, she labels them ‘a dust, and a stink, and a cosmopolitan chatter...’ (ibid) Of course, the references to dust suggest a blindness on the part of the Wilcox men; one that is far worse than Aunt Juley’s. As with Ronny and Adela of *A Passage*, Charles and his father remain tragically blind to spiritual realities.²⁶⁹ Moreover, the dust signifies death in that, in cleaving to technology, the Wilcox men have forgotten what it is to truly live.

In *A Passage* itself, then, road dust is also foregrounded as a cultural phenomenon but here too it is a sign of blindness, indeterminability, and death. At the scene of the Marabar Road accident, for instance, Adela and Ronny ‘muddle about in the dust’ looking for answers when, in fact, there are none. (87) As we will see later, the entire incident foreshadows the chaos of the caves and bespeaks the muddle of India generally. However, the road dust is also a correlate of death in that Ronny, like Henry and Charles Wilcox, has embraced technique to the cost of his authentic self. In this respect, Ronny’s scratching about highlights the degree to which he is a lost soul.²⁷⁰

F. Scott Fitzgerald also employs dust as a pervasive symbol. In *The Great Gatsby*, for instance, the 'green breast of the new world' is replaced by the Valley of Ashes, an industrial dumping ground over which 'spasms of bleak dust...drift...' (26) Moreover, the dusty road that winds through Fitzgerald's waste land replaces the dull canal of Eliot's poem and classical mythology and on it Myrtle Wilson will be ferried into the underworld, her 'thick dark blood' symbolically mingling 'with the dust.' (131) Ironically, Myrtle's agency is extinguished in the very place from which she wished to escape, and so the dusty highway and the garage become a depressing intersection of degradation and death. Myrtle's attempt to literally drive out of a personal nightmare and so recapture the spirit of romance that she and her husband once enjoyed ends in her being 'all run down'; destroyed by the very technology that promised to liberate her from drudgery. The dust and the ashes then, are poignant reminders of mortality as much as they signpost the industrial nightmare of the twentieth century.

This road-dust-death metaphor is extended when the shadowy George Wilson is described as an 'ashen figure'. (27) Whilst the image identifies the man with his depressing milieu, it also confirms his symbolic role as one of the living dead in the waste land. Of course, the low-key entrepreneur's dreams have quite literally turned to dust as well - his broken agency symbolised by the dusty, smashed-up body of a plebeian car. Gatsby's own dreams, moreover, are corrupted by the 'foul dust' of our earthly consciousness. (8) By way of confirmation of the metaphor's central significance, and in anticipation of the calamity to come as well, Gatsby's Rolls-Royce, driven by Tom, 'slides to a dusty stop' outside Wilson's garage. (117) Nor may we ignore the 'inexplicable amount of dust' that lies in Gatsby's 'musty' house the day after Myrtle is killed. (140) Whilst reinforcing the tragic circumstance's of Myrtle's death, this detail surely anticipates Gatsby's own demise as well. Finally, as in Forster's fiction, dust in *The Great Gatsby* represents blindness and deception. At one point, in a reference to Gatsby's capacity to enchant, Tom cynically says that the hero 'threw dust' into both Nick's and Daisy's eyes. (169) Ironically, though, it is Tom who is blind for he does not even glimpse the possibilities that the hero sees.

Objectionable noises

‘**Coach and Sedan**’, a privately printed pamphlet of the year 1636, features a debate between two modes of conveyance: horse-drawn wheeled coaches that were introduced to English streets around 1580 and the older sedan chairs that were carried and propelled by two men. The paper opens with a foreword announcing its theme: ‘Man...can neither sleepe or studie for the clattering of coaches...’ (Coach & Sedan: A2) The pamphlet proper begins:

I love Sedans, cause they doe plod
And amble every where,
Which prancers are with leather shod,
And neere disturb the eare.
Heigh downe, dery, dery downe,
With the hackney coaches downe!
Their jumpings make
The pavement shake,
Their noyse doth mad the towne.

(Coach and Sedan: ii)

Complaints against coaches and coach culture were still being registered in 1859 when Arthur Schopenhauer wrote: ‘The most inexcusable and disgraceful of all noises is the cracking of whips - a truly infernal thing when it is done in the narrow resounding streets of a town. I denounce it as making a peaceful life impossible; it puts an end to all quiet thought’. (Schopenhauer in Schneider: 354) Elsewhere, Schopenhauer complained of the sound of stage-coach horns, the rumble and rattle of steel wheel inserts, the stamping of horse hooves, and the stench of horse manure.

The point is this: that every new form of conveyance has its critics and had the writer of ‘**Coach and Sedan**’ and Schopenhauer been confronted with the motor-car, they would have very quickly turned their attentions to it – and with more justification since the early automobiles were *very* noisy. The first cars were often unsilenced,

making use of only straight pieces of exhaust pipe. Furthermore, they idled at comparatively high revs and were also prone to backfiring. Moreover, because the early pneumatic tyres were unreliable, alarming blow-outs were common. Evidence of the sometimes terrifying engine noise of such automobiles may be found in Sidney Olsen's *Young Henry Ford*, where the writer, who knew the man personally, remembers an encounter with the manufacturer's model 999 of 1902: 'I have an idea he was afraid of his machine; to tell the truth, I was frightened myself.' (Olson: 33) The model 999 was indeed fearsome. It had four huge in-line cylinders which produced a terrible roar - 'loud enough', Ford said, 'to kill a man.' (Lacey: 63)

In William Carlos Williams' *The Great American Novel*, the crash and roar of exhausts and the fortissimo shriek of siren whistles replaces the surging romance of Wagner. Whilst the Futurists and Stravinsky assimilated the sounds of urban frenzy into their work, Williams was appalled and in the same novel declares: 'It is not our signal.' (177) Virginia Woolf was also horrified by the automobile and in *Mrs Dalloway*, makes the observation that motor-cars rob the cities of a peace that they might otherwise enjoy. She foregrounds the idea by repeatedly returning to images of marauding traffic which is said to 'hum' perpetually. (29) And in what is one of Woolf's more sardonic criticisms writes, from Clarissa's point of view: 'It was strange; it was still. Not a sound was to be heard above the traffic.' (33) Of course, at the very start of the novel, a motor-car back-fires as well and Miss Pym, who is strategically located in Mulberry's flower shop, cries out in fright. The moment is critical, for two reasons. First of all, Miss Pym's reaction is symptomatic of one who is, as Hesse says, caught between two eras, and second, the narrative details confirm just how alien the machine is to the garden.

E. M. Forster's fiction also foregrounds the throb and roar of engines.²⁷¹ In 'The Eternal Moment', Miss Raby's connection with Signora Cantu, a woman who is expressly identified with the nineteenth century, is broken by the uproar of a passing motor-car. Significantly, the meeting takes place at the Hotel Biscione, a mountain retreat hitherto protected from the onslaught of the twentieth century. In *Howards End*, Mrs Munt, another figure whose consciousness is

essentially Victorian, secures ‘a comfortable seat (on a train), facing the engine, but not too near it...’ (27) And of course, there is that extraordinary scene early in the novel when Charles Wilcox stands up in the ‘throbbing, stinking car’ which he leaves idling in the sanctuary of his mother’s garden. Indeed, the differences between the men and women of the novel are suggested by the industrial forms associated with the former and the romantic or natural phenomena connected with the latter. As we have seen, the motor-car is the symbol of the Wilcox males whilst the house, garden, and romantic music are major emblems for the text’s women. It is, then, a significant, but often missed, detail that we are urged to admit that ‘Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated into the ear of man.’ (44) Whilst the males of *Howards End* can only hear the pulse of modern technics then, it is appropriate that the Schlegel sisters identify closely with the work of the greatest musical romantic.

In *A Passage to India*, Forster does not focus on automobile noise to any significant extent, but it is worth noting that the Nawab Bahadur’s motor-car makes a comic and decidedly out-of-place ‘burring’ sound as it rushes past an Indian landscape too big to take in. (85) As always, Forster’s attitude here seems to be one of contempt for the machine – especially when it enters the garden. In Fitzgerald’s fiction, however, the emphasis on automobile noise is rather different in that through it the author foregrounds a profoundly shallow agency or a certain lugubriousness. It has already been noted, for instance, that the car-horns of competing lovers in ‘**Bernice Bobs Her Hair**’ suggest a crude sort of sexual agency, whilst in *The Beautiful and Damned*, Parker Allison’s ‘noisy’ racing car implies something similar (363) Turning now to Fitzgerald’s employment of automotive sounds to suggest sadness, in the same novel we cannot help but be affected by the ‘fretful clatter’ of a taxi as it moves away from an increasingly isolated and marginalised Anthony Patch. (379) In *Gatsby*, of course, car horns communicate just the same sort of emotion although they also imply a profound restlessness. However, and as often, we begin with Kenneth Grahame.

In *The Wind in the Willows*, the ‘double note of warning’ is a prelude to disaster. (161) In *The Great Gatsby*, car horns are also used

as a foreshadowing device, but Fitzgerald is subtle in his employment of them. For example, the impatient and incessant ‘groaning’ of horns which finally reaches a ‘caterwauling crescendo’ outside Gatsby’s house contributes substantially to the impression of chaos from which Fitzgerald’s hero stands aloof, and therefore highlights his alienated, spectatorial stance. (55-56) At another level, of course, the cacophony signifies the urge of a restless culture to move on - regardless of any impediment. Naturally, Gatsby’s car also symbolises this blind optimism as it gives out ‘a burst of melody from its three-noted horn’. (62) However, like the Toad’s, Gatsby’s horn also signifies the calamity yet to occur and stands in stark contrast to the rather more sombre tune played in chapter eight when Nick fills in the details of the hero’s betrayal.

Here, in the novel’s watershed chapter, the ‘wailing saxophones’ and ‘sad horns’ that so clearly symbolise the twilight of the hero’s relationship with Daisy also portend the other incommunicable sorrows to come. The mood of depression and the sense of foreboding is heightened by Fitzgerald’s subtle allusions to Eliot’s ‘**The Waste Land**’ as well. Certainly, the reference to ‘the grey tea hour’ adds a sombre air whilst the ‘throbbing rooms’ echoes Eliot’s ‘throbbing taxi’ and therefore encourages us, in retrospect anyway, to make the connection to Gatsby’s car. (144) Penultimately, because it alludes obliquely to ‘**The Waste Land**’ as well, the onomatopoeic ‘jug-jug-spat’ of the policeman’s motor-cycle contributes to the novel’s theme of moral degradation. (66) Whilst it is a sordid story of sexual conquest that is told to ‘dirty ears’ in Eliot’s poem, Gatsby tells a tale of his own to the officer and so evades a fine. Finally, the echoing reverberation of the fog-horn that opens the novel’s eighth chapter is poignant not just because it parodies the last post and parallels the repetitive groaning of Wilson, but also because notions of blindness and an attendant loss of navigability are reinforced. Indeed, since its incessant groaning listlessly echoes the caterwauling car horns of the third chapter, the mournful sound of the fog-horn acts as a cruel but well-placed reminder of the result of our impatience and carelessness.

Signage and advertising

The advertising industry boomed in the nineteen-twenties. There were two main reasons for this: the commodification of the image in Hollywood and the advent of mass motoring. In his '**The Automobile Age**', James Flink finds that during the twenties 'the automobile industry became one of the heaviest users of magazine [and] newspaper space...' (191) 'Expenditures for automobile advertising in magazines alone,' he writes, 'climbed from \$3.5 million in 1921 to \$6.2 million in 1923 and \$9.269 million in 1927.' (ibid) He notes that over the same period there was no concomitant rise in household spending power. Of course, as Flink observes, automobile manufacturers and dealers were buying advertising in media other than magazines, and the roadside hoarding quickly became a popular way to promote one's product.

Hoardings and roadside signage are a direct corollary of motor technology, and they ruin the view. Writers of the period 1910 to 1925 noticed this. In D. H. Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent*, for example, a large advertisement for motor-car tyres greets visitors to an idyllic Sayula landscape. For Lawrence, the billboard is a stark reminder that the 'machine of the world' has entered the garden. (96) In *Howards End*, Forster also passes judgement on the culture of advertising when Juley Munt feels ironically sickened by the 'advertisements [for] anti-bilious pills'. (29) Whilst it is not absolutely clear whether a general statement is being made here or whether Forster has in mind a particular sign, since Mrs Munt is on a train at the time and is thinking about the Great North Road that runs parallel to the railway, it is reasonable to suppose that Forster has a certain roadside or track-side hoarding in mind. Of course, he is also passing judgement on a society that forces medicines on its people so that they might cope with a quickened pace of life.

In Fitzgerald's fiction, a number of references are made to signs, hoardings, and advertisements. It is in *The Great Gatsby*, of course, that we find literature's most famous advertisement: the massive

billboard of defunct oculist Dr. T. J. Eckleburg. Sitting high above Fitzgerald's waste land, the fading hoarding, which is observable by all, is an obtrusive and more or less permanent reminder of the result of our commercial drives and of the facelessness of capitalism. The 'persistent stare', moreover, reinforces the permanence of the commercial spirit. (26) It is significant too that Wilson confuses the eyes of Eckleburg with the eyes of God in that the billboard confirms that the spiritual world has been superseded by the material world. Furthermore, the whole area over which the hoarding presides is no longer the garden of Eden but a land dominated by the cultural wreckage of capitalism.

With further reference to *The Great Gatsby*, given the hero's wealth, it is surely not surprising that he surrounds himself with the fashionable and flamboyant commodities that contemporary advertising was so vigorously promoting. To this extent, we must see Gatsby as a product of his time. However, it is important to bear in mind that he seeks transcendence. Ironically, the idea of transcendence itself is a major appeal made by the advertising industry, and so whilst Gatsby's life is filled with those commodities, such as his magnificent motor-car, that promise more ease, more leisure, and more luxury, his desire to rise above it all paradoxically reinforces the fact that he remains, to some extent anyway, a product of the market place. Moreover, the hero's insistence that he can fix things the way they were before owes much to the culture created by mass-marketers who try to sell dreams as much as they do goods and services. After all, Daisy even tells Gatsby that he 'resemble[s] the advertisement of the man.' (114)

Elsewhere in the novel, Myrtle tells Nick how she once had to keep her eyes off Tom by 'looking at [an] advertisement' symbolically placed 'over his head'. (38) Like Gatsby, then, Tom is a product of popular culture and Fitzgerald is at pains to identify him as such. A shallow man, Tom reads popular literature, espouses populist ideology, and treats people as commodities. Moreover, as his identification with the advertisement suggests, he is driven by the spirit of competition – a fact that is borne out by his behaviour on the road. Finally, it has already been noted that Jordan Baker's identity is also informed by the advertising industry. Through these three figures, then, Fitzgerald

seeks to foreground the idea that the spirit of commerce has corrupted (with respect to Jordan and Gatsby) or replaced (with respect to Tom) human feeling.

The only other significant reference to advertising in Fitzgerald's pre *Gatsby* fictions is the neon Marathon Club sign in *The Beautiful and Damned*. Designed to attract and lure approaching pedestrians and motorists, the sign is one of the novel's most potent symbols: 'A dozen blocks down Broadway, Anthony's eyes were caught by a large and unfamiliar electric sign spelling 'Marathon' in glorious yellow script, adorned with electrical leaves and flowers that alternately vanished and beamed upon the wet and glistening street.' (67) Foregrounded twice in the novel, the sign actually has three main levels of significance. First, the idea of the marathon suggests a long and arduous journey – such as the one undertaken by the hero and his wife Gloria. Of course, the connotations are not pleasant since the marathon runner, should he complete the race at all, is customarily shattered – a fact consistent with Fitzgerald's desire to have his couple ruined on the shoals of dissipation. Second, the sign points to a contest for space and place, and third, its electric foliage highlights the fact that the garden has been banished from the urban milieu. All that is left is a grotesque neon parody.

Motoring in paradise

Now that we have detailed representations of three major nuisances, we may turn our attention to the way in which Forster, Fitzgerald, and others foreground the 'motor-car in the garden' theme generally. We remember that Henri Lartigue, who was one of the first photographers to criticise the automobile through the lens of his camera, regarded the machine as a wrecker of paradise.²⁷² We remember too that Swiss architect Le Corbusier once celebrated the machine, but in his *L'Urbanisme (The City of Tomorrow)* he says that the motor-car has caused a madness. 'I think back twenty years....the road belonged to us then,' he writes adding that: 'We sang in it, we argued in it, while the horse-bus flowed softly by.' (in Berman: 166) Lartigue, then, was by no means alone in his condemnation of the

automobile and whilst *The Wind in the Willows* was probably the first fiction to consider the assault that the motor-car makes on the environment, Forster's *Howard's End* was probably the second. Certainly, it is the first English novel to explore the theme in such depth.

When the machine enters Forster's shires, the garden always suffers. Whilst we have seen already how Forster foregrounds the scourge of dust, the disturbance of automotive noise, and the visual pollution of signage, he is concerned too to detail further examples of the machine's destruction of the environment.²⁷³ In passing over the two years after Ruth Wilcox's death, for instance, the narrator of *Howards End* writes of the vicissitudes of urban renewal and the pernicious effects of the motor-car: 'This famous building had arisen, that was doomed. Today Whitehall had been transformed; it would be the turn of Regent Street tomorrow! And month by month the roads smelt more strongly of petrol, and were more difficult to cross, and human beings heard each other speak with greater difficulty, breathed less of the air, and saw less of the sky. Nature withdrew:...the sun shone through dirt with an admired obscurity.' (115) Of course, the conclusion of the novel has a profound warning. From the garden at Howards End, Helen observes that 'London's creeping.' (329)

Moreover, as Juley Munt speeds northwards by train on her way to confront Paul Wilcox, she passes a veritable Eden; a landscape untainted by the machine: 'untroubled meadows and the dreamy flow of Tewin Water.' (29) For a little while, then, it seems to her that the Great North Road, which from time to time runs parallel to the railway track, promises a sleepy sense of the infinite. However, she ultimately concludes that it actually bespeaks 'such life as is conferred by the stench of motor-cars...' (ibid) So, for Juley Munt, the machine ruins the natural world and in chapter thirty-four, when Henry Wilcox's automobile runs over a bed of wall flowers, Forster's theme finds its most uncompromising expression. (281) In order to drive home his point though, Forster has Henry speak of having to '[mess] away with a garage all among the wych-elm roots...' (ibid) The wych-elm is, of course, Forster's primary symbol of the *hortus* - the object with which, apart from the house itself, Mrs Wilcox is most thoroughly connected.

So, by wishing the tree away in favour of a garage, Henry unconsciously defiles both the memory of his late wife and the spirit of the garden. It is pertinent, then, that at the end of the novel, when she is in the process of leaving Henry, Margaret sits with him on a scrap of grass by the roadside. It is observed that '[t]he Great North Road should have been bordered all its length with glebe', but that 'Henry's kind had filched most of it.'²⁷⁴ (324)

In *A Passage to India*, Forster describes Chandrapore as 'a city of gardens...a forest sparsely scattered with huts...a tropical pleasaunce washed by a noble river.' (9) Indeed, the only thing to compromise the beauty of the milieu are the 'mean' streets that criss-cross their way through it. (ibid) We may see the same thing in Scott Fitzgerald's *Gatsby* where the hero's beautiful lawns are bisected by a grey, gravel driveway. Indeed, the mechanical invasion of Gatsby's symbolic gardens by the cars that are parked five deep in his drive makes 'a breach in nature' at least as significant as that caused by the dozens of guests who leave their litter all over his lawns. (Bewley in Bloom: 16) It may be seen as part of the magic of the novel that, after each party, Gatsby's gardeners sweep in to make things the way they were before. It is an important detail, then, that early in the novel Nick sits on an abandoned lawn roller since it anticipates the 'letting go' of the hero's servants. Clearly, the illusion of order in the garden cannot be maintained.

Flushing Meadow is the greatest paradise to be laid to waste in *Gatsby*. Accordingly, it is presented as a 'fantastic farm' that grows not greenery but 'grotesque gardens' of ashes. (26) Moreover, the transport technologies that are there represented contribute to, and are products of, the waste land. Fitzgerald's Valley of Ashes (read 'Valley of Death'), then, is an uncompromising vision of what happens when the machine enters the garden.²⁷⁵ In his essay 'Two Versions of the Hero', David Parker explores the profound relationship between Browning's '**Childe Rowland to the Dark Tower Came**' and Fitzgerald's Flushing Meadow. His analysis provides a useful starting point for our consideration of Fitzgerald's valley since in both texts machines maraud through barren lands. In '**Childe**', a fear-stricken narrator asks 'what bad use was that bad engine for...' as it turns its way

through a 'grey plain', its terrible 'wheel' rumbling on toward nemesis. (Browning: st. xxiv: 57) In *The Great Gatsby* we find a parallel expression of what Parker calls 'the squalor and destructiveness of industrial civilisation.' (Parker in Bloom: 33) In Fitzgerald's barren land, 'a line of grey cars crawls along an invisible track, [giving] out a ghastly creak' and the road that runs through Flushing Meadow, past ash heaps which are the legacy of modern industrialism, replaces Browning's stream and the sweaty river of Eliot's own waste land.²⁷⁶

As noted above, the various transport technologies, including motor-cars, represented in Fitzgerald's waste land are simultaneously, products and transmitters of modern technicism. They are metaphorical creations of Fitzgerald's valley, and they bring death - not only to the landscape - but to the people in it. We have seen already how the megamachine has invaded the consciousness of the 'ash-grey men' of Flushing Meadow. It is inevitable that such a psychological death must have its physical confirmation, and so Myrtle Wilson is mowed down on a dusty road by one of the modern world's greatest testaments to industrial sophistication: the Rolls-Royce. 'All these things', writes David Parker, 'point towards the malignity of the contemporary environment... .' (Parker in Bloom: 33) In summary, then, it might be said that the 'fresh green breast of the new world' that 'flowered once for Dutch Sailors' eyes' has become, in our time, a desert inhabited by a killing-machine in the form of the motor-car. (Fitzgerald: *GG*: 171)

We encounter the same notion in D. H. Lawrence's fiction. In *The Plumed Serpent*, for instance, the automobile is represented as an alien invader of the garden; an incongruity: 'The car went on, the great lights glaring unnaturally upon the hedges of cactus and mesquite and palo blanco trees, and upon great pools of water in the road.' (286) In the story 'St. Mawr', moreover, the car is also represented as an unwelcome, incongruous invader when it 'wade[s] past...flowers' (673) And in *The Trespasser*, Helena says that the 'tearing along of...taxis and the charge of a great motor-bus' is 'painful' and 'not [to] be endured near any wonderland.' (124) In *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, D. H. Lawrence's namesake, Colonel T. E. Lawrence, feels 'guilty at introducing the throbbing car, and its trim crew of khaki-clad northerners' to the remoteness of the Mejaber Springs - a milieu he

calls a 'most hidden legendary place... .' (559) Although the colonel's triumph is now complete (we remember from an earlier chapter that he has just caught the Turks in disarray and overrun their station) the automobile which he previously praised so fulsomely here becomes the unwelcome invader of the garden. Certainly, the gloss is thus taken off Lawrence's victory and it seems to him that humankind is destined to destroy all that it conquers.

As one, final, example of this theme in modern literature we may turn to Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. But, first, a brief note on Shaw. In examining the influence of various composers on G. B. Shaw's *Man and Superman*, Richard Corballis suggests that the dramatist puns on the title of Bizet's famous work *Carmen*.²⁷⁷ There are, after all, several car men in the play and the word 'car', rather than 'motor-car', did come into popular usage in England just before the turn of the twentieth century. We might force a similar pun out of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* where 'car-nations', among other things, symbolise the inner life and pastoral idealism, whilst motor-cars, among other technologies, emblematises the outer life and the machinations of the socio-political world. Whether or not the pun was intended remains moot point, but without a doubt Woolf foregrounds the automobile as the destroyer of the garden in her novel.

We have already noted the effect on Miss Pym when a machine backfires near the flower shop (although Clarissa's private euphoria is similarly shattered) and it is significant too that the blinds of the Prime Minister's car shut out the garden thus emblematising the inner blindness of those beings who forsake the natural world. Of course, Septimus Smith's more sensitive disposition is suggested by his connection with nature, but his reveries about geraniums and grass stalks are destroyed by the roaring of the swooping aeroplane and the raucous blasts of motor-horns.²⁷⁸ Moreover, Septimus' desire for beauty and permanence, signified by his reflections on Keats' odes, is undone by the fact that traffic marauds noisily, and rapidly, around the statue of Queen Victoria outside Buckingham Palace where he is walking at the time.

Be careful washerwoman!

As discussed earlier, fast driving confirms a certain transitory agency – but it also compromises our appreciation of the natural world, telescoping it into mere ‘environment’. Slow driving, however, betokens something almost as destructive. We have seen that the motor-car can communicate servitude to a conservative set of values, but this aspect of publicness is also foregrounded in driving style. The heading for this section comes, of course, from that famous episode in Kenneth Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows* where Toad, having just escaped from prison, takes the wheel of the automobile that landed him in so much trouble in the first place. Whilst Toad’s aggressive, adventurous driving style foregrounds his panache then, the gentleman’s stern warning highlights a more cautious approach to life. Although Grahame was probably the first writer in English to see that driving style is an index of personality, both Forster and Fitzgerald foreground slow driving as a sign of emotional and cognitive conservatism.

In Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paradise*, the mother of Amory Blaine drives an ‘ancient electric, one of the early types’. (28) Her choice of automobile and her driving style together symbolise a deep-seated conservatism. She drives her seriously out-dated, dull-grey machine at two miles an hour and beseeches her impatient son to act as a sentinel, even making him alight from the car in order to forewarn other traffic of her imminent arrival at a cross-roads.²⁷⁹ The narrator then writes Beatrice Blaine off with the cruel label ‘careful driver’, a universal metaphor for a stultifying predictability, conservatism, and dullness. (29) Not surprisingly then, the woman’s over-cautious character brings about her financial downfall. Recognising, albeit with regret, the nation’s drive to adopt the automobile, Beatrice Blaine gets it wrong and invests in street-car companies - by then the purveyors of redundant technology who were doing all they could to resist the wholesale shift in demand to the private motor-car.

In Fitzgerald's second novel, *The Beautiful and Damned*, hero Anthony Patch appears to love the pace and excitement of modern life. However, he is out of place. His literary and historical predilections in fact lie with the Middle Ages and any recklessness of spirit finds its feeble and embarrassing expression in a bus ride back to his 'reproachless apartment.' (17) Ironically then, Anthony is alienated by the very culture with which he seeks to connect. In poignant illustration of this fact, on his way home from an evening of light theatre, Anthony encounters the bustle of New York: 'the soft rush of taxis...the rumble of subways...the revolutions of light...' and turns, 'thankfully down the hush...of a cross street.' (31) Even the Chariot Race sign that glares at him in Times Square hints at a 'gruelling contest for space' and leaves the hero unnerved and anxious to retreat from the real world. (Long: 49)

Yet Antony's problem is that he must seek to impress the demanding and effervescent Gloria: 'to pose...to stir...' (63) Early in the novel, therefore, Fitzgerald seems to be saying that Anthony predicates his being on inauthentic modalities rather than on anything stable and enduring and that the hero's flight from the world signifies a desire for a unified sensibility. However, rather than thoroughly and consistently reinforcing the romantic and organic aspects of Anthony's consciousness (which might well have preserved reader interest in him as a suffering individual) Fitzgerald instead inclines to Gloria's perspective and so undercuts his hero by typecasting him as an ineffably cautious and utterly spoiled being of profoundly limited horizons.²⁸⁰

Clearly, therefore, Anthony's relationship with the effervescent and vivacious (but facile) Gloria cannot last. Too late she reviews the signs that she should have read more carefully before marrying Anthony. The first thing she thinks of, in hindsight, is his cowardice on the road:

'...his warning to a taxi-driver against fast driving...'

(143)

In confirmation of this belated intuition, on their way out of New York, and in language that is highly reminiscent of the gentleman's cautioning words to Toad in *The Wind in the Willows*, Gloria is admonished by Anthony for driving too quickly:

Remember now!' he warned her nervously,
'the man said we oughtn't go over twenty
miles an hour for the first five thousand
miles.'

(159)

Such caution becomes the hallmark of Anthony's personality. As the narrator points out: 'That afternoon the car joined the laundry-bags' as Anthony warns Gloria of 'railroad-tracks' and points out 'approaching automobiles...' (159) It is not long before his frustrated wife is complaining that the car, like her husband, is old in spirit and quite incapable of a stirring performance. Indeed, toward the end of the novel's second book, we are told explicitly that 'Anthony Patch [has] ceased to be an individual of mental adventure, of curiosity, and [has] become an individual of bias and prejudice, with a longing to be emotionally undisturbed.' (252) Rather than being cast as the disaffected wanderer then, Anthony is rather foregrounded as a man whose sense of adventure is exhausted almost before it is engaged. As his reaction to automobility suggests, he is enslaved by fears and doubts and by a social pedigree that demands a cautious approach to life.

There are few cautious drivers in *The Great Gatsby*. Indeed, there is only one: Nick Carraway. As noted earlier, Nick's choice of a Dodge motor-car seems to echo his generally conservative approach to life and certainly his reaction to Jordan Baker's reckless manoeuvres underscores this trait. In a scene which foreshadows the running down of Myrtle Wilson, Jordan clips the buttons of a man's coat as she forces her drop-head coupe into a tight bend in the road. But whilst Nick's subsequent admonishment of her as a 'careless driver' is quite reasonable in itself, it ironically reinforces the fact that his voyeuristic approach to life and relationships also makes *him* a dangerous person to know; that he too is careless, irresponsible, and unattached; that he too smashes up peoples lives and leaves others to do the cleaning up. Of

course, Nick's spinelessness is also manifest in chapter seven when he slows down 'to avoid overtaking [Tom].' (169)

Like Fitzgerald's, E. M. Forster's writing places an emphasis on bad, rather than good, driving. In fact, there are no profoundly conservative drivers in either his short or long fictions. However, Forster certainly foregrounds conservative attitudes to the driving of others. The most notable example of this is in *Howards End* when Margaret Schlegel votes with her feet, as it were, and jumps out of a moving vehicle. Whilst the full symbolic significance of her resistance to motoring will be addressed later, for now we observe that the action implies an identification with the old, relatively non-mobile world. Of course, there is also Juley Munt's reaction to Charles Wilcox's reckless driving to consider. Like Margaret, Aunt Juley prefers the more leisurely pace of the old world and is terrified by the lurching, hissing automobile as it weaves its way from the railway station to Howards End. In fact, Aunt Juley is one of Forster's key representatives of the early twentieth century anti-machine faction – a position made plain not just by her reaction to motor-cars but by her preference to sit some distance from the engine of the train at the beginning of the novel. So, whilst Fitzgerald's fictions tend to condemn those like Anthony Patch who are enslaved to their conservatism (and whose transport preferences confirm such a disposition), Forster's sympathies lie with such characters.

This chapter has considered the various ways in which these writers show that technology may ensnare and enslave people. We have seen, for example, how the motor-car makes of us economic slaves and how, because of mass-production, we are forced to bend the knee to the commodity rather than to artifice. We have seen too how the motor-car comes to signify and promote public consciousness and how dependence on the machine turns us into serfs of the twentieth century's rational order. More particularly, we have examined how the technological (for which the automobile is a principal sign in modern fiction) may rob us of authentic identity. We have also seen how the motor-car emblematises our servitude to the relentless pulse of modern technics in that we no longer dwell. Finally, we have seen how a conservative attitude to driving, as it is represented in literature, may

signify servitude to a bland and homogenous set of cultural values. Truly then, the motor-car, which at the very start of the twentieth century promised to set us free, was, by 1908, regarded as an emblem of servitude. No longer, therefore, was the machine taken at face value. Now, critics of culture were divining the motor-car's implicit meanings, seeing it not merely as a sign of servitude, but as a breaker of social and emotional connections.

Broken Connections

A careful inspection showed that...the cart would travel no longer. The axles were in a hopeless state, and the missing wheel was shattered into pieces.

Kenneth Grahame - *The Wind in the Willows*

Some introductory bits and pieces

In his epigraph to *Howards End*, E. M. Forster urges us to 'Only connect'. However, his novel is full of beings who 'connect nothing with nothing'.²⁸¹ Forster's plea is germane to modern fiction generally in that the modern world, as it is represented in such texts, appears to be utterly fragmented. It has, for example, already been shown that humanity's perverse identification with the technological has cost us our connection with both artifice (original work) and the land. We have seen too how servitude to the technical daemon breaks down even the most fundamental assumptions about our being in that, until the First Machine Age, we lived by the Protagorean dictum: 'Man is the measure of all things'. However, with the Second Machine Age came the certain knowledge that it was the machine that did the measuring and that man was destined to merely obey its rhythms.

Modern fiction, then, also highlights the breakdown of our agency value as independent functionaries: no longer, it asserts, may we be said to be prime movers. Moreover, modern writers acknowledge that our relationship with the technological severs other crucial linkages. Sexual and gender connections, for example, may thus be

broken as might those between divergent cultures. Also subject to disintegration through our relationship with technique is our aboriginal identity, our connection with the moral milieu, our social connections, and even our agency as commercial operators. Finally, modern writers are also concerned to show that our marriage to the machine compromises our faculty to envision and that it breaks important community bonds. Given the unreliability of the early motor-cars, which often broke down due to poor construction and 'trivial defects like choked carburettors or broken electrical connections,' it was inevitable that the automobile was taken by authors as their principal emblem of a society that was falling apart; as a metaphor for social disintegration and emotional crack-up.²⁸² (Bird and Hollows: 25)

Shattered linkages: Forster's novels

In *Howards End*, and in what is certainly part of an extended motoring metaphor in the novel, the connection between the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes is seen as 'accidental'; a 'collision' of momentous consequence. (39) Such diction, then, undoubtedly anticipates the eventual wreckage of Henry's relationship with Margaret. Of course, Charles foresees the 'horrible smash-up' between his father and Margaret and it is therefore all the more significant that when the final altercation comes that it should take place on the side of a road.²⁸³ Of course, Forster uses the motor-car to signify other breakdowns too – including Henry's emotional crisis at the narrative's conclusion when he declares that he is 'broken'. (324) Moreover, the failure of the Wilcox men to connect with the emotional significance of place is foregrounded by their proclivity for machinery. Indeed, the general insensitivity of Charles and his father is emblematised through the automobile. For instance, that Henry may have killed someone on the road is less important than that they are 'insured against third-party risks' and when a child's pet is later run down, Charles merely proclaims that '[t]he insurance company [will] see to that.' (97, 212)

Nonetheless, it is when Henry and Charles learn that Mrs Wilcox has left Howards End to Margaret, that their blindness and their mechanistic, calculating natures are most clearly manifest.²⁸⁴ First, they cite the dubious legalities of her will in order to deny Miss

Schlegel the residence. Led by Charles and Henry, the Wilcox family then systematically attack the 'problem' of Ruth's letter in the most mechanical manner possible. In so doing, they of course aim to diminish the emotive simplicity of the woman's last wish and therefore distance themselves from all sense of moral obligation. Finally, in callously assessing the value of improvements to Howards End (the garage is noted) they demonstrate nothing but their complete inability to see the estate as 'a spirit, for which [Mrs Wilcox] sought a spiritual heir.' (107) At this point in the narrative, then, it is plain that the Wilcox men know the price of everything and the value of nothing; that they are exponents of the calculating frame of mind.

However, it is in Forster's *A Passage to India* that the motor-car most clearly symbolises the idea of things falling apart. Whilst portending the muddle of the Marabar (the novel's motor accident takes place on the Marabar Road), the chaos of the trial, the resultant cultural collision between Europeans and Indians, and the break-up of Aziz and Fielding's entente, the automobile also signals the inevitable 'breaking' of Ronny's relationship with Adela - a connection that Ronny makes later when he says that their relationship is the product of mischance; that 'they would never have achieved betrothal but for the accident to the Nawab Bahadur's car.'²⁸⁵ (92, 251)

Moreover, with reference to the worsening relations between the Indians and the English, Fielding has a premonition of 'a most awful smash'. (198) He refers, of course, to the imminent cultural collision between Indians and the machinery of the British Raj - a calamity that is also anticipated by that motor-wreck on the Marabar Road.²⁸⁶ Whilst, at a narrative level, they are both the result of mischance, significant parallels may be found between events surrounding the motor crash and the Marabar incident that brings underlying cultural tensions to a head. Indeed, the carefully crafted paralleling is reinforced in a number of ways. First, Ronny Heaslop tells the Nawab's chauffeur to take the ill-fated Marabar Road (instead of the Gangavita) whilst Mrs Moore encourages Aziz and Adela to pursue the mysteries of the caves independently. Second, the 'wandering' tyre tracks of the motor-car anticipate both the 'this way and that' turning of the train on its climb through the Marabar ranges and the snake-like

tracks on the Kawa Dol. In fact, Adela herself makes a connection between the tyre imprints and the double row of footholds on the Kawa Doll's rocky neck.

Third, the Nawab Bahadur's 'disproportionate and ridiculous' reaction to the crash is mirrored by Adela's own emotional excesses at the caves. (86) Fourth, in both incidents, an 'external force' appears to impinge. (87) The Nawab believes his car to have been attacked by the 'unspeakable' form of a ghost - that of the man his machine had run down years earlier - whilst the Marabar hills themselves suggest an 'unspeakable' spirit. (96, 123) Fifth, mystery surrounds the cause of each crisis and in both cases an exhaustive search is made for concrete evidence. Sixth, in both accidents a motor-car (Miss Derek's) arrives at the scene to bear the Europeans away *Deus ex machina*.²⁸⁷ Seventh, the connection is further reinforced in that whilst the Nawab's car is certainly assaulted by something, Nancy Derek's machine only narrowly misses being struck by rocks which tumble down the Kawa Doll - and of course there is the implied connection between the former incident and the 'attack' on Miss Quested herself.

Eight, the facilitator of each expedition is left stranded alone: the Eurasian chauffeur at the scene of the motor accident and Dr Aziz at the caves. Nine, and it is a typically subtle Forsterian detail, the narrator informs us that Adela's excited physical activity around the crashed automobile on the Marabar Road suggests that she herself 'attacked' the machine. (87) When considered along with the other parallels, the connection between the disaster on the road and the 'attack' at the caves is complete and Ronny's recollection of events serves only to amplify this. And so, finally, with reference to both calamities, he speaks of people losing their heads.

The catastrophe on the Marabar Road also foreshadows the abortive court case. It is a link made clear by Forster's carefully worded description of the trial's breakdown and disintegration. Looking at the faces in the court room, Adela thinks of 'the wreckage of her silly attempt to see India.' (214) McBryde, despairing that the gears of the prosecution case have been irremediably thrown, looks at her 'as if she was a broken machine' and the framework of the court is

similarly said to '[break] up.' (224) Dr Panna Lal, who had sought to win favour with the English by offering to testify for the prosecution, sees 'the crash coming sooner than most people' and when the case finally '[breaks] down' he surreptitiously slips from the court room to escape retribution. (229) We are later informed that the Marabar caves episode 'wrecked several careers... .' (230) Apart from affirming the interconnectivity of scenes, Forster's diction also reinforces the idea that the legal system itself is a machine which, like all technical devices, can break down with surprising results.

The whole episode, then, serves as a focal example of the negative powers of the judicial system. Ironically though, while the machinery of question and answer breaks down from the point of view of those who drive it (that is, the British), from the point of view of *justice* it works very well indeed since it leads Adela along the paths of truth. In a what seems to be a parody of the Indian mystical framework of question and answer, Adela is, in the adversarial environment of the court room, given the novel's most clearly transcendent vision. Certainly, it is much more so than Godbole's. But then, this is India: the land of mysteries. How fitting that understanding should come to a 'rational' European just when she is required to be at her mechanical best. And how ironic that her breakdown should be so disastrously misinterpreted by her people. Again, it is a paradox that is felicitously anticipated by events on the Marabar Road.

References to breakdown also signify the demise of Fielding's relationship with Aziz in that the two men who once spoke so easily are finally reduced to conversation that jumps 'from topic to topic in a broken-backed fashion.' (271) However it must be acknowledged that the particular (that is, the nature and pattern of the friendship) must finally be seen to mirror the general: the morphology and anti-colonial message of the text as a whole. Although Forster felicitously varies the intensity of narrative focus and explores tensions and oppositions, the fundamental impetus of *A Passage* is centrifugal. Hope of order and unity gives way to chaos and anarchy as the cultural machinery of the Raj, emblematised, among other things, by transport technologies, over-reaches itself.

In the face of the impersonal forces of colonialism then, the individual has as much chance as Forster's drunk Indian. And so the friendship cannot survive the powerful imperatives of culture: Aziz, insulted by the social requirements of the Raj and permanently maimed by its administrative and judicial machinery, must retreat to the solidarity offered by his people. In the end, Fielding does likewise. Finally, there are Indians and Englishmen, and that, Forster seems to be saying, is the way it must be until all the odious apparatus of colonial rule, if not its symbols, are annihilated.²⁸⁸ That the story ends with a focus on individuals, then, is not to assert the primacy of life over technical forces.

Disconnections: the fiction of Fitzgerald

Terry Eagleton's assertion that the fragmentary content of Eliot's '**The Waste Land**' '...mimes the experience of cultural disintegration', may be applied, with as much veracity, to Fitzgerald's fiction. (Eagleton: *ILF*: 148) In his *The Achieving of The Great Gatsby*, then, Robert Long writes that *This Side of Paradise* 'is like a kaleidoscope of glimpsed, glittering dreams that come apart... .' (Long: 17) However, apart from its death car – to be considered in depth later, there is only one machine that falls to pieces in the novel: the taxi that Dean Hollister's friends acquire. This, they disassemble - taking its parts up to Hollister's office where they put them back together again. The episode, of course, anticipates the more significant wreckage when Dick Humbird is run down. At a more whimsical level, however, the joke also foregrounds the idea of compromised agency since Hollister cannot work.

Whilst Fitzgerald's first novel was a serious enough attempt to present the condition of young Americans, his second was even more so. Certainly the iconography of *The Beautiful and Damned* is more sophisticated as the extended automobile imagery suggests. As always in Fitzgerald's fiction, the motor-car is here employed as a sign of cultural malaise and emotional breakdown. In considering two college friends who had become colourless, even in comparison to himself, then, Anthony Patch describes their condition in terms of 'broken and

obsolete machines' (55) His words are, of course, bitterly ironic as he will suffer a similar fate.

Prior to its eventual abandonment, Anthony and Gloria Patch have a number of accidents in their white roadster; accidents that bespeak the carelessness of youth. At one point, Gloria, having departed from the relative security of the high road, is forced to choose between two alternative approaches to a small town. She hesitates and 'making her choice too late, [drives] over a fire hydrant...[ripping] the transmission violently from the car.' (160) Like the intoxicated driver who runs into a ditch in *Gatsby*, Gloria cannot quite believe it: 'We broke down,' she says incredulously. (161) But the accident is the inevitable consequence of Gloria's reckless spontaneity and portends the emotional crisis between her and cautious husband Anthony.²⁸⁹ Despite the fact that they have the machine repaired then, by half way through the middle book, the roadster has deteriorated to a 'rattling mass of hypochondriachal metal... .' (207) In terms of the death of their relationship we might also draw attention to the taxi ride taken after their bitter row on a railway station platform:

'All the long ride, through the increasing dark of twilight, she sat huddled in her side of the car, her silence broken by an occasional dry and solitary sob.'

(180)

Writing of *The Beautiful and Damned*, Edmund Wilson complains that Fitzgerald's characters are destroyed 'with a succession of catastrophes so arbitrary that, beside them, the perversities of Hardy seem to be the working of natural laws.' (*SL*: 32-33) He observes that everything seems to fall to pieces: Gloria prematurely loses her beauty whilst her career and moral character break down; Richard Caramel, once a promising artist, sells out to popular culture; Anthony squanders his money, loses his connection with his family, and suffers humiliation on the street. Moreover, Wilson finds the novel to be merely an 'expression of revolt' and says that we are forced to conclude that the 'the most honourable course is to escape from organised society and

live only for the moment.’ (*SL*: 34) Whilst it is true that we are temporarily lifted by the sheer sense of abandonment exhibited by the protagonists, Wilson’s complaint that ‘the hero and heroine of this giddy book are creatures without method or purpose’ seems to miss the point - in that this *is* the point. (*ibid*: 34) In the end, Fitzgerald wants us to grow tired of these debauches - and so, through the dilapidated roadster, he seeks to foreground their utter rootlessness, their carelessness, and their selfishness. Moreover, he thereby aims to underscore the idea that when one lives one’s life this way, things will fall apart.

In his introduction to *Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Great Gatsby*, Ernest Lockridge writes that the novel is one in which ‘all connections have broken down.’²⁹⁰ (Lockridge: 9) In the same volume David Minter writes: ‘Behind Gatsby...is a history of dislocation and alienation...’ (Minter in Lockridge: 83) Of course, the pre-eminent (and governing) symbol of *The Great Gatsby* is the motor-car – a machine that finally comes to bespeak the cultural wreckage of America.²⁹¹ Given that pieces of car are foregrounded throughout the novel, and that it is responsible for terrible wreckage, the vehicle is emblematic of every broken connection otherwise highlighted by Fitzgerald. Early in the novel, for example, Nick notes that time seems to be fragmented. Moreover, there are broken cries; Wilson suffers a breakdown; ‘pulpless halves’ of lemons are left all over the hero’s garden; his lawns are ‘bisected’; his consciousness seems oddly dislocated from the cares of the temporal world; his life has to be pieced together; Tom Buchanan says that ‘[c]ivilisation’s going to pieces’; Jordan’s party is ‘rent asunder by dissension’; her connection with Nick is broken; Nick explains that he has ‘tactfully broken off a relationship with a Midwestern girl; voices break off at crucial moments; hearts are broken; dreams fall apart; communities are strung out and disconnected; words seem out of place; Owl Eyes seems oddly adrift in that narrative; various body parts are sprinkled through the text; Eckleburg’s eyes are strangely ‘disembodied’; and business connections fail.²⁹²

Whilst the ‘breakdown’ of *The Great Gatsby’s* two most significant automobiles will be discussed later, here we may note some

key links between motoring and the idea of things falling apart. We begin with the failure of various characters to make mental connections. Whilst the unusual concatenation of chapters in *Gatsby* forces us to piece things together, Fitzgerald's characters struggle to see crucial links as well. Jordan, for example, fails to connect 'Gatsby with the officer in [Daisy's] white roadster' and Carraway thinks that Tom might see 'a connection' in Daisy's driving the death machine. (76, 138) Moreover, Gatsby's father imagines that there is a connection between his son and railway tycoon James J. Hill.²⁹³

As noted, the broken car symbolises the dissolution of dreams. Despite the sign that reads 'Repairs. GEORGE B. WILSON...', the wreck in Wilson's garage bespeaks its owner's inability to 'fix things the way they were before' and so reinforces a major theme in the novel. It also emblematises the failure of Wilson's dream to build a thriving business. We will see later how the wreck outside Gatsby's mansion and the broken fender on his Rolls-Royce also communicate the breakdown of dreams but for now note that when wheels fall off motor-cars in Fitzgerald's fiction (as they do when Tom has his accident on the Ventura Road and when the drunk runs into a ditch at the gates of Gatsby's mansion) it signifies the wheels coming off something far greater. Whilst the two events above are narratively connected then (Fitzgerald's capacity to foreshadow calamity is unparalleled), the idea that the wheels of culture are *disconnected* is paramount. The parts of bodies that are scattered through the novel suggest the same idea: that what once was whole is now fragmented. With respect to the motor-car, there is, first of all, Ripley Snell's hand and, of course, Myrtle's breast which swings loosely from her torso – sliced off, one supposes, by the wing-like fender of Gatsby's Rolls. These and other accidents in the novel are, moreover, emblematic of the accidental and the chaotic generally.

But the automobile foregrounds other broken connections as well; for example our inability to see things the way they really are. In his essay '**Scott Fitzgerald's Criticism of America**', Marius Bewley points out that '*The Great Gatsby*...takes its distinguished place among those great national novels whose profound corrective insights into the nature of American experience are not separable from the artistic form

of the novel itself.’ (Bewley in Bloom: 11) Like Forster’s above, Bewley’s words serve as a useful focus in that modern beings’ identification with material (and particularly mass produced) artefacts has produced a great blindness but for which we might be redeemed. Of course, it is not only Scott Fitzgerald who sees that our worship of the machine breaks any spiritual connections that we may once have enjoyed. Forster, too, details our loss of insight as does D. H. Lawrence. Moreover, all three writers employ the automobile and automobile headlights as a sign of our compromised vision and our inability to navigate our way through life. Given the history of automobile lighting systems, this is hardly surprising.

The first motor-cars inherited the carriage-lamps of horse-drawn vehicles. These were splendid looking, but as they produced only one candlepower and lasted just four hours were better thought of as mere decorations. Later came the colza oil and petrol lamps that remained popular up until about 1910. Oil lamps, such as those lit by Charles Wilcox in *Howards End* and the taxi driver in Lawrence’s *The Rainbow*, were dirty, smelly, and woefully inefficient. They were dangerous too in that they often flared when lit. Whilst oil and petrol lamps were not much good for navigating then, at least they did not blind oncoming motorists as did the acetylene gas lamps which came into popular usage early in the second decade of the twentieth century. Prior to the development of a crude dimming system whereby a concave mirror behind the acetylene flame could be turned 180 degrees to obscure the light source (but which ironically meant a dangerous reduction in light output), the fierce glare of acetylene lamps caused an alarming number of accidents – mainly involving oncoming machines being forced off roads into ditches and fences. Other disadvantages included the fact that such lamps were very noisy - they emitted a piercing hiss – and had a tendency to explode. Until 1912 then, and developments like the parabolic mirror (which few vehicles employed until 1914), if you could see the road ahead, fellow motorists travelling in the opposite direction most certainly could not. Ironically, then, the lights of the early automobiles were, for various reasons, synonymous with both illumination and blindness – a fact reflected, as it were, in modern fiction.

Several editions of Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and a number of secondary works referring to it, have covers that foreground automobile headlights. There would seem to be a conscious or unconscious recognition that through its headlights, more than through any other decorative or functional paraphernalia, the automobile may be brought to life. But perhaps editors see that the car headlight is more than a sign of the will to anthropomorphise? Perhaps they recognise, as Lawrence did, that headlights stand for second sight: that they are a metaphor for cultural development or metaphysical navigability – or, indeed, the impossibility of same? Certainly, *The Great Gatsby*'s central reference to headlights, at the scene of the crash outside Gatsby's house, is critical because it signifies the blindness afflicting an entire culture - not merely that of a drunk who refuses to concede that his machine is broken.

The faulty vision of a whole generation, then, is projected onto literature's most famous drunk driver. Bleary-eyed and '[b]linded by the glare of headlights...' the confused, gangly apparition of Gatsby's third chapter presides over catastrophe.²⁹⁴ (54) It is pertinent to the novel's central themes of cultural wreckage and moral disintegration that the headlights of the cars queued up behind his crippled machine fail to light up the road ahead, but rather illuminate 'a bizarre and tumultuous scene.' (ibid) Fitzgerald notes that there are a dozen of these piercing lights. Whilst the word 'dozen' was popularly used at the time, given Fitzgerald's penchant for effecting intra-narrative correspondences, it is not too much for us to connect these lights with the equally blinding 'dozen suns' of Gatsby's car or even the 'dozen magazines' that the hero flicks through.²⁹⁵ Adding to the general impression of sightlessness is the fact that semi-blind Owl Eyes, the Tiresias figure of *The Great Gatsby* and a passenger in the broken automobile, is mistaken for its driver.

Whilst it can be argued that these references to sightlessness are in some measure a simple reflection of contemporary reality, it is suggested that they are, for the greater part, consciously and carefully woven into Fitzgerald's narrative so as to highlight the idea that modern American culture has lost its way; that it seeks no longer the light of transcendent truth but worships instead the material thing. In fact, there

are numerous allusions to compromised vision in the novel. For instance, Nick blinks into the 'blinding light' of a metropolitan street, sees the 'blinding signs' of commerce as he and Jordan symbolically exit the comparative Eden of Central Park into Fifty-ninth Street, refers to a 'blind' Chicago populace, and comments on the 'vacant', 'blurred' eyes of the hero.²⁹⁶ There are, moreover, references to Myrtle Wilson's dog which at one point looks with 'blind eyes through the smoke', the guests who arrive 'blindly and instinctively' at the hero's mansion, Daisy's blind gaze at Gatsby, the blurred vision of Owl Eyes at the hero's funeral, and Nick's assessment that his own eyes are 'distorted beyond the power of correction.' Then there are other 'blinding' signs such as those commented on by the narrator at the end of the fourth chapter. Of course, as we shall see in a moment, the most significant of these is the roadside hoarding of defunct oculist Eckleburg. However, as noted earlier, Gatsby's motor-car (the headlights of which catch too late the figure of Myrtle Wilson on the road) is the novel's governing symbol and as such once more deserves our immediate attention.

As noted, Nick tells us that the labyrinth of windshields on Gatsby's Rolls-Royce mirror a dozen suns. One might say that the car is, in all its splendour, physically blinding. Yet the machine is a catalyst for a profound and permanent spiritual blindness too. As one of the west's gaudy material objects, it is, as Marius Bewley says, a 'fatal deterrent' to the clarity of the hero's vision. (Bewley in Bloom: 16) Indeed, Nick's description of the machine is highly reminiscent of lines from Eliot's poem '**Gerontion**' in which 'a wilderness of mirrors...multiply variety'. (Eliot: 41) Of course, the word 'labyrinth' itself suggests a lack of certain vision. But whilst it bespeaks the impossibility of navigation and mastery, there is another, less obvious, connection between the labyrinth and the notion of blindness. Whilst it is well known that the labyrinth was originally constructed to house the Minotaur, as J. G. Frazer points out, less well known is the fact that the Minotaur was seen as 'a representative or embodiment of the sun-god' with whom Gatsby himself is ineluctably associated. (Frazer: Vol 4: 77)

The idea of blindness, however, is most comprehensively represented by the billboard that overlooks the Valley of Ashes. The

hoarding, a potent cynosure for the idea of cultural (and indeed commercial) malaise, is designed for passing motorists. Significantly, the wide open eyes of the figure depicted – that is optometrist Eckleburg ‘whose services have long since ceased’ - are ‘dimming a little’. (26) It is a crucial detail that confirms the blindness of those who can see only the value of the dollar. However, the ‘untarnished yellow glasses’ symbolise the fact that such commercial perspectives endure – despite the spiritual cost. (ibid) George Wilson’s conviction that Eckleburg’s eyes are those of God then belies a crucial insight: that those who have surrendered to the imperatives of commercial and industrial technique have confined themselves in a living hell and are therefore judged. So, whilst Wilson gets the identity of his wife’s killer wrong, he is perhaps the only figure to properly apprehend the hideous spirit of the twentieth century. Finally, the billboard underscores the idea that in indulging our pecuniary desires, we are all too easily distracted from the proper path of life.

It is appropriate, therefore, that just as T. J. Eckleburg’s optometry business withers and dies, George Wilson’s mean garage is destined to suffer a similar fate. Whilst Wilson’s business struggles from the start, the former enterprise once flourished in Flushing Meadow, a waste land which, by the time *Gatsby* was written, was filled with rubbish such as the carcasses of old motor-cars.²⁹⁷ Indeed, virtually every business alluded to or mentioned in *The Great Gatsby* (from the mines of California to Meyer Wolfsheim’s dubious dealings) collapses. As representations of failed American enterprise, it is pertinent that the Eckleburg and Wilson operations exist among the many other fragments of the novel. Indeed, Wilson’s garage seems to be totally adrift from its surroundings:

‘The only building in sight was a small block
of yellow brick...contiguous to absolutely
nothing.’

(27)

Because it sits on the edge of Fitzgerald’s waste land, the garage is almost marginalised in a landscape that is itself marginal.

The marginalisation of Wilson's garage is as a result of what is termed 'ribbon development' (the opposite of 'concentric development') whereby commercial premises are established along major arterial routes.²⁹⁸ Severance and dislocation, on the other hand, are technical terms pertaining to the break-up of communities as a result of public and private urban renewal activities and the driving through of municipal and government roading projects. In the early years of the twentieth century, the motor-car certainly caused the severance of entire communities and also contributed to decentralisation - which in turn resulted in the dereliction and the eventual demolition of city hearts. The results, as urban designers the world over have found, are completely irreversible.

Lewis Mumford's *The City In History* explores the paradox of decentralisation: 'The reckless drive to push multiple-lane expressways into and out of the heart of the city has merely emulated and enlarged 'the worst errors of the railroad engineers. ... Thus much of what appears brightly contemporary restores the archetypal form of Coketown under a chrome plating.' (Mumford: *CH*: 479) In their clamour to appear progressive, then, the more thoughtless planners were creating the anti-city: a nebulous structure devoid of individuality and charm; a 'formless urban exudation' (505). It is an ironic fact that by building a city around the means of getting to it, urban architects drive people away. It is just this sort of environment that Scott Fitzgerald seeks to represent in his fictions.

In Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned*, Gloria Patch complains that the poorly serviced dormitory settlements she and Anthony pass on their way out of New York 'aren't towns...just city blocks plumped down coldly into waste acres.' (158) Whilst Gloria's words communicate her abhorrence of dwelling, they also highlight the problems of urban diffusion and associated ribbon development. Of course, for Fitzgerald, the dislocation of communities is symptomatic of a deeper social malaise in which people have lost their connection with those things that would promote authentic presencing - and so broken communities are also foregrounded in *Gatsby*. Here, the hero's car drives past faded nineteenth century slums that have long since fallen victim to decentralisation. Of course, as noted above, there is also

considerable focus on the isolated building that houses Wilson's garage and Michaelis's coffee shop – both of which, we must remember, are themselves a result of the new motoring culture.

The last point to be made in connection to broken linkages in *Gatsby* is that the automobile is employed by Fitzgerald to foreground the breakdown of relationships. We may profitably begin with Nick's relationship with Jordan since Fitzgerald applies to it some of the most striking automobile imagery in modern literature. In indicating to us that he wanted to take things a little more slowly, Nick considers Jordan to have shifted their relations and reminds us that he is slow-thinking and 'full of interior rules that act as brakes on [his] desires'. (59) However, Jordan's insistence that '[i]t takes two to make an accident' signals that the problem is not all hers. (ibid) It is, however, through accusations of bad driving that the connection between Nick and Jordan is finally broken in the novel:

“Oh, and do you remember” - she added - “ a conversation we had once about driving a car?”

“Why - not exactly.”

“You said a bad driver was only safe until she met another bad driver? Well, I met another bad driver, didn't I? I mean it was careless of me to make such a wrong guess. ...

(168)

The driving that is here referred to is an explicit metaphor for Nick's dishonesty. Certainly, Nick's reactions to sexual invitations are 'mechanical and shifty.' (Fraser in Bloom: 64) Indeed, Nick's sexual ambivalence is highlighted by the automobile in that he is an over-careful driver and prefers to be a passenger so as to be just carried along. Whilst his voyeuristic tendencies have been noted earlier, it is germane to reinforce here that the throbbing taxi cabs that Nick sees in New York finally suggest sexual potential; not sexual agency.

Jordan Baker's sexual status is similarly questioned. Her name, for example, implies an ambiguous status ('Jordan' is applicable to both sexes) and from a physical point of view she appears as a somewhat androgynous figure.²⁹⁹ Once again, this is foregrounded via automobile imagery. For example, Nick refers to her 'hard, jaunty body' and 'erect carriage' at least twice and observes too 'a jauntiness about her movements... .' (16, 51) Later, he says that she is a 'clean, hard, limited person. (77) All of the imagery is masculine or technical – as if the architecture of the automobile gives her body its lines. The impression of a quasi-androgyny is complete when, in arranging to meet Nick, she tells him that she will 'be the man smoking two cigarettes.' (119)

With respect to expressions of sexual anarchy in *Gatsby*, it may also be observed that there is something erotic about the description of Myrtle Wilson's death. After all, Gatsby's phallus-like machine, which Myrtle mistakenly believes her lover to be driving, 'knock[s] right into her' and the two men who rush to her side bend over her corpse and rip open her shirtwaist. 'The occasion', suggests A. B. Paulson '[suggests] a sexual assault.' (Paulson in Bloom: 78) Paulson's reading of this scene is certainly consistent with Fitzgerald's desire to foreground the violation of America and the tearing off of Myrtle's breast is, as we will see, crucial to that message. Happily, other manifestations of sexual anarchy in the novel are easier to endure. Among these are Tom's infidelity with a Santa Barbara chambermaid - a liaison facilitated by the motor-car – and, of course, his affair with Myrtle Wilson.

Finally, the sapping of libido is also suggested by the broken automobile in that 'run down' garage proprietor George Wilson can no longer satisfy his wife. Even his efforts at the gasoline pump pale in comparison to the 'panting vitality' that Nick glimpses when he sees Myrtle straining at the hand-pump. (66) Indeed, Tom sarcastically suggests that Wilson might make a suitable subject for the effeminate photographer McKee and proposes the title: 'George B. Wilson at the Gasoline Pump'. (35) While it is very obviously represented as such in *Gatsby*, we also find that the broken car is a sign of failed sexuality in Fitzgerald's short fiction.

'**The Jelly Bean**' (1920), often considered a sequel to '**The Ice Palace**' (though the debt to '**Dice**' is at least as great), has the desultory figure of 'Jelly-bean' Jim Powell as its broken protagonist. At the beginning of the tale we are told that Jim rejects parties and prefers 'sitting on the disconnected axle' in Tilly's garage, his social aspirations having 'died in the oily air'. (SS: 143-144) Jim is a prototype for the washed-up and run-down figure of *The Great Gatsby's* George B. Wilson. Like Wilson, Jim lives in semi-squalor above the garage which is in itself a constant reminder of his ruined agency, his broken dreams, and his failure to succeed sexually or romantically. It is a general malaise emblematised by the automobile too. For instance, his dream of driving off into the sunset with the treacherous Nancy Lamar is cruelly undone at the tale's conclusion when he accepts that he has been used by her. As the news of Nancy's perfidiousness and concupiscence sinks in, he grips the side of Clarke Darrow's model-T - the machine which originally bore him into the 'jasmine-scented night' and the hope of romance.³⁰⁰ (ibid: 146)

The last broken car to be examined with respect to Fitzgerald's fiction is Jim Powell's decrepit machine in the story '**Dice, Brassknuckles & Guitar**', a tale that precedes '**The Jelly Bean**'. Powell's old flivver, with symbolically half-painted (and faded) yellow hood, is literally broken in half.³⁰¹ The broken car, then, is emblematic of Powell's ultimate loss of agency in Southampton where he establishes a doomed 'educational' academy.³⁰² After the collapse of the business, Powell takes one last ride in 'a taxi-cab, carefully selected to look like a private car...' before picking up his own ludicrous machine and retreating to the South. (SS: 254) On the way home, travellers have to swerve to avoid the spectacle of Powell and his boy applying hammer and nails to the machine and although Fitzgerald ultimately ascribes to Jim a remarkable fortitude and dignified presence in the tale, when we meet him in '**The Jelly Bean**' his spirit is finally and unequivocally crushed.

More broken connections: A Passage to India

In the fictions of E. M. Forster, not all roads lead to Rome; the highways represented are usually disconnected or stop short of an

implied destination. The West's endeavour to colonise India, for example, is physically represented by road and rail networks in *A Passage to India*, but, as Forster acknowledges, the sub-continent nonetheless remains unconnected - a metaphor, perhaps, for the impossibility of realising the land in its totality: 'The branch line stops, the road is only practicable for cars to a point...paths fray out into the cultivation, and disappear...' ³⁰³ (153) In *A Passage*, then, transport lines may be said to symbolise cultural audacity: the West's attempt to master the numinous and 'take hold' of the spirit of the country. ³⁰⁴ (135) But Forster personifies India as the 'she' who has 'never been defined' and so in *A Passage*, the road becomes a metaphor for indeterminability; for connections that cannot be made. (ibid)

Doreen D'Cruz's assertion that a constructive movement toward meaning and a deconstructive drive toward nullification are represented by images of the coil in *A Passage* stands up to scrutiny. The novel's winding train tracks, twisting roads, and wandering tyre imprints, for instance, bear out her thesis since through them Forster is saying that transportation lines, like India itself, promise conclusion but ultimately lead nowhere. The snaking paths of both train and motor-car, then, anticipate and reinforce the novel's central themes of indeterminacy and personal erasure. And so, symbolically, just beyond the end of the Marabar line, and the Marabar road, are the mystical caves; caves which promise to reveal the real India, but which are finally beyond utterance: an expression of 'the Void', as D'Cruz puts it. (D'Cruz: 195)

Indeed, Forster takes great care to foreground the inconclusiveness of the caves. Their strange echoes are 'devoid of distinction' whilst the slightest noise will start a 'worm coiling...too small to complete a circle.' (145) If there are many disturbances, moreover, the sound of hissing, writhing snakes is precipitated: another metaphor for confusion, muddle, and indeterminacy. Although physically small and disappointing, the caves' echoing reverberations nonetheless suggest the vastness of India; the annihilation of beings; the unapproachable proximity of the numinous. Moreover, their circularity suggests an organic completeness that the twisting and turning man made transportation lines of the text ironically fail to convey.

Significantly, given Adela's reaction to them and Ronny's plan for them, only a mind sympathetic to the Orient may appreciate the caves' incommunicable unity - hence Godbole's inability to utter their meaning and Mrs Moore's speechlessness upon exiting one of them.

The more direct relevance of our subject to the Marabar episode is as follows. The great spine of rock known as the Kawa Dol suggests a neck whilst the vast round rock that sits atop it suggests a brain. The landscape therefore bespeaks the quest for a higher consciousness. Significantly, then, whilst Mrs Moore remains on the Kawa Dol, the ironically named Miss Quested, the only other European on the expedition, returns to her base material world as symbolised by the motor-car which awaits her below. Of course, Adela's spiritual inadequacies and generally trivial disposition are further reinforced by Aziz's incorrect supposition that his guest runs down the Kawa Dol 'in the hope of a little drive.' (153)

It is crucial to Forster's purpose, then, that the technologies of the West are unable to approach the heights of the Marabar - just as it is impossible for the mechanism of the rational mind to apprehend its mysteries. So it is that those two great symbols of Western hegemony, the automobile and locomotive, are abandoned as images of twisting and turning are taken up by the writhing snakes of the Kawa Dol. The novel's central episode therefore encourages us to interpret the mechanised journey as a sign of the West's teleological drive: its thwarted ambition to reach conclusion.³⁰⁵ Of course, Mrs Moore's final train journey to Bombay reinforces this point since the tracks which have carried her over a continent end in a city which colonisers 'had built and abandoned with a gesture of despair'. (204)

*Putting the pieces together: foreshadowing and foregrounding death in **The Great Gatsby***

We have seen that in *Howards End* and in *A Passage to India* E. M. Forster employs the automobile or automobile imagery to foreshadow calamity, emotional breakdown, and muddle. Whilst brief references have been made to such pre-echoing in the novels of Scott

Fitzgerald, in *The Great Gatsby* the technique is of crucial significance. The two calamities foreshadowed here are, of course, the mowing down of Myrtle and the gunning down of the hero – events that are themselves connected. Through careful employment of motoring imagery, then, Fitzgerald invites us to make the intra-narrative connections that contribute to the foregrounding of the twin disasters. There are, first of all, the novel's representations of evasion to consider – including Jordan's 'bad lie' where she brazenly out her innocence despite having cheated at golf. (58) Like Gatsby and Daisy after the crash, she is simply content to wait until it 'die[s] away'. (ibid) Of course, in another pre-echo of the catastrophe, Jordan tells a lie about a borrowed open car the top of which she leaves down.

The killing of Myrtle Wilson is also foreshadowed when Tom Buchanan expresses his fear that on their way back from New York Gatsby and Daisy might make a dash for a side street – which is exactly what they do in order to evade detection after hitting Myrtle. In context, then, even Gatsby's evasion of a speeding ticket anticipates the details surrounding the catastrophe. Similarly subtle are the allusions to the river Styx in the novel – allusions that confirm the symbolic role of Flushing Meadow as Fitzgerald's waste land and that bespeak the ferrying away of Myrtle on the gravel ribbon that runs through it. On the way to New York for lunch with Gatsby, Nick and the hero pass over a bridge and later, when driving with Jordan, the narrator and the girl '[dip] under a little bridge...' (77) There are, of course, other subtle but inevitably disturbing connections with the accident to be made.

For instance, Gatsby's sun car with its wing-like fenders suggests the flight of Daedalus and Icarus and, therefore, the notions of carelessness and hubris that result in wreckage both in the myth and in Fitzgerald's narrative whilst Nick's reference to 'this year's shining motor-cars' also implies hope that turns to tragedy. (140) Other pre-echoes of the calamity include Myrtle's early association with a lavender taxi. 'Myrtle' is, of course, a lavender flower. The connection is made more clear, however, when Daisy, who is at the time wearing a lavender hat, pulls up outside Gatsby's house in a 'large open car' onto which drips the dew from lilac trees – emblematic, surely, of Myrtle's own dripping blood.³⁰⁶ If we miss the connection here though, Nick

helps us out when he speaks of ‘a hint of...romances that were not musty and laid away already in lavender... .’ (ibid) Even the words ‘wavered tragically’, used to describe the recklessly meandering death-car of chapter seven, may be linked to Daisy who, whilst losing her nerve at the wheel of Gatsby’s car, is herself a victim of an earlier ‘wavering’ when she loses her nerve and chooses money over love.

Even Myrtle’s connection with a blind dog (purchased through the window of the portentous taxi) anticipates the disaster that lies ahead. After all, the metaphorically blind Myrtle is something of a bitch and is run down like a dog, her animal vitality finally yielded up to the road. It is significant, then, that the dog is said to ‘groan faintly.’ (38) The link is reinforced by Tom, who, seeing his wife slip away from him, transfers his emotion by weeping over a container of decomposing dog biscuits – an event that anticipates tears shed over Myrtle herself. There are, of course, many other premonitions of Myrtle’s death including: the Ford that ‘crouches’ so malignantly in Wilson’s garage, the novel’s many references to ‘mistakes’ and ‘accidents’, Nick’s observation (just prior to her being run down) that Gatsby and Daisy are ‘gone...made accidental...like ghosts...’³⁰⁷, her husband’s ironic comment that he is ‘all run down’, the moment when Jordan Baker passes so close to a workman that her machine’s fender flicks a button on his coat, the references to metal – including silver and the ‘metallic cloth’ hat that Daisy wears the night of the accident, the fact that just as Wilson announces he is to take his wife West, Tom’s blue coupe flashes by, the hearse ‘heaped with blooms’ that passes the Rolls on its way up to New York ³⁰⁸, the fact that Carraway’s taxi feels its way menacingly along a darkened road, and the fact that at least two of Gatsby’s guests are maimed by transit technologies.

Whilst all of these portend the death of Myrtle Wilson, *The Great Gatsby’s* numerous and structurally interconnected motor accidents do most of this work.³⁰⁹ In the first place, there is the chaotic drink-induced smash at the gates of Gatsby’s mansion. That the event foreshadows Myrtle’s death is scarcely in question since alcohol, mistaken identity, carelessness beyond belief, and a violent ‘amputation’ of objects are indicated in both calamities. What is more, both accidents are linked to Tom Buchanan’s infidelity with a Santa

Barbara chambermaid - an event publicised when Tom's car runs off the road and loses one of its front wheels. In this accident then, reported to Nick by Jordan Baker, a man is in a motor-car with a woman not his wife, there is a collision, a female is 'smashed up', and a wheel is 'ripped' from a machine in the same manner that Myrtle's breast is ripped from her body. It is worthy of note too that a link between Tom's accident and the one outside Gatsby's mansion is effected in that the car in the latter accident is a coupe as well. However, in final, grisly, confirmation of the interconnectivity of the former events, Michaelis and his unidentified companion see that Myrtle's mouth is 'ripped a little at the corners'.³¹⁰ (131)

It is also worthy of note that Tom's infidelity with Myrtle is confirmed by a portentous 'shill, metallic' ring and that Myrtle is laid out on a couch, bleeding profusely, after Tom has broken her nose at the end of the second chapter. (21) Myrtle, identified with cheap metal jewellery, is, of course, killed by a metal object and there is much blood at the accident site. Nor may one ignore the fact that, in both cases, Myrtle is reduced to a bleeding mess just after an argument.³¹¹ Furthermore, the chaotic apartment scene and the drama outside Gatsby's mansion when the coupe crashes both prefigure the roadside chaos in the Valley of Ashes, whilst the 'persistent wail' that Nick says is ushered up along the shore for Daisy portends the 'wailing sound' of George Wilson's despair. Note too that Myrtle issues up a 'long broken wail of pain' after Tom assaults her in the apartment and that there are bloody towels on the floor which prefigure the blood-stained blanket that covers Myrtle's body after she is struck by the car. (39)

The accident itself, when it does come, is one of modern literature's greatest representations of horror:

'The death car' as the newspapers called it, didn't stop; it came out of the gathering darkness, wavered tragically for a moment, and then disappeared...The other car['s] driver hurried back to where Myrtle Wilson, her life violently extinguished, knelt in the road and mingled her thick blood with the dust..., [B]ut

when they had torn open her waistshirt, still damp with perspiration, they saw that her left breast was swinging loose like a flap...'

(Fitzgerald: *GG*: 111-112)

There is, of course, a connection to Fitzgerald's first novel, *This Side of Paradise*, where Amory Blaine's college acquaintance, Dick Humbird, is killed (horribly) in an auto wreck.³¹² The scene is developed by Fitzgerald in *The Great Gatsby*. In *Gatsby* and in *This Side of Paradise*, two cars are returning from New York, their occupants semi-intoxicated. In both novels it is night time and there is a sense of tragic expectancy as the machines scythe through the darkness. In both fictions it is the car in front that, having rounded a bend in the road, brings about a shocking death. In both novels, the wing-like front fenders of the death machines are crumpled. In *This Side of Paradise*, the occupants of the second car, in which Amory is travelling, are appalled to find Dick Humbird, 'face downward in a widening circle of blood' whilst Myrtle Wilson's blood mingles tragically with the road's dust in *The Great Gatsby*. (*SP*: 91) There are other connections too. The figures of Dick Humbird and Myrtle Wilson, in life straining in pursuit of happiness and the aristocratic ideal, are in death tragically 'horrible' and 'unaristocratic'. (*SP*: 92) It is a point made clear by the fact that in both novels corpses are laid out in shoddy buildings. In both texts, moreover, there is an atmosphere of shocked disbelief as Ferrenby vainly calls out 'oh my God!' and a despairing Wilson utters the same anguished cry. (*SP*: 92) The final connection is that the two deaths are rendered in shocking detail.

In a letter to Fitzgerald, Maxwell Perkins pleaded for the excision of the description of Myrtle's death, but the author, who usually bowed to his editor's suggestions, refused, saying that the episode and its detail were crucial to the novel. 'I want Myrtle Wilson's breast ripped off,' Fitzgerald wrote back, adding: '...I don't want to chop up the good scenes... .' (Fitzgerald to Perkins, Jan 24, 1925: in *Letters*: 175) Fitzgerald's choice of words here underscores a rightly held conviction that the tearing off of the breast signifies the renting of

American aspiration; the idea that the ‘pap of life’ and the ‘fresh green breast of the world’ are ultimately made sterile by the forces of modernity and by the great carelessness of people.³¹³ It is through such carefully balanced evocations of epiphany and brutality, then, that the author undercuts, as it were, the whole idea of the American Dream – including, of course, the naïve notion that we might recover the essence of the frontier.

Like the green, pulsing ‘traffic’ light on the shore opposite Gatsby’s dream house, the green leather interior of the hero’s chimerical car evokes the promise of a pastoral ‘otherness’; a vague vision towards which the hero’s whole being strains. However, the machine (the word is used here in its specific *and* generic senses) that speaks of the great beyond, ultimately ‘represents the forces working against [such] fulfilment.’ (L. Marx: *MG*: 256) Just as the green light which beckons the universal traveller on appears in *Gatsby* as a warning against running aground, so the motor-car which promises liberty implicitly warns of imminent wreckage. Whilst it appears to Nick that there may be hope, the grim reality lies in the certainty of death; in the ‘shocking spectacle of Myrtle’s left breast...swinging loose like a flap after the road accident’ and, of course, in Gatsby’s gunned-down body which listlessly floats in the cold, blue waters of his swimming pool. (Tony Tanner in *GG: I*) It is in Myrtle’s death, then, that Fitzgerald’s criticism of America’s materialistic yearning is made complete. It is an idea structurally reinforced in that dream car becomes death car and by the fact that Myrtle is killed on a highway - no longer a symbol of progress and agency but a place of breakdown, failure, degradation, and, of course, death itself.³¹⁴

Although, in the end, the make of the killing machine is not spelled out for us, we may nonetheless reach a fairly certain conclusion since Fitzgerald gives us some clues. There can be little doubt, then, that the death car is Gatsby’s Rolls Royce. After the accident, the fender of the hero’s carefully hidden *open* car is in need of repair. That the death car is an open one is highlighted for us in chapter seven, before the accident, when Gatsby feels the leather seats of the machine that will mow Myrtle down. The point is reinforced in chapter eight, after the accident, when he orders that his open car is not to be taken

out. Moreover, whilst automobile upholstery specification varied in the nineteen-twenties, open cars generally had pleated leather seat cushions whilst mohair or broadcloth was generally reserved for closed tourers.³¹⁵ More significantly, however, the many references to ‘ghosts’ and ‘silver’ in the text simply cannot be accidental. Finally, the focus on fenders (mentioned at least three times before Myrtle is killed) also establishes a clear connection between the calamity and Gatsby’s winged Rolls.

Gatsby’s own death and funeral are foreshadowed through the automobile as well. In the first chapter, for example, Nick tells his cousin Daisy that ‘[a]ll the cars in Chicago have the left rear wheel painted black as a mourning wreath...’ for her. (55) More importantly, on Nick and Gatsby’s drive to Astoria, ‘[a] dead man’ passes the hero’s cream-yellow Rolls-Royce ‘in a hearse heaped with blooms.’ (67) Whilst Myrtle’s killing is contemporaneously suggested, in this remarkable mini tableau, the Rolls-Royce is also passed by a limousine and thus the final chapter’s trinity of yellow motor-car, limousine, and hearse is subtly anticipated. Robert Long points out that the manuscript of *The Great Gatsby* shows that Fitzgerald had originally intended the foreshadowing to be more obvious. In it, for instance, when Gatsby drives Nick to New York he says that his car is ‘the handsomest in New York’ and that he ‘wouldn’t want to ride around in a big hearse like some of those fellas do.’ (Fitzgerald in Long: 193)

As additional confirmation of the author’s intention to mute the novel’s funereal undertones, and so avoid the overwriting that characterises his earlier fiction, the word ‘sepulchrally’ is dropped from the description of the ‘grey cars’ that traverse the Valley of Ashes in chapter two and the phrase ‘reeks of death’, as was to have been applied to Flushing Meadow, is also crossed out. (Long: 194) In the published text, of course, there are other premonitions of Gatsby’s death among which is Wolfsheim’s tale in which a man gets out of a car, goes into a restaurant, shoots someone, and then drives away. The story, which seems to be so out of place, foreshadows the shooting of Gatsby by Wilson – also a car man. The other premonition involving the automobile is the ‘dilatary limousine’ that collects Daisy from

Gatsby's party in chapter six since it surely anticipates the late guest who pulls up to Gatsby's mansion just after the host is buried.

Bearing in mind the squadrons of motor-cars that make their way to Gatsby's mansion back in chapter three, the arrival of this single machine seems too much - as does the contrast between the dozens of ostentatious automobiles and the three funereal machines at the hero's grave-side. At the cemetery, in order of appearance, there is a 'horribly black and wet' hearse, an unidentified limousine, and Gatsby's yellow station wagon. (165) That the yellow and black cars are so incongruously juxtaposed is a structurally and semantically significant feature of the text. The former, a kind of 'circus wagon' in its own right in that it once bore guests to Gatsby's shows, now follows the black hearse - another station wagon and the novel's ultimate death car. Thus, Fitzgerald presents us with one last reminder that our dreams, corrupted by our materialistic drives, wither and die; that there is, in the end, no magic.

It has struck at least one critic of *The Great Gatsby* that whilst in the real world history cannot be repeated, the form and content of the novel ironically suggests otherwise.³¹⁶ Certainly, the idea of turning back time is one of the central themes in *Gatsby* and, through spatially disconnected automobile images, the author underscores it. However, as with the foreshadowing technique, Fitzgerald makes us work to make the connections. Whilst the idea of turning back time is suggested by the fact that Tom Buchanan turns his garage into a stable and recovers something of the spirit of the football game on the road, the most potent emblem of the idea (apart from the 'pastoral' green interior of Gatsby's automobile that we have already considered) is the ludicrous effort of the drunk-driver at the gates of the hero's mansion. Here, a gangly and ghostly apparition stands beside his machine and, despite the fact that the vehicle is minus one of its wheels, slurs the following demand: 'Back out...Put her in reverse.' (56) Like his more heroic double, then, this deluded soul believes that 'backing up' will fix everything. When it is pointed out to him by unspecified members of the crowd that 'the wheel's off' (a metaphor, as we have seen, for unrectifiable social disintegration) he hesitates before saying that there's 'no harm in trying.' (ibid) We are reminded here of the famous

exchange between Nick and Gatsby where the hero replies to Carraway's assertion that you can't repeat the past with the much quoted 'Why of course you can old chap.' (106)

But in the end, Gatsby is wrong – even if redeemed (made 'all right' as Nick says) by his *attempt* to fix things the way they were before. Death, however, confirms that Gatsby's vision is tragically corrupted by the 'foul dust' of the mortal world. Fitzgerald seems to be saying that the result of our drive to acquire silver is betrayal and death. He also implies that it is in death that we experience the ultimate disconnection; that final breakdown that confirms the entropic course of life. In Fitzgerald's Fiction, and in Forster's, these paradoxes are emblematised through the motor-car, a machine which, by 1980, was responsible for more deaths than the disastrous European conflict of 1914 –18 and World War Two put together.

As a brief aside, in Forster's fiction only one person is killed by an automobile – although in *The Longest Journey*, a child is run down by a train. In *The Longest Journey*, then, it is the locomotive, rather than the automobile, that emblematises the forces of modernity and that underscores the machinations of bureaucratic technics. Rickie, a passenger on the express and Forster's symbolically deformed protagonist, is 'frightened...at the splendours and horrors of the world' – a world in which, he says, 'men...have lost themselves.'³¹⁷ (70, 300) As parallel diction suggests, the above killing anticipates the crushing of Rickie's naïve and romantic soul by the machinery of the English school system: 'He was ashamed, for he remembered his new resolution - to work without criticising, to throw himself vigorously into the machine, not to mind if he was pinched now and then by the elaborate wheels.' (193)

In *Howards End*, Forster again signals that he will deal with the theme of technicism versus humanity and so Juley Munt passes through the North Wewyn Tunnel 'of tragic fame', where, in 1886, three goods trains piled up at the cost of several lives.³¹⁸ (29) However, in this novel it is the motor-car and not the locomotive that emblematises the destructive forces of modern technics. Leonard Bast's financial crash, then, is symbolised by '...the Juggernaut car that was crushing him.'

(308) Moreover, the automobile, so strongly identified with the Wilcoxes, is emblematic of how one class in a society may oppress another. Of course, the machine also bespeaks the riches of the world that permanently elude Leonard - and which would destroy him anyway. It is therefore appropriate that, like Gatsby, he is killed by a car man - an event foreshadowed when, broken and despondent, he is almost struck by an automobile in which sits 'another type whom Nature favours - the Imperial.' (314) If we miss this clue though, Forster provides two more: first, when Leonard finally arrives at Howards End he steadies himself against the symbol of his own destruction and second, when dead, his body is laid out on a gravel driveway whilst Charles callously drives off.

Reconnections: the machine breakers

In *The Question Concerning Technology*, Heidegger explores a paradox already alluded to: that in confronting not technology but its essence, we might perceive the saving power that inheres in the technological. Following Hölderlin's 'But where danger is, grows / The saving power also', Heidegger argues that where *das Gestell* reigns, there may we also find *vorgangigkeit*: the possibility that humanity may emerge into a more original mode of revealing - a salvation; a bringing home of the self to an original essence. So, where the technological most threatens beings - that is to say where we are at greatest risk of falling into the way of a super-structured, super-ordered inauthenticity that has its confirmation in death - we may, so long as we are alert to technology's true spirit, simultaneously encounter a more authentic mode of presencing.

For Heidegger, as for Plato, the true is grounded in the poetic, but we may note that the way of authenticity, if not authenticity itself, may also be represented in the discourse of political rebellion, in a relationship between man and garden, and in religious experience. In the introduction to Heidegger's *Poetry, Language, Thought* the philosopher tells us:

‘There is a world of difference between man’s present life as a technological being under the aegis of Gestell...- in which everything including man himself becomes material for a process of self-assertive production... - and a life in which we would genuinely dwell as a human being.’

(Heidegger: *PLT*: xi)

‘This time of technology’, he adds ‘is a destitute time, the time of the world’s night, in which man has even forgotten that he has forgotten the true nature of being. In such a dark and deprived time, it is the task of the poet to help us see once more the bright possibility of a true world.’ (ibid)

In the fictions of E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald we have seen that technology is estranged so it may be newly appreciated.³¹⁹ Both writers, moreover, foreground a profound resistance to *das Gestell*; a hitting back at the machine by figures who are more or less alert to the artificial character of modern civilisation. Other writers, too, agreed that humankind must take up the struggle against the forces of modernity. Predictably, in his *The Wind in the Willows*, Kenneth Grahame has his characters do just that and so not all creatures in the novel approve of the automobile. Indeed, the Rat and the Mole are outraged by it and so as the Toad sits, vacant-eyed in religious rapture at the gentlemen’s motor-car, the Rat dances up and down denouncing them and their machine:

‘ “You villains!” he shouted, shaking both fists. “You scoundrels, you highwaymen, you - you - road hogs! ... I’ll report you!” ’

(27)

It will shortly be shown that such a striking back may facilitate reconnection with those things that promote authenticity and that therefore humanise us. In *Howards End*, then, Margaret tells us that it

is necessary to stand ‘against the inner darkness that comes with a commercial age.’ (322) It is a stance that is to see her grow strong whilst the Wilcox men grow weak.

In *Howards End* the ‘throbbing, stinking car’ stands as the supreme symbol of the ‘detested new civilisation’. (36) Margaret’s opposition to it is most clearly demonstrated during the motor-tour of chapter twenty-five when she quite literally gets off the bandwagon and jumps out of Henry’s moving vehicle.³²⁰ Because the automobile bespeaks rationalism, empiricism, political conservatism, and, of course, capitalism, Margaret’s action is to be interpreted as part of a spirited attack on the whole system. Though all the signs are against it, she wins – her victory lying in her own strength certainly, but also in the weakness of logic, which, in Henry’s case, breaks down. In him, she hopes for and sees a quite remarkable sea-change in consciousness wherein a man once given over entirely to machinery (in all its guises) begins to manifest a more authentic mode of being.

Henry Wilcox’s sea-change of consciousness, wrought through the calamitous events that take place in the sanctuary of Howards End, is symbolised through his rejection of the automobile. His dismissal of modern technics in favour of his feet not only highlights such an alteration but the return of his aboriginal strengths. However, it is his attunement to and connection with feminine sensibilities that is most fundamentally reinforced through reference to the automobile : “‘You young fellows’ one idea is to get into a motor. I tell you, I want to walk; I’m very fond of walking.” ... Charles ... was uneasy about his father ... [t]here was a petulant touch about him - more like a woman.’ (319) Here, in the novel’s greatest thematic reversal, Margaret ‘who had never expected to conquer anyone, had charged straight through these Wilcoxes and broken up their lives.’ (331)

Whilst the motor-tour is ‘unreal’ and demonstrates to Margaret and that the Wilcox men have ‘no part with the earth and its emotions’ Henry begins to reconnect with nature and so Margaret has hope that one day he will be a member of ‘a civilisation that won’t be a *movement*, because it will *rest* on the earth.’ (ibid) Margaret’s victory, then, is Forster’s; an answer to the novelist’s fear that ‘[t]he little

houses that I am used to will be swept away; the fields will stink of petrol, and the air-ships will shatter the stars...a soul such as mine shall be crushed out.' (Diary: January 27, 1908 in *HE*: x) It will be noticed that both Margaret and Forster's words emphasise the idea of dwelling. It is in dwelling, of course, that *Howards End* has its main point since those who 'rest' may achieve an authentic self-presencing. Earlier in the novel, as she is shown around the Wilcox London residence, Margaret looks at the maroon leather of the smoking chairs and cynically thinks '[i]t was as if a motor-car had spawned.' (167) Her point is that the residence is not a home at all but rather something of an hotel; a place that Henry visits from time to time.

Margaret's being, on the other hand, lies completely in her connection with nature and with place. We have already seen how she has connected with her own London residence for example. Now that this is to be torn down, she must look for a new spiritual home and finds it in *Howards End*: '...but Margaret still stopped at *Howards End*...The air was tranquil now. She and her sister were sitting on the remains of Evie's rockery, where the lawn merged into the field.' (325-326) The connection with house and hortus signposts the recovery of a better life and signals resistance to the hurry of the new world. As F. R. Leavis observes in his chapter on Forster in *The Common Pursuit*, 'The general drift of symbolism appears well enough here: The sense of flux which had haunted her all the years disappeared for a time. She forgot the luggage and the motor-cars, and the hurrying men who know so much and connect so little. She captured the sense of space which is the basis of all earthly beauty...'.³²¹ (Leavis: 270)

However, it is in her reflections on the body of Leonard Bast lying, looking heavenward, in the garden at *Howards End*, that Margaret achieves what is perhaps the novel's most profound connection. She imagines Leonard released and, in a moment of consanguinity, catches 'glimpses of the diviner wheels.' (320) She refers, of course, to the spheres of heaven or perhaps to the celestial chariot of *The Book of Kings* against which 'the machine', in the form of modern technics, the machinations of the judicial system, and the cycles of commerce, runs counter. But Margaret's resistance to the machine is not only expressed in her ability to dwell. It is, as we have

seen, also signified by her strong identification with the garden and an urge to ban from it the men and the machines that would disturb its tranquility.

Once again, it is an urge that echoes Forster's desire to repopulate the shires with real nymphs instead of motor-cars.' (Dowling: *BA*: 66) At the end of the story, then, when Margaret sees Helen's condition, she turns and forces the men out of the garden and back to their waiting automobile before ushering her sister inside. Dowling observes that Forster's earlier attempts to identify with the land were clumsy in that he resorted to images of nymphs and Dryads. Here in *Howards End*, however, the writer encourages a new aesthetic: the careful husbanding of nature in a world that is antagonistic toward the garden.³²² This new consciousness and aesthetic stance is suggested, of course, not only by Margaret, but by her spiritual mentor Ruth Wilcox.

One of the first glimpses we have of Ruth Wilcox is when she turns from her ranting son (who is standing up in the machine that he has driven into her garden) to look 'toward her flowers.' (36) Having thus defused her oldest son's rage, she 'stoops down to smell a rose', thereby revealing to the reader her contempt for men and machines and her empathy with the natural world. The narrator later informs us that the 'clever talk' of the male Wilcoxes 'alarm[s]...'and wither[s] her 'delicate imaginings'; that it was all 'social counterpoint of a motor-car, all jerks, and she was a wisp of hay, a flower.' (84) It is interesting, then, that Ruth should defend her husband's driving by claiming that 'the police traps have been...bad...' and that her husband is not guilty of being a 'road-hog'. (94) But Ruth's comments have to be interpreted as those of the loyal wife. Moreover, the very idea of police traps suggests resistance to the machine – a point taken up by the narrator who points out that the road is a neutral space and that Henry 'must expect to suffer with the lower animals.'³²³ (ibid)

Whilst Walt Whitman's '*Passage to India*' of 1868 represents the machine as being emblematic of a higher, spiritual power, Forster's counter-text, *A Passage to India* of 1924, depicts the machine as antipathetic to art, inimical to aboriginal culture, and destructive to the

things of the spirit. Like *Howards End*, then, *A Passage* is full of representative beings who resist the mechanistic operations of the Raj. Inevitably, this resistance is often foregrounded through physical machinery or allusions to same. It only *appears*, then, that Professor Godbole has ‘reconciled the products of East and West, mental as well as physical... .’ (71) For instance his haunting song of the seventh chapter gives ‘the illusion of a Western melody’ but is ultimately a maze of noises intelligible only to a certain ear.³²⁴ (77) The song is in fact an expression of rhythms which do not quite fit with Western forms. More significant, however, is that Eastern philosophy holds that the self can only be realised outside of matter, since matter is the cause of all suffering. Appropriately, then, Godbole’s lengthy puja causes both he and Fielding to miss the Marabar train. Moreover, whilst the pumping steam engine that destroys the rhythm of his hymn is one of many symbols of colonial rule in the novel, Godbole doggedly sings on in defiance of both it and the entire apparatus of the Raj.

Apart from the disapproval of the automobile expressed by Dr Pana Lal, the most explicit rejection of Western technologies comes in the final chapter where older, more original, forms of transport - particularly the carriage, the elephant, and the row-boat - are used in preference to motor-cars and motor-boats. Indeed, when Fielding arrives to see Aziz, he has to abandon the motor-car in which he travels. We should note too the fact that the golden sewing machine reputedly given Mrs Turton by ‘some Rajah or other’ subtly bespeaks an Indian desire to arrest the machinery of the British Raj; certainly, since it is given as a bribe, it is meant to pervert its course. (13) In context, nor should we ignore Aziz’s repudiation of European administrative machinery, particularly his mocking dismissiveness of committees.³²⁵ As both Forster and Fitzgerald assert, then, man is a being with the power of self-transcendence and so can reclaim himself by rising above the system in which he was hitherto a functioning participant.

In Forster’s most famous short story, ‘**The Machine Stops**’, we have seen that Kuno is the representative breaker of injurious mechanisms. In an act of courage that is inevitably condemned as perverseness, weakness, and cowardice, he defies the central machine that controls everything in the world as he knows it. This defiance then, though

costly in one sense, undermines the efficacy of a system that depends on a homogenous and seamless network of impersonal relations. Through his act of sabotage, Kuno asserts his authentic self and maintains his aboriginal strength and does to **The Machine Stops'** Machine what Fielding does to the cultural mechanism of the British Raj in *A Passage to India* or what Henry Wilcox finally does to the machinations of capitalist enterprise in *Howards End*.³²⁶ However, whilst in both novels the personal does triumph over the mechanical, there is nonetheless a suggestion that technique cannot be entirely eliminated. In '**The Machine Stops**' too, there is an acute sense that like Milton's Satan, the Machine is down but not out; that a chink in its armour has been exploited, but exploited only temporarily. As Kuno says: 'Oh, to-morrow - some fool will start the Machine again, to-morrow.' (SS: 158)

Nonetheless, prior to the publication of Huxley's *Brave New World* in 1932, '**The Machine Stops**' represents modern literature's most intense and focused rejection of the mechanical - and its most absolute celebration of the personal. We might justifiably make this claim since the bulk of the text offers such an uncompromisingly grim simulacrum of technique that the reader holds the counteracting forces of negation and revolt - the politics of the self - to be completely in vain. There are few texts, then, in which a vision of mechanical or technical domination overwhelms in quite the same way, but among them are Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, and *Brave New World* itself. In the face of such complete systemic hegemony, then, Kuno's victory, no matter how transitory, is all the more striking.

With reference to Scott Fitzgerald's fictions, we have, in the process of examining other things, explored various expressions of the struggle against technology. However, it is pertinent to briefly recap these and to point out some other manifestations of the phenomenon. We begin with *This Side of Paradise* where Fitzgerald makes at least two attempts to highlight the hero's rejection of technology. The most significant example, of course, is his speech in the Locomobile at the end of the novel. The other comes earlier when, in a mood of disillusionment, he wanders away from his friend's car, declines the

offer of ‘further locomotion or stimulation’, and walks to his hotel. (234) Whilst Fitzgerald would have us see him as an alienated hero, aloof from the restless youth sub-culture, it is, as we have seen, difficult to see Amory as anything other than shallow. Of course, Amory Blaine’s rejection of street and automobile may likewise be read as self-presencing, but here too, for reasons also adumbrated, we tend to judge Amory as an unheroic failure.

Gatsby, however, is different in the same way that Forster’s *A Passage to India* might be said to be different from the Englishman’s other fictions. Both *Gatsby* and *A Passage* articulate a complex view of machinery and its relationship to humanity. In *Gatsby*, as has been suggested, we find a full and thorough representation of the American tragic hero who, whilst failing to realise a dream, is ennobled through its greatness. As we have also seen, Gatsby’s car bespeaks a capacity to wonder and emblematises a desire to make good those things that have fallen apart through carelessness, neglect, and selfishness. Moreover, the winged Rolls-Royce suggests Gatsby’s yearning for the things of heaven; his profound displacement from the temporal world; his ghostliness, if you like. As a classic, furthermore, the car hints at a certain conquest over time. All of these things and more, then, foreground Gatsby’s almost mythic stature in a world that desperately needs heroes. All of these things, moreover, paradoxically highlight his indifference to the gaudy objects that he has collected and obviously once valued.³²⁷ Truly, his performance is not in these things but in his capacity to dream and in his ability to emerge as one of the few real characters in a novel full of disappointingly inauthentic figures. As the conclusion to this paper will assert, whilst the technical world drags him down he is redeemed as a human being because he tries. However, before so concluding, it is germane to pause and see whether the struggle against technology is similarly represented in other texts. A brief look at D. H. Lawrence’s *The Plumed Serpent* confirms that it is.

In D. H. Lawrence’s fiction, as we have seen, ‘the world’ is represented by the ‘lurching and hissing’ motor-car. (Lawrence: *PS*: 105) We have seen too that Lawrence paints a picture of a dark and deprived world in which beings have succumbed to *das Gestell* and so are squandered. But like his contemporaries, Lawrence believes in the

acquisition of an authentic identity in a world that seems to put up barriers to this and so, whilst Gatsby's apotheosis is rooted in his ability to dream and Mrs Moore is Indianized, Kate, who, for the first three-quarters of *The Plumed Serpent* is identified with 'the world's cog-wheels', finally abrogates the destructive forces within herself and cleaves to the primitive mysticism of an Aztec renaissance. (100) As in Forster's fiction, the 'primeval passion of the prehistoric races' is asserted through silence, dance, or a spiritual music that defies definition; a music against which is counterpointed the blasphemous and hostile 'note...of mechanical dominance.'³²⁸ (108, 85)

The naturalistic, smoothly turning twin wheels of the Quetzalcoatl's men's dance then contrasts to the crude 'cog-wheels' of the West: the wheels of modern technics as they are variously represented in the novel. Whilst the machinations of modern technics generally symbolises the void; a loss of being, this dance, like Anna's of *The Rainbow*, signifies a profound self-actualisation: Beingness. It is a dance 'belonging to aboriginal America' through which is stimulated 'a strange, submerged desire...for things beyond the world.' (244) So it follows that Don Ramon's world is one where the primitive technologies of ox wagon, black-smith, and carpenter are preferred over the various technical triumphs of the West; a world in which a crude but quintessentially Mexican sculpture might supplant the automobile as a cultural sign.³²⁹

Conclusion

N*arratives of Conquest and Destruction* has sought to highlight how the motor-car is employed by both Forster and Fitzgerald as an emblem of our desires and as a sign of cultural breakdown. Moreover, it has drawn attention to that fact that far from idling unobtrusively in the background of texts, the automobile is actually a powerful engine, erupting through the fictions of Forster and Fitzgerald as a semantic vehicle and as a formal mechanism which, if absent, would seriously compromise the structural integrity, narrative impetus, and semiotic richness of their novels and stories.

For many readers, however, if the automobile does not simply merge into the background rumblings of modern culture, it is interpreted as an emblem of endless plenty: as sign of unlimited agency; as a metonym for progress; as a vehicle for conquest. After all, as the first half of this thesis makes clear, the car expresses a multiplicity of human desires: the desire for cultural pre-eminence; the desire to play the king; the desire to humiliate social subordinates; the desire for a womb substitute; the desire to get away from it all whilst retaining a sense of personal space; and the desire to mobilise the libido. As this last point suggests, the automobile also communicates a desire for the magnification of our physical powers. Of course, it additionally bespeaks our desire for escape and transcendence: our wish to abolish both space and time; our need to buck the fixed schedule; our wish to leave behind our cares, worries, and responsibilities. Finally, the motor-car communicates our need to escape ourselves.

However, as the major fictions of E. M. Forster and F. Scott Fitzgerald assert, the agency enhancing capacities of the machine are actually mythical. Indeed, what modernity imposes on us by way of technique is a new prohibition for every apparent freedom that is given. In his *Ideas of Technology*, Jacques Ellul writes that whilst technique frees us from all sorts of historical limitations, ‘new limits and technical oppressions have taken place of the older, natural constraints...’ (Ellul

in Stover: 18) Elsewhere he writes: 'The machine's senses and organs have multiplied the powers of human senses and organs, enabling man to penetrate a new milieu and revealing to him unknown sights, liberties, and servitudes. He has been liberated little by little from physical constraints, but he is all the more the slave of abstract ones...' (Ellul: 325) Marshall Berman puts it another way: '...anything that looks or feels like freedom or beauty is really only a screen for more profound enslavement and horror.' (Berman: 170)

Whilst the motor-car is generally identified with moving forward, Forster and Fitzgerald both assert that progress is not amelioration. Indeed, since the destructive forces of modern technics are far stronger than the constructive forces, it is not even as if the two sides of technology cancel each other out. Through their narratives, then, Forster and Fitzgerald argue that progress is by no means a neutral term given that it 'moves towards specific ends...transcend[ing] the realm of necessity to serve as an instrument of domination and exploitation.' (Marcuse: 16) For Marcuse, as for Forster and Fitzgerald, progress is therefore a synonym for proscription, pacification, and, most importantly, the nullification of Being. So it is that in their fictions, the automobile finally bespeaks economic catastrophe, the commodification of artifice, a debilitating cerebral mechanisticity, a paralysing psychic monochromacity, the inflexibility of bureaucratic and institutional technics, sexual anarchy, and the commodification of libido as it is brought into 'the realm of commodity production and exchange.' (Marcuse: 75) Moreover, the car foregrounds and contributes to a profound homelessness and the loss of our aboriginal strengths. Finally, in virtually all of the novels, it shatters our connection with the garden and bespeaks the breakdown of personal and social liaisons.

The result of all this, and it is, as we have seen, well adumbrated by both Forster and Fitzgerald, is that we fall away from our essential selves, acquiring in the process an inauthentic, 'public' consciousness for which the motor-car is a sign in modern fiction. However, in highlighting opposition to the mechanical, their fictions also point to the possibility of transcendence over collapse. As Robert Linhart writes in *L'Etabli*, '...life hits back...[t]he muscles resist. The nerves

resist. Something in the body and in the mind rebels against repetition and annihilation....[and cries out] I am not a machine!’ (Linhart: 34) Like the socio-political and philosophical tracts of the period, their texts are an attempt to come to terms with a profoundly unstable social context in which human beings and machines have come into conflict. Having read Forster’s and Fitzgerald’s narratives of conquest and destruction, the overwhelming question that remains for us as readers is: Can human beings rise above the Machine and permanently alter its operations so that it is never again a threat?

Kuno’s warning in Forster’s ‘**The Machine Stops**’ suggests that the answer is no. Panikkar agrees, writing that a ‘wild minority *tries* to escape’ but that, for the greater part, we are tamed and enslaved: paralysed and subdued by the self-justifying voice that promises us liberty through innovation.’ (246) The motor-car, then, always ‘wins’ in modern fiction although through his enchanted objects (motor-car included) it must be observed that Fitzgerald’s *Gatsby* does bring to modern life a carnival of energy, light, and sound. That the brilliance is entirely ephemeral, that it is so completely transitory, does little to reduce the machine’s aura. Indeed, to simply claim that *Gatsby* gets it wrong in seeking the spirit of the frontier in the gaudy creations of capitalism is to miss Fitzgerald’s point that, so long as we are aloof to the worldly significance of such objects, we may nonetheless be guided by them to ‘a secret place above the trees...’ where we too might ‘suck on the pap of life, gulp down the incomparable milk of wonder.’ (Fitzgerald: *GG*: 106-107)

While all of the fictions considered in this thesis betray a certain ambivalent attitude to technology, Fitzgerald’s *Gatsby* and Forster’s *A Passage to India* especially highlight the paradox of the motor-car. It is a paradox worth rehearsing once again. Just as we are made more human by transcending the machine, the automobile nonetheless has some functions that are themselves ostensibly conducive to humanity. As noted above, the first half of this thesis traverses this ground by asserting that the car affords us a means of highlighting our economic status, enables us to achieve a degree of social fulfilment in that we can ride like kings, provides us with a home away from home (and therefore permits us a measure of private expression), lets us escape the pressures

of urban life (thereby appearing to promote an identification with the countryside), facilitates the conquest over time and space that to some extent defines humanity, enables us (purportedly) to escape schedules and responsibilities, facilitates a spurious agency as heroes of the highway, gives us an ‘on the road’ education of dubious quality, and points to certain spiritual truths. However, as we have also seen, the second half of this thesis highlights that most of these ‘freedoms’ are illusory. In the end, if the machine works for us (as it does in Forster’s *A Passage to India*) it is by accident, and certainly not by design. Moreover, as Luther knew, we may not be divorced from the material world and so rise above it.³³⁰

Forster and Fitzgerald knew so too and their fictions assert that whilst we may, and indeed must, rise up against the machine, ‘the destiny of the technological civilisation is death.’ (Panikkar: 252) As in the *Ashoka* story, there is, in the narratives of Forster and Fitzgerald, a tacit acceptance of the fact that once the machine has been taken in by a society there is no going back. However, by offering resistance to the machine, there is a feeling that we may nonetheless forestall, for a time, its ineluctable and terrible advance. Of course, both writers also acknowledge that for many, the illusion of freedom yielded up by the machine is too great; that technology establishes such a hold over some beings that they are blinded to the truth and so nonchalantly, or even enthusiastically, seek to connect with all sorts of mechanisms. And so despite the fact that Grahame’s Toad is thrown from a motor-car into a swamp (thus being returned to his true place of origin) one cannot help but feel that at any time he might honour an earlier commitment:

“Then you don’t promise,” said the Badger,
“never to touch a motor-car again?”
“Certainly not!” replied Toad emphatically.
“On the contrary, I faithfully promise that the
very first motor-car I see, poop-poop! off I go
in it!”

- ends -

Notes

Chapter One

¹ It is possible that the pronoun 'she' as applied to various transit technologies including ships, aeroplanes, and automobiles is an expression of cultural transference. A number of motor-cars have earned feminine nick-names such as 'Tin Lizzie' and 'Ford Betsy'.

² The ownership of superior bloodstock was, and still is, an essential element of aristocratic life - a fact that Fitzgerald's Tom Buchanan, with his string of ponies, is acutely aware of.

³ In his *Tirocinium* of 1785 William Cowper lists '...skill in coachmanship, or driving chaise...' as among the accomplishments of an educated man. See Cowper: 248.

⁴ See *Pride and Prejudice*: 28

⁵ See fig. 13

⁶ The first electric road vehicle was built by Robert Anderson in 1839.

⁷ *OFW*: 30: 594

⁸ See fig. 2

⁹ Decades earlier Karl Marx had written: 'Of all the great motors handed down from the manufacturing period, horse-power is the worst, partly because a horse has a head of its own, partly because he is costly, and the extent to which he is applicable in factories is very restricted.' (K. Marx: 183)

¹⁰ See fig. 1

¹¹ Some designers had gone to the trouble of attaching false horse heads to the fronts of their machines. French designer Emile Lavassor was the first to break with tradition and put the motor at the front of the vehicle.

¹² Wolfgang Sachs cites the 1911 register of the German Automobile Club. See *For Love of the Automobile*, p.180.

¹³ See Sachs: 12

¹⁴ This explains why so many closed cars had canvas roof sections.

¹⁵ It is surprising how often automobiles are misidentified in criticisms of *Gatsby*. Tony Tanner's error can be proved by the fact that the second man (and driver) who emerges from the crashed coupe outside Gatsby's mansion would have been quite visible in an open car. See *Gatsby*, p.55. Besides, soft-tops (convertibles) were known as drop-head-coupes, cabriolets, or landaulets.

¹⁶ See Veblen, p. 67. Manufactures of today's luxury cars occasionally suggest that their models are hand made - a result of fitting a bewildering array of optional extras to a nonetheless standard automobile. For instance, a 1992 BMW brochure announces that 'Your BMW 5 series could be the only one of its kind.' See *The BMW 5 Series*, Berlin: 1992, p.

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¹⁷ See Cox & Dyson, p. 70

¹⁸ From its infancy, the motor industry has enjoyed a special dispensation from the social code which says that gentlemen do not engage in trade.

¹⁹ Shaw: *MS*: Act 3: 104

²⁰ Personal interview, 20 March 1993

²¹ See fig. 5.

²² W. A. Robotham writes that 'one of the more fascinating aspects of Rolls-Royce car production in the twenties was the manufacture of the body at the many coach-building establishments that existed in London, the provinces and Paris.' (Robotham: 14)

²³ I use the term 'ego' as it is popularly appreciated. In Freudian psychology, it is of course the operation of the ego and super-ego that keeps in check the primitive drives of the id.

²⁴ It is possible that the gentlemen's car in Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* may have inspired Forster. Certainly, the description of the interior of Henry Wilcox's car suggests the womb and as such foregrounds the idea that the 'natural' has been replaced by the 'mechanical'.

²⁵ Recently, two of my neighbours observed a third neighbour driving a new Audi A6. One of the men commented that the car was 'a beautiful thing', the other replying: 'It's all right for some'. Forster seems to be conscious of the two points of view, but would appear to have trouble accepting the first man's appreciation of form without regard to the content. Sachs too regards such a perspective not as a special ability but as a blindness to the cultural meanings of technical constructs. See Sachs: 91.

²⁶ See Robotham, p. 15.

²⁷ Among these classical undertones are: allusions to Petronius, Homer, and Joyce, references to the classical travel guide (the Baedeker), references to classical antiquity, biblical symbolism, the feigning of classical poses (including the one Gatsby himself strikes on the dash-board of his car), and references to classical architecture.

²⁸ This association between luxury cars and royal (or at least aristocratic) status was also observed by D. H. Lawrence. In *The Rainbow*, Skrebensky's acquisition of a motor-car is pertinent to his aristocratic background whilst in *Women in Love* Birken drives 'like an Egyptian Pharaoh...seated in immemorial potency.' (335) Colonel T. E. Lawrence also noted the relationship between royalty and automobility. In *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, he writes of '...driving like kings splendidly in our roaring cars.' (524) Wolfgang Sachs believes that the high wheel-bases of the early automobiles reinforced the prepotency of the privileged, but, as Lawrence reminds us, physical elevation was just as significant in the days of the horse and coach. In *The Rainbow*, for example, Anna Brangwen rides 'high up' in her father's pony trap, 'her passion for eminence and dominance [thus] satisfied.' (85)

²⁹ One mid twenties advertisement for P-A features a disconsolate, sorry looking man beneath whom appears the following text: The man who mistook a Pierce-Arrow for another make. This would have been a serious social gaffe and helps to explain the importance of Fitzgerald's choice of automobile in '**The Diamond**'.

³⁰ See *The Great Gatsby*, p. 66

³¹ See *Women in Love*, p. 234

³² See Sachs, p. 14

³³ Of course, the employment of a chauffeur means that entrepreneurs like Wilcox can conduct business whilst in transit - the very reason why modern luxury automobiles come equipped with hands-free car telephones, voice-activated answering systems, multi-function steering wheels, and the like. In this sense, the employment of a chauffeur may indeed bespeak efficiency.

³⁴ Sir Len Southward, from personal interview 20. 03. 1993. As an example of the complexity of the early automobiles, Southward cites the 1904 Wolsey which one had to drive with one's legs crossed since the clutch pedal was on the right. The same car, like most models from contemporary manufacturers, had a difficult to operate rev-dependent in-line gear shift.

³⁵ See p. 23, above.

³⁶ In a rare lapse of critical perception, D. H. Lawrence misread *Howards End* writing to Forster that a mistake had been made in '[glorifying] those *business* people...' (D. H. Lawrence: *Letters*: 552) Lawrence, it would seem, had made the mistake of taking representations of wealth at face value rather than as implied criticisms of cultural intemperance. The fact that, despite his extraordinary impertinence, Crane maintains his employment in *Howards End* suggests that he is indispensable and that, therefore, Wilcox is the slave. This is an irony that did not escape G. B. Shaw whose figure Tanner complains in *Man and Superman* that his chauffeur Straker 'positively likes the car to break down because it brings out my gentlemanly helplessness and his workmanlike skill and resource.' (Shaw: *MS*: Act 2: 76)

³⁷ As his *Man and Superman* suggests, Shaw also understood this.

³⁸ Early in the twentieth century, the de Dion motor company ran a poster showing a woman at the wheel of a new and rather fast-moving roadster whilst her disconsolate, dark-skinned driver sits, arms folded, at her side. See fig. 7.

³⁹ During the equally prosperous 1970s, an even more adventurous experimentation was under way. Taking their cues from the phenomenon of psychedelia, manufacturers put out cars in colours ranging from a startling aqua-marine to a metallic mustard.

⁴⁰ We will see how yellow is the colour of dreams and the outer life in Fitzgerald's fiction. See pp 104 – 105, below. In 'The Diamond', the Washington's Rolls-Pierce has a golden interior and its wheels are studded with yellow jewels.

⁴¹ 'He returns to his machine; seats himself in it; and turns up a fresh page of his paper...' (Stage direction, *MS*, Act Two, p.80)

Chapter Two

⁴² In making such an assertion we must be aware that Egyptian culture employed human labour as a form of machinery.

⁴³ In response to Mr. Ferguson's story (see p. 12, above) about a new hand-cranked, personal vehicle, Dr. Johnson is reported to have said: 'Then, Sir, what is gained is, the man has his choice whether he will move himself alone, or himself and the machine too.' (Boswell: 171)

⁴⁴ According to Leo Marx, Coxe was the first American to interpret the machine as a natural sign of his culture. See L. Marx: *MG*, pp. 155 – 163.

⁴⁵ In Lacey, pp. 47-48

⁴⁶ Of course, Eliot uses the motor-car quite directly: 'But at my back from time to time I hear / The sound of horns and motors...' (*TWL*: 197, p. 66)

⁴⁷ The text is capitalised in the original.

⁴⁸ Sir Len Southward remembers the early motor-cars as being 'terrifically loud'. Prior to 1914, many models lacked silencers - instead opting for straight, uninterrupted exhaust pipes. The 1912 four cylinder Buick, for example, 'made a fearful din and was actually barred from public roads in New Zealand since it had no noise reduction system of any sort.' (Sir Len Southward)

⁴⁹ Nietzsche was adored by the Futurists. Mussolini's over-simplified 1911 interpretation of Nietzsche met with the approval of Marinetti and his cronies who concurred with his notion of the destructive libertine. 'Futurism shared at least three characteristics with Fascism -

romantic and uninformed glorification of the machine (technology) in society, the use of physical violence against opponents, and infatuation with youth... .' (Bozzolla & Tisdall: 200)

⁵⁰ Addressed to a Mercedes touring car, W. E. Henley's poem 'A Song of Speed' uses meter to express and celebrate the rhythm of the machine age.

⁵¹ Like the sleepy cat of 'The Love Song', the 'waiting', 'throbbing', 'human engine' of 'The Waste Land' could always spring into noisy life.

⁵² In the best Byronic tradition, George McDonald Fraser's *Flashman* takes advantage of numerous women in coaches.

⁵³ In the 1940s, John Steinbeck observed that 'most of the babies of the era were conceived in the Ford Model T, and not a few of them were born in them.' (Steinbeck in Pizer: 50) There is little doubt that as the motor-car enhanced geographical horizons it also increased sexual agency, making it possible for men and women to follow primal urgings. Ironically, Ford is credited with changing the mating habits of a nation.

⁵⁴ Personal interview 12 Sept. 1994. Name withheld.

⁵⁵ The song was written in 1905

⁵⁶ See fig. 4

⁵⁷ See fig. 24

⁵⁸ See Piper, p. 59

⁵⁹ The ownership of a motor-car by any youth was considered extraordinary at this time. In his biography of Fitzgerald, Arthur Mizener notes that in 1913 there were only six undergraduate motor-cars in Princeton. See Mizener, p. 15

⁶⁰ See Kronhausen & Kronhausen, p. 8

⁶¹ Freud only mentions the motor-car once in the whole of his *General Introduction*: 'A man related as a dream that he and his uncle were sitting in the latter's auto and his uncle kissed him. The dreamer himself instantly volunteered the interpretation: it meant auto-eroticism...Now was this man allowing himself a joke at our expense and pretending that a pun which occurred to him was part of a dream? I do not think so.' (Freud: 542-543)

⁶² In order to gain power and speed, early motor-car manufacturers simply enlarged engine capacity. Jacques-Henri Lartigue's 1929 photograph of a Hispano Suiza 32hp betrays careful use of single point perspective to suggest the phallus. See fig. 19. Contemporary slang also reinforced the connection. The term 'thruster', for instance, was in common usage from c. 1910 and was applied to those who sought to dominate the road by thrusting their machines ahead of others. Source: *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*: Vol 2, p. 1,398

⁶³ Tom's status as a 'take over' man is variously manifested. He has taken over an oil man's house, he takes over another man's wife, and he takes over Gatsby's car on the way up to New York. All of Tom's women are 'taken' as trophies. Wolfgang Sachs writes that '[d]riving...necessitates an egocentric perspective in which other drivers appear...as competitors. These competitors call on one both to strive for victory and to fear defeat; driving in the end is experienced as a series of small rebuffs and triumphs.' See Sachs, p. 116.

⁶⁴ See Paulson in Bloom, p. 78.

⁶⁵ In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf recounted seeing from her London window a man and a woman getting into a Taxi. This scene, she felt, symbolised the two sexes that reside within each of us and that must live in harmony if we are to live wholly.' (Dowling: *MD*: 81 from *A Room of One's Own*, pp. 96 - 97

⁶⁶ The motor-car does, of course, facilitate a romantic connection in *Lady Chatterly's Lover* when Hilda delivers Connie to Mellors' cottage. See Lawrence: *LC*, pp. 201- 203

⁶⁷ See Flink, *AA*, p. 88

⁶⁸ In the same year, Kenneth Grahame completed *The Wind in the Willows* – the first novel to deal with the negative effects of motoring on the environment.

⁶⁹ Of course, this is another clue as to the identity of the death car. Gatsby's Rolls-Royce has green leather upholstery.

⁷⁰ He even sends a greenhouse over to Nick's place.

⁷¹ Not long after, Ettore Bugatti abandoned his paint brushes to design his first motor-car.

⁷² Cf the stylised, romanticised imagery of Jean Boucher's sculpture at the Place St.

Ferdinand - a monument to Leon Serpollet, ex holder of the land-speed record in the steam-car.

⁷³ In 1910 a form of speed-camera was developed by the French firm, *Gaumont*. The Futurists were aware of it, and this device too had considerable influence on them.

⁷⁴ In 1907, Felice Nazzaro won the Targa Florio and the prestigious Grand Prix of the Automobile Club de France in a Fiat whilst Nando Minoia drove a Milan-built machine to victory in Spain. An Italia won the Peking - Paris endurance race of the same year.

⁷⁵ See Grahame, p.30

⁷⁶ Lawrence's use of the word 'mournful' paradoxically undercuts this triumphant tone. The colonel is, apparently, reflecting on the destructive aspect of his machine.

⁷⁷ Rolls is the nick-name of Lawrence's driver.

⁷⁸ See p.188, below.

⁷⁹ Fitzgerald had intended to entitle the novel '*The Flight of the Rocket*'. See Fitzgerald: *Letters*, p. 145.

⁸⁰ A full discussion of character determination may be found in Barthes' *S/Z*, pp. 94ff.

⁸¹ As we have seen, despite publicly criticising the automobile, letters to his mother reveal that Forster enjoyed motoring. See p. 60, above.

⁸² The cabriolet was originally a seventeenth century horse carriage with two wheels, two seats, and a fold-back hood. Its wheel shafts were rigidly fixed to body causing the carriage to 'caper about' quite madly. The word derives from the French 'cabrioler'.

⁸³ Personal interview: Arthur Symmonds, aged 100.

⁸⁴ One of Henry Leyland's friends actually died from the vicious kick-back of a crank-handle.

⁸⁵ Electric automobiles do not require hand-cranking, one of several reasons why women favoured them.

⁸⁶ An early twentieth century advertisement by Liberty Co. promoted a motor bonnet designed to protect women's hair from the ravages of wind whilst giving them the freedom of the road. See Rolt, p. 97

⁸⁷ Wharton travelled with her husband and their chauffeur, Charles Cook.

⁸⁸ Jordan's name in fact points to a certain androgyny. See p.209, below.

⁸⁹ Wolfgang Sachs writes that '[t]echnically and organisationally, the railroad [is] a thoroughly postfeudal means of conveyance'. (Sachs: 9)

⁹⁰ See *Anticipations*, p. 14

⁹¹ In 1928 Al Capone spent a then massive US\$30,000 lining his Cadillac with quarter-inch steel plating.

⁹² When assessing Gatsby's agency as a machine-borne repudiator of authority, we must always remember his association with the criminal under-world.

⁹³ From *Save Me for The Waltz* in *The Collected Writings of Zelda Fitzgerald*, p. 54

⁹⁴ The current television advertising campaign by Nissan (for its Maxima business sedan) features a young executive looking in his rear-view mirror to see his diary, which he had left on top of the machine, strewn all over the road. Instead of going back to pick up all the pieces, the young man smiles and accelerates away.

Chapter 3

⁹⁵ In 1934, one month before Clyde and his machine-gun toting sweetheart were shot by police, Clyde wrote to Henry Ford: *Dear Sir; While I still have breath in my lungs I will tell you what a dandy car you make. I have drove [sic] Fords exclusively when I could get away with one. For sustained speed and freedom from trouble the Ford has got every car skinned and even if my business hasn't been strictly legal it don't hurt anything [sic] to tell you what a fine car you got in the V-8. Yours Truly, Clyde Champion Barrow* (Barrow in Pizer: 71)

⁹⁶ See *Studies in Classic American Literature*, pp. 154 - 168

⁹⁷ It is, of course, in their abject failure to come to terms with India's spirit that Forster's interest really lies. It will be shown later that they failed to overcome India's geography as well.

⁹⁸ See Fitzgerald: *GG*, pp. 62 – 67.

⁹⁹ Toad is cast as Ulysses in the novel's final chapter.

¹⁰⁰ In *The Egoist*, T. S. Eliot complained that the Georgian sensibility amounted to little more than a 'caress' of culture. (Eliot: *The Egoist*: March, 1918: in Symonds, p. 19) Other commentators found the era equally torpid. See Ezra Pound's '**Hugh Selwyn Mauberly**'. Had Eliot looked at Britain's performance in the motor industry, however, he might have judged the spirit of the country less harshly. By 1907 the output of cycles, motor-cycles, and motor-cars exceeded the production value of locomotives - thus showing that England was prepared to look forward.

¹⁰¹ Shaw had a passion for his machine and often took long European excursions in it, claiming that research and a need for self expression necessitated same: 'I drive half the day...I am already twice the man I was when I left...' (Shaw to Barker: in Holroyd, p. 209)

¹⁰² We must be cautious about so pigeon-holing Kenneth Grahame because he finally condemns the technological as a mode of being by having Toad abandon the motor-car and return home to dwell at Toad Hall.

¹⁰³ It is important to distinguish between Shaw's use of the term 'superman' and its usage by Nietzsche. Shaw did not adopt the notion of the all conquering, ruthless being who would shrug off the human impulses of compassion and forgiveness in order to become the embodiment of Might. However, he did fully adhere to the Nietzschean principle that 'man is a bridge; not the goal.' Echoing Nietzsche's words from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*... 'I sing you the Superman...', Tanner surrogate, Don Juan, says: 'I sing... the philosophic man: he who seeks in contemplation to discover the inner will of the world, in invention to discover the means of fulfilling that will.' (Shaw: *MS*: Act 3: 139)

¹⁰⁴ As observed earlier, in modern fiction, the automobile often represents internal drives. The *OED* notes the psychological meaning of the word 'drive': 'Any internal mechanism which sets an organism moving or sustains its activity in a certain direction, or causes it to pursue a certain satisfaction.'

¹⁰⁵ The Parliament scene is to be read as a contest between Shaw's optimism, for which the Tanner surrogate Don Juan speaks, and the argument, presented by the Devil, which says that

man is destined to destroy himself. The motor-car, of course, is a perfect symbol for both philosophical positions.

¹⁰⁶ Fitzgerald saw himself as belonging in the 'great company' of Shaw and H. G. Wells. See Fitzgerald's letter to Shane Leslie, February 1918 in F. S. Fitzgerald: *Letters*, p. 373

¹⁰⁷ 'Car' here refers to a train carriage.

¹⁰⁸ Automobile theft was common by the early twenties with stolen machines commonly driven across state lines and then abandoned. See Burness, pp. 34 – 35. By 1921, 8000 cars were stolen in Los Angeles - reaching a peak of 11,541 in 1926. See Flink: *AA*, p. 88.

¹⁰⁹ We see the same thing in *Gatsby* where the hero is seen to quest rather than drift aimlessly like the other characters.

¹¹⁰ Among those to celebrate the intoxicating effects of driving at speed were Sherwood Anderson, George Bernard Shaw, and Oliver St. John Gogarty whose passion for pace was legendary.

¹¹¹ See *Machines of Death* in *bibilo*.

¹¹² See Sachs, p. 91. Here may well lie another reason for Fitzgerald's choice of the Rolls-Royce as principal mode of transport for Gatsby. Gatsby is, after all, said to be 'about his father's business', and is 'dedicated to the following of a grail'.

¹¹³ There is little doubt that literature's most famous death-car is Gatsby's Rolls Royce, and that it is, moreover, a Silver Ghost model. We will see that Fitzgerald provides some very strong clues about this, which appear not to have been picked up on by previous commentators. Besides, with his profound insight into the cultural significance of proper names (and given the careful references to both silver and ghosts in the text), it is most unlikely that the author had in mind any other make or model.

¹¹⁴ In his seminal essay '*Scott Fitzgerald's Criticism of America*', Marius Bewley erroneously identifies the death car as white. See Bewley in Lockridge, p. 51.

¹¹⁵ See fig. 15.

¹¹⁶ See Fitzgerald: *GG*, p. 145

¹¹⁷ That Gatsby's motor-car is not pure yellow may suggest the corruption of the hero's own dreams.

¹¹⁸ As often in Fitzgerald's fiction, dreams of escape from temporal realities are undercut.

¹¹⁹ Berofsky writes that the concept of agent worth, a phenomenon which lies very much at the heart of *Gatsby*, is determined by the extent to which an individual agent counts or admits moral factors as being relevant to his deliberations. See Berofsky, p. 12.

¹²⁰ Cf St. John of the Cross: 'Hence the soul cannot be possessed of the divine union, until it has divested itself of the love of created things.'

¹²¹ Like his character double Nick, Gatsby is both within and without.

¹²² '*Trimalchio in West Egg*' was one of several alternative titles Fitzgerald considered for *The Great Gatsby*. See the author's letter to Maxwell Perkins in Fitzgerald's *Letters* p. 169

¹²³ Cf Joyce's Dedalus who, in *A Portrait*, desires 'to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his soul so constantly beheld.' (Joyce: *AP*: 66) It is unlikely that it would have escaped Fitzgerald's attention that the Rolls-Royce itself was a product of a ten year dream.

¹²⁴ We are expressly told by Nick that Gatsby's house 'looks like the World's Fair', the hero's guests conducting themselves 'according to the rules of behaviour expected in an amusement park.' (79, 43)

¹²⁵ As a formal, structural device we will see later that they also play a part in relieving the tragedy of *Gatsby*.

¹²⁶ The original manuscript of the novel refers to the machine as a 'compact sun'. (Long: 161) Gatsby is, at several points, found looking heavenward.

¹²⁷ The Encyclopaedia Britannica notes that the right-hand swastika is a solar symbol, imitating the sun's rotation. (*EB*: 11: 433: 1b) Among Gatsby's many mythic progenitors is the Greek sun-god, Apollo.

¹²⁸ See Lockridge, p. 13

¹²⁹ The relationship between powered flight and the development of automobility has already been adumbrated.

¹³⁰ Constructivism, a movement in abstract art which evolved in Russia after World War One, also explored the use of movement and employed machine-age materials in sculpture.

¹³¹ See Benton, p. 25

¹³² Zelda Fitzgerald writes: 'There seemed to be some heavenly support beneath his shoulder blades that lifted his feet from the ground in ecstatic suspension, as if he secretly enjoyed the ability to fly... .' (Z. Fitzgerald: *Save Me for the Waltz*: 37)

¹³³ For example, see Euripides' *Iphigeneia* and *Medea*.

¹³⁴ The colour green in Fitzgerald's fiction generally has uplifting, bucolic associations, the protagonist hopeful that the bus's 'stick of candy glamour might penetrate [his grey] disposition.' (F. S. Fitzgerald: *SP*: 137) Cf Nick's feeling of gladness that 'Gatsby's splendid car' is 'included in [the] sombre holiday' of the funeral procession of the fourth chapter. (F. S. Fitzgerald: *GG*: 67)

¹³⁵ It is entirely fitting to the *Deus ex machina* tradition that the Europeans in India are likened to 'little gods'.

Chapter 4

¹³⁶ Fitzgerald's own financial excesses extended to the purchase of extravagant motor-cars – including the second-hand Silver Ghost that he and Zelda bought in 1920.

¹³⁷ In fact, the automobile boom and the economic prosperity of the 1920s was 'short-lived and illusory'. (Flink: *AA*: 189) By the mid twenties, the market for both new and used cars was at least 75% underpinned by instalment payment schemes. See Flink: *AA*, p. 191

¹³⁸ Nick's fantasy that Wilson's dark and oily garage might conceal 'sumptuous' apartments makes us wonder if there might be an obscure word-play on 'sump'. Certainly, Nick's diction reinforces the depressing and scungy realities of Wilson's life.

¹³⁹ Williams' famous declaration that a poem is 'a machine made of words' is commonly misinterpreted. Rather than highlighting any approval of the mechanical world, Williams is simply highlighting that a poem should only have essential words, just as a machine should only have essential parts and that, moreover, the words should work together harmoniously like the various components of a machine.

¹⁴⁰ Ironically, Hitler's Volkswagon was meant to convey the same sentiments.

¹⁴¹ This explains the will to customise mass-produced motor-cars.

¹⁴² In 1924, half of the cars in the world were Fords. By 1927, when the Model-T went out of production, 15,007,003 Tin Lizzies had been produced. In 1900, registered motor vehicles numbered some 8,000 in the US – a figure that rose to 500,000 in 1910. This is an increase of over 500%. See Cherry, p. 74

¹⁴³ As is the case today, in the 1920s a huge parts and customising industry grew up to provide approved or unapproved accessories such as new springs and shock absorbers, nickel plated bumpers, spare wheel covers, and even new streamlined bodies. During the nineteen years of its production, the Model-T had more than 500 available accessories – most of them

not approved by Ford. Indeed, a multiplicity of auto-allied industries sprang up to support the manufacture of the motor-car. In 1917 Detroit boasted 23 motor-vehicle manufacturers and there were 132 allied parts firms. See Lacey, p. 62.

¹⁴⁴ See Cox & Dyson, p.66. By 1914, Leland Motors' sales had topped £500,000 and its net profit was well over £100,000. See Turner, p.2.

¹⁴⁵ Between 1896 and 1911, the number of books loaned out by British public libraries increased from 26 to 54 million. See Cox & Dyson, p. 77

¹⁴⁶ In his seminal *The Revolt of the Masses*, Jose Ortega y Gasset writes: 'This essay is an attempt to discover the diagnosis of our time... .' (36)

¹⁴⁷ By the early 1920s, American manufacturers were producing 100,000 cars a year.

¹⁴⁸ See Burness, p. 91

¹⁴⁹ See Fraser in Bloom, p. 67

¹⁵⁰ Jordan's driving suggests just such a disposition.

¹⁵¹ Nick's timetable, like the other lists in the novel, also suggests a proclivity for order and empiricism.

¹⁵² The closed car also appears in Eliot's '**The Waste Land**' where it is a refuge from outside stimulants: 'And if it rains, a closed car at four'. In his recently published *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*, urban designer Richard Sennett calls the closed automobile a womb substitute and a self-contained pleasure. He argues that the motor-car has produced a cosiness that enfeebles our responses to bodily stimuli.

¹⁵³ The official cars of today still tend to have sober colour schemes, black and grey being favoured by most Western governments.

¹⁵⁴ In cities all over Europe, exhaust fumes make a significant contribution to the dirtying and demise of building facades.

¹⁵⁵ Grey tends to be the colour of the establishment in Woolf's fiction. Lady Bradshaw's class privilege is also foregrounded through her husband's automobile. Late in the novel, as she waits for him in the car outside his rooms, she is said to be drowning among 'grey rugs' and 'grey furs'. (Woolf: *MD*: 111)

¹⁵⁶ See E. M. Forster's story '**The Celestial Omnibus**'.

¹⁵⁷ Classical scholar A. D. Godley (1856 - 1925) formed the modern macaronic '**Motor Bus**'. It goes thus: '*Domine defende nos / Contra hos Motores-Bos*' - which translates: *Lord protect us from these motor-buses*. See *EB*: 7: 603.

¹⁵⁸ Today, the 'for hire' stretch limousine fulfils the same social function.

¹⁵⁹ In *The Beautiful and Damned*, taxis are represented as dull and plebeian vehicles. In what becomes a motif in the novel they are said to 'yawn' around the streets of New York. See Fitzgerald: *BD*, pp. 95, 100, & 378.

¹⁶⁰ Biographer Arthur Mizener observes that in 1924 Fitzgerald fought with a European taxi driver and ended up punching a plain clothes policeman who had come to investigate. Fitzgerald got badly beaten by one or both of these men and the incident haunted the author for many years. See Mizener, p. 68. Another biographer, Matthew Bruccoli, notes that whilst at Princeton, Fitzgerald fought with Harvey Firestone in the latter's car. Fitzgerald lost that fight too. See Bruccoli: *EG*, p. 143

¹⁶¹ See Fitzgerald: *GG*, p. 145

¹⁶² Heidegger's definition, here adumbrated, is not inconsistent with my own above in that in turning to the world, one aligns oneself with institutionalism, governmentality, monocultural values, and so on.

¹⁶³ The words here are Kate Leslie's, from D. H. Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent*.

¹⁶⁴ Lawrence is at pains to highlight the fact that, until the final third of the novel, Kate's Irish-European consciousness remains intact and that when she finally surrenders her Western being to Mexican culture she finds a truly authentic and profoundly non-mechanical mode of self-revealing.

¹⁶⁵ G. K. Das makes the point that whilst punishments such as those proposed by the Collector's wife may seem comical exaggerations, Forster is actually alluding to orders given by General R. E. H. Dyer after a European girl was attacked in Amritsar. General Campbell's 'salaaming order' was no less objectionable and its representation here must be seen in the wider context of the humiliating requirements of the Raj.

¹⁶⁶ Lewis Mumford discerns the same truth, albeit with specific reference to physical (rather than institutional) technics: '...the emancipation from manual labour has brought about a new kind of enslavement: abject dependence upon the machine.' (*CH*: 572)

¹⁶⁷ This in itself implies the internalisation of machine ideology.

¹⁶⁸ See Panikkar: 241. Panikkar notes that the belief that machines have a ghost is still popular. After all, we insist on personifying the machine: we speak of 'disabling' the machine, 'conquering' the machine, 'limiting' the machine, 'banning' the machine, and so on. We speak of the machine as 'she'; we speak of the *Deus*. In so doing, we ascribe to the machine an independent capacity. In the modern world, observes Panikkar, we no longer have the *manus lunga* (the machine of first order, the extension of a person's hand) but the second-degree machine; that which obeys its own rules, sets its own rhythm, and which have to be followed by men. As Arthur Koestler notes in *The Ghost in the Machine*, the motor-car is an excellent example of such second order mechanisms in that to operate it one has to conform to a set pattern of manoeuvres with respect to gears, levers, and pedals.

¹⁶⁹ Mumford observes that 'it seems highly unlikely that submission to colourless repetition could have been achieved...without the millennial discipline of religious ritual.' (*MM*: 201)

¹⁷⁰ The qualification is apposite since some slaves rose to positions of great power.

¹⁷¹ See Davis et al., p. 46

¹⁷² When the Electronic Age arrived in the 1960s, there was a similarly positive, almost euphoric, reaction. Computers, it was thought, would free humanity from repetitious tasks, bring about a profound degree of social collocation, and guarantee a productive future. More than twenty years on, computers are ambivalently received since they have been found to cause eye strain, OOS, and 'terminal addiction'.

¹⁷³ That machines could have a destructive effect on the psychic life is suggested in Wordsworth's 'Excursion'.

¹⁷⁴ It would be erroneous to suggest that Butler subscribed seriously to the latter of these two notions. In a letter to Charles Darwin written just after the appearance of the first edition of *Erewhon*, Butler claimed to pursue the idea for fun. With reference to a myopic application of Darwin's theories he wrote: 'See how easy it is to be plausible, and what absurd propositions can be defended by a little ingenuity and distortion and departure from strict scientific methods'. (Butler in Gounelas: 27)

¹⁷⁵ About 60 years later, Oswald Spengler prophesied a time when 'man will blot the machine from his memory and his environment, and create about himself a wholly new world, in which nothing of this Devil's technique is left.' (Spengler in Chase: 14)

¹⁷⁶ See 'Lord of the Dynamos', 1894

¹⁷⁷ The late capital era usually refers to the electronic age from c. 1960. However, in considering late capital aetiology it is germane to observe that the apparent abolition of space and time so central to it, has, to some extent at least, its roots in the development of the rapid

transit technologies of the early twentieth century. In the USA, the internet is commonly called the 'info-highway' or the 'info super-highway'.

¹⁷⁸ John Ralston Saul's book, *Voltaire's Bastards*, considers the debilitating effects of the Western world's rational code. He writes: 'We are now more than four and a half centuries into an era which our obsession with progress and our servility to structure have caused us to name and rename a dozen times, as if this flashing of theoretically fundamental concepts indicated real movement.' (13-14)

¹⁷⁹ Many unscrupulous factory owners used Taylor's rationale to increase productivity but coupled this methodology with a low wage regime designed to boost profits.

¹⁸⁰ Taylor himself acted as an adviser to industry and personally oversaw the application of his principles to many major companies.

¹⁸¹ The word 'automation' was actually coined in the 1940s at the Ford Motor Co.

¹⁸² At peak output, a Model-T came off the production line every 10 seconds. See Lacey, p.111

¹⁸³ Tasks that are precisely paced to the rhythm of the machine or the conveyor-belt transfer system are said to be particularly exhausting. See *EB*: 21: 206: 2b.

¹⁸⁴ See Peterson, pp. 63 - 64

¹⁸⁵ Gartman's epigraph to *Auto Slavery* is a Louis Burcar poem simply called 'Auto Slaves'. The poem begins: With the automatic movements timed to great / Machines, these metal-workers seem to reel / In some weird dance. Like marionettes they wheel / With insane music at a maddening rate. (Burcar in Gartmen: i)

¹⁸⁶ See Ellwood, p. 4. Ellwood also notes that Detroit has the highest per capita murder rate of any Western city.

¹⁸⁷ See Peterson, p. 49

¹⁸⁸ Today, in the following countries taken as a whole, more than 225 people die daily in auto crashes: New Zealand, Australia, UK, USA, Japan, Canada, Germany, Sweden, and France. It would seem that such fatalities are acceptable sacrifices to the efficiencies of motorised transport. Statistical source: 'International Comparisons' table in *NZ Official Year Book* (1997), p. 212

¹⁸⁹ Heidegger calls this consciousness 'machenschaft'.

¹⁹⁰ George Orwell's *Nineteen-Eighty-Four* makes this very point.

¹⁹¹ 'Technological rationality reveals its political character as it becomes the great vehicle of better domination creating a truly totalitarian universe.' (Marcuse: 18) It may be added that such a political character is in resurgence on today's 'info-bahn'.

¹⁹² Herbert Marcuse argues that far from providing the human being with a refuge, 'private space has been invaded and whittled down by technological reality' with 'mass production claim[ing] the entire individual.' (Marcuse: 10)

¹⁹³ This rationality of Ellul's is best exemplified by the process of systematisation: the creation of standards and the establishment of norms. Therefore Ellul makes the same distinction between technology and technique that Heidegger does, writing that: 'technique is the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency in every field of human activity'. (*Ellul*: xxv) For Ellul then, the machine itself is merely symptomatic of that towards which technique strives: pure *machenschaft*. Early in *The Technological Society* Ellul asserts that '[a]ll-embracing technique is in fact the consciousness of the mechanised world' and that 'when technique enters into every area of life...it ceases to be external to man and becomes his very substance...progressively absorb[ing] him' (*Ellul*: 6 - 7)

¹⁹⁴ In a world thus organised, Ellul claims that only the state can ‘put the brakes on technique.’ (Ellul: 305) Unlike Heidegger then, Ellul sees no hope of indemnity for modern people since, in embracing technique, the state has lost mastery over it.

¹⁹⁵ The European Fascists were to learn some useful lessons from Ford’s industrial methodology and the social theory of the Ford Sociology Department. Hitler, who announced that he was ‘a great admirer of Ford’, threatened ‘to do [his] best to put his theories into practise in Germany’. (Hitler in Flink: *CC*: 71) Ford’s self-congratulatory autobiography *My Life and Work* was a best seller in Germany. In his essay, ‘Energy and Equity’, Ivan Illich quotes José Antonio Viera-Gallo, Assistant Secretary of Justice in the government of Salvador Allende, who said: ‘El socialismo puede llegar sólo en bicicleta’ – You can only arrive at socialism on a bicycle.’ (Illich: 131)

¹⁹⁶ The Cubists, many of whom were mobilised between 1914 and 1918, were also profoundly affected by the anonymity of mechanised warfare.

¹⁹⁷ This so-called marriage between the technical and the human is one possible reason for Duchamp’s decision to re-title ‘Headlight Child’, ‘**The Bride**’. See fig. 23.

¹⁹⁸ This challenge to cubism was so radical that, when first exhibited, ‘**L’enfant**’ was hung, insultingly, under the stairs in the Grand Palais so that as few people as possible might see it.’ (Green: 49) See fig.22.

¹⁹⁹ Especially Keaton’s films ‘**The Navigator**’ (1924) and ‘**The General**’ (1926)

²⁰⁰ D. H. Lawrence said that all of modern society was ‘a steady sort of Bolshevism; just killing the human thing and worshipping the mechanical thing.’ (Lawrence in Lewis & Maude: 56)

²⁰¹ The perceived insanity of Americanism is directly emblematised by the automobile. See *PS*, p. 103

²⁰² For an amusing, though disturbing, insight into the endemic rationality of the school system, see Forster’s short story ‘**Co-ordination**’.

²⁰³ Significantly, those who controlled the technical apparatuses of the education system, the judicial system, the military system, and so on tended to own automobiles.

²⁰⁴ Vashti is a Hindu name.

²⁰⁵ Colonel Leyland first appears as Mr Leyland, the conceited, would-be artist in Forster’s ‘**The Story of a Panic**’.

²⁰⁶ Diary entry, 16 June 1908; in preface to *HE*: x

²⁰⁷ Dairy entry, 27 January 1908; in preface to *HE*: x

²⁰⁸ *ibid*

²⁰⁹ Ancillary industries to the motor-trade were booming by the 1920s, the rubber industry among them.

²¹⁰ In tacit confirmation, Forster himself turns to Ezekiel when he complains of ‘the muddle’ of India: ‘It is wheel within wheel.’ See Forster in Dowling: *BA*, p. 72

²¹¹ We are told about the right angles of the roads three times in the first chapter: here on page 10, earlier on page 9, and later on page 18. It is clearly a point that Forster wishes to reinforce.

²¹² Emphasis mine.

²¹³ Forster’s negative depiction of Ronny is, in part at least, informed by the petty officialdom the author encountered in Allahabad, an Indian city which he visited late in 1912.

²¹⁴ Other cultures represented in *A Passage* are similarly crushed beneath the wheels of bureaucratic technics. These include artistic culture, female culture, and spiritual culture. In Lawrence’s *The Plumed Serpent*, another fiction which deals with the effects of colonisation, Owen Rhys witnesses an accident in which an old Mexican woman is run over by a motor-car. See *PS*, p. 23

²¹⁵ Ronny's words are very reminiscent of those of the narrator in ;'The Machine Stops': '...the Machine may progress, that the Machine may progress, that the Machine may progress eternally.' (*SS*: 133)

²¹⁶ The running down of a fellow Indian is the clearest sign of the Nawab's Western sensibility.

²¹⁷ See *A Passage* pp. 37, 83

²¹⁸ Blue is Gatsby's true colour. After all, he is effectively destroyed by the driver of a blue car, is identified with blue lawns, and ends up in the cold blue waters of a swimming pool.

²¹⁹ Fitzgerald was profoundly affected by Marx's *Das Kapital*. He suggested to his daughter, Scottie, that she 'read the terrible chapter in *Das Kapital* on 'The Working Day', adding that she would '[n]ever be quite the same.' (*Letters*: 102)

²²⁰ As such, they are emblems of death (the death of authentic self) - a theme that *Gatsby* highlights in the most palpable way.

²²¹ See *GG*, p. 71

²²² As we will see later, Jordan Baker's very name depersonalises her.

²²³ Frazer records that masks were worn by actors who represented demons or spirits. See *The Golden Bough*: vii: pp. 95 & 186

²²⁴ A superb, but almost certainly unconscious, representation of internalised technicism can be found in a remarkable advertisement by the Ford Motor company published c.1910. Here, a begoggled chauffeur stares out from the page at us, but instead of eyes we see the silhouettes of Ford motor-cars. The chauffeur is thus dehumanised and ironically appears as a dark and sinister representative of the technical and industrial orders. See fig. 26.

²²⁵ Hilda's technical spirit and inability to connect with the flesh is suggested by her attire.

²²⁶ For 'Mulligan', we may, of course, read 'Oliver St. John Gogarty' - a very keen but reckless motorist and fellow student of Joyce's at Royal University (now UCD).

²²⁷ Euripides, for example, occasionally employed the *Deus* to effect a bathetic climax.

Chapter 5

²²⁸ Tofler whimsically adds: 'The search for a place to stop, at least temporarily, is unwittingly symbolised by our increasingly hectic pursuit of that vanishing commodity - a parking place.' (Tofler: 99)

²²⁹ See p. 20, above.

²³⁰ See *PLT*, pp. 146 -47

²³¹ Care must be taken, however, since 'to dwell', in Indo-European, meant 'to go (or be led) astray. 'Dweller', moreover, is the name given to a horse that pauses, or 'dwells', at a fence. Furthermore, given that machines bespeak movement, it is paradoxical that engineers use the term 'dwell' to refer to a slight pause in the motion of a machine. Such a pause is to give time for completion of an operation effected by a particular part. Source: *OED*.

²³² Contemporary research carried out in Germany suggests that driving a motor-car satisfies an 'itch' to journey regardless of the destination. See Sachs, p. 112.

²³³ Forster had a particular fondness for travel and travel guides. See Dowling: *BA*, p. 61

²³⁴ Cf Grahame's 'homesick' Rat, a well-balanced and quintessential dweller. See *The Wind in the Willows*, p. 27

²³⁵ Of course, she is referring to Howards End itself when she says 'the place'.

²³⁶ In D. H. Lawrence's short story 'St. Mawr', Phoenix's 'rootlessness, his drifting, his real meaninglessness' is similarly emblematised by the automobile with which he is connected. (*Tales*: 669)

²³⁷ That the book did not outlive its own age was for other reasons among which are: the failure to imbue Amory Blaine with noble characteristics, a failure to properly develop a coherent pattern of imagery, and a failure to rigorously adhere to the conventions of the *entwicksroman* in that Amory's 'development' is doubtful.

²³⁸ Automobile theft was common by the early twenties. Stolen machines were commonly driven across state lines before being abandoned. See Burness, p. 34 - 35.

²³⁹ More obviously, the restless spirit of the new era is also testified to by Amory's mother who, in a letter to her son, writes: 'if there is one thing we can be positive of, it is that people will not stay in one place...' (*SP*: 105)

²⁴⁰ Cf Nick's hope that the hero's Rolls-Royce might cheer up the funeral party in *Gatsby*.

²⁴¹ See Fitzgerald: *SP*, p.59

²⁴² Amory condemns these people for desiring 'a better limousine than those oil people across the street.' See Fitzgerald: *SP*, p. 260

²⁴³ In a letter to long-suffering editor Maxwell Perkins, dated 4 September 1919, Fitzgerald wrote of *Paradise*: 'I certainly think the hero gets somewhere.' (Fitzgerald: *Letters*: 138)

²⁴⁴ Another is the restless Maury Noble, 'a human Baedeker', who, like Anthony, has travelled widely but 'without any redeeming spontaneity...'. See Fitzgerald: *BD*, p. 45

²⁴⁵ Gloria is specifically likened to a bird on several occasions. See Fitzgerald: *BD*, p. 116

²⁴⁶ At the time *Gatsby* was being written, Scott and Zelda were drifting around mainland Europe, shifting from Rome to Capri just before the final proof of the novel was submitted. Sometime between April and December 1925, Fitzgerald read John Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*, a novel which deals with similar themes to *The Great Gatsby*. See Fitzgerald's letter to Maxwell Perkins written c. 30 December 1925: 'Wasn't Dos Passos' book astonishingly good?' (Fitzgerald: *Letters*: 196)

²⁴⁷ See Mealey @ URL: <http://www.cogpsyphy.hu/-server/KOGLIST/archive/0181.html>

²⁴⁸ We are reminded of Gatsby's own balancing trick on the dash board of his machine.

²⁴⁹ Jordan Baker is introduced to Nick as 'a great sports woman' (*GG*: 70)

²⁵⁰ Early in the novel, Daisy is specifically identified with the nightingale – a symbol of the violated woman in classical literature. In Keats's 'Ode to a Nightingale', of course, the bird symbolises the desire for permanence. Thus, in *Gatsby*, through the symbols of nightingale and motor-car, Fitzgerald foregrounds notions of flight, homelessness, and betrayal.

²⁵¹ Her very name suggests a lack of rootedness since the plant myrtle has a very shallow root system. While it may be said that she cleaves to Tom, the connection with him is actually quite shallow.

²⁵² See Fitzgerald: *GG*, p. 27 & 129. Naturally, these restaurants proliferated as the American motor industry developed. They remain, in the form of all-night diners, a potent symbol of cultural restlessness.

²⁵³ Even at the end, Gatsby's blood traces a 'leg of transit' in the cold blue water of his swimming pool. (*GG*: 154)

²⁵⁴ Because Cody is a character double for Gatsby, the latter's restlessness is reinforced all the more.

²⁵⁵ This is a travel book.

²⁵⁶ Both car and character have the superlative 'gorgeous' applied to them.

²⁵⁷ In his *Cars of the Early Twenties*, Tad Burness includes a short chapter on windshield styles. When Fitzgerald refers to a 'labyrinth' of glass to describe the fenestration of

Gatsby's machine, he means it quite literally. The elaborate window glasses of pre-1925 luxury cars were commonly two-piece affairs, although they often took the misleading name 'three-piece, ventilating windshield'. (Burness: 17) These glasses were often horizontally split in the middle, and were housed in a sloping frame to which was fitted a fixed lower pane, and a 'swinging upper section which could be pushed outward for ventilation.' (ibid) To either side of the central windshield arrangement, and to the front of the front door posts, were additional stationary panes of glass. The combined effect of the assembly undoubtedly gives rise to multiple reflections and creates a many-layered, panoramic, wrap-around feeling similar to that which a glass-house elicits.

²⁵⁸ See Queen Victoria's famous comment to the effect that if a man exceeded six miles an hour he would expire.

²⁵⁹ Tofler's '**Playboy**' papers preceded the publication of best-seller '**Future Shock**'.

²⁶⁰ See L. Marx: *LM*, p. 345

²⁶¹ John Ruskin was similarly contemptuous of speed, observing that the faster one goes the less one sees or understands. See Ruskin in Sussman p. 66

²⁶² In answer to Boswell's proposition that a rapid ride in a post chaise is the best form of escape next to being drunk, Dr. Johnson replied: ' "No, Sir, you are driving rapidly *from* something, or *to* something." ' (Boswell: 297)

²⁶³ On a later motor-tour to Shropshire, the narrator tells us that the landscape is 'robbed of half its magic by swift movement... .' (*HE*: 210) In his *Arbinger Harvest* essays, Forster writes: 'One has to keep pace with the times if one is to guide them and they sorely need our guidance... .' (*AH*: 25) The reply to this statement highlights Forster's feeling that modern life is altogether too fast: 'That was all right in the nineteenth century, when life was slow, and one could point to one impropriety after another with one's umbrella...- but to-day! Why, you'll get knocked down. You'll be run over by a motor-bicycle, and before you can see whether it was a girl on the pillion she will have disappeared...civilisation is so complicated.' (ibid)

²⁶⁴ Drayton was a seventeenth century pastoral poet whose topographical verse celebrated the natural beauty of England.

²⁶⁵ Science and technology undoubtedly contribute to what T. S. Eliot, in his essay '**The Metaphysical Poets**', calls 'the dissociation of sensibility'. (Eliot: *SE*: 288)

²⁶⁶ It is an enduring sub-genre. As social critic Jacques Ellul writes: '[t]echnique is opposed to nature..it destroys, eliminates, or subordinates the natural world, and does not allow this world to restore itself...' (Ellul: 79)

²⁶⁷ Cf Fitzgerald's Valley of Ashes.

²⁶⁸ See Flink: *AA*, p.169

²⁶⁹ Of course, their failure to connect with the emotional significance of place is their greatest blindness.

²⁷⁰ It is important to bear in mind that it was on the Marabar Road that the Nawab's car drove over and killed a drunk Indian.

²⁷¹ Forster was undoubtedly influenced by his friend G. L. Dickinson whose articles for *The Independent Review* mercilessly condemned the internal combustion engine. See '**Motoring**' Jan 1904, '**Noise That You Pay For**', Aug 1904, and '**The Motor Tyranny**', Oct 1906.

²⁷² Complaints about the early coaches were just as common: '...you conceive not what damage the State receiveth by the coaches, and how the whole Common-wealth suffereth in their increase and multitude... . They first consume an infinite quantitie of our prime and best leather...wee can hardly have a young Ash grow till hee bee seven teeres old...more-over a

wonderfull quantitie of our best broad-clothes is consumed and wasted about the lining of Coaches and their seats...' (C&S: E3)

²⁷³ 'Environment' is a term that exactly suits the motorist's view of Nature: that it is a backdrop; a 'stage-set' for the activities and movements of human beings. Certainly, the word environment implies nothing of the nurturing mother.

²⁷⁴ We have to be careful when tempted to fall in behind the opinion of Forster that roads supplant useable pasture. J. B. Rae reports that in 1920 about twenty-seven percent of the harvested area in the United States was given over to the growing of feed for horses and that by 1971 that figure had decreased just one percent. See Rae, p. 357.

²⁷⁵ It is, moreover, an indictment of the free market and the economic libertarianism to which Gatsby subscribes.

²⁷⁶ There is actually a small, foul river bordering the Valley of Ashes in *The Great Gatsby*. For a reasonably full examination of 'Waste Land' symbolism in the novel, see Letha Audhuy's 'The Waste Land Myth and Symbols in *The Great Gatsby*' - in Bloom, p. 109ff.

²⁷⁷ See R. P. Corballis: 'Why the Devil Gets All the Good Tunes'.

²⁷⁸ See Woolf: *MD*, pp 76-77.

²⁷⁹ James Flink notes that women preferred electric cars because they required no hand cranking. See Flink: *AA*, p. 162

²⁸⁰ Of course, his ultimate lack of an automobile confirms this too.

Chapter 6

²⁸¹ See T. S. Eliot's 'The Waste Land', in Eliot, p. 74

²⁸² T. S. Eliot once compared his malaise to that of a car engine that had been taken apart. See personal letter from Peter Ackroyd, 10 March 1993.

²⁸³ The motor-cycle wreck in *Maurice* portends the breakdown of Maurice's relationship with Clive Durham as the latter acquires a new sexual status. Of course, it also signifies Maurice's break with the world generally since the wild ride that preceded the smash results in him being sent down from Cambridge.

²⁸⁴ Charles' ministrations to car lamps further foregrounds his blindness to spiritual realities and reinforces once more his identification with the technical world.

²⁸⁵ Of course, the accident on the Marabar Road also pre-echoes the final physical and cultural collision of the novel: that between the Indian and European boats in the penultimate chapter.

²⁸⁶ Late in the novel he says: 'the more modern a country gets, the worse'll be the crash.' See *A Passage*, p. 269.

²⁸⁷ It is, therefore, all the more significant that the Europeans are likened to little gods.

²⁸⁸ Ghandi believed that India would never belong to Indians until every symbol of colonial oppression was destroyed.

²⁸⁹ It is portentous too, that, toward the end of the novel, Anthony's mistress Dorothy Raycroft triumphantly exclaims: 'We could have an automobile.' (*BD*: 293)

²⁹⁰ Keath Fraser (see Fraser in Bloom, p.57) finds a strained pun in coneggtions (cf Wolfsheim's 'gonnegtion'), but A. B. Paulson produces something more fruitful when he notes that 'gonnegtion' contains the root 'gon' - from the Greek 'gone', meaning seed. Paulson goes on to suggest that Carraway (a seed) could be seeking to connect with an 'egg':

the questionable business associates of Gatsby and Wolfsheim. (See Paulson in Bloom, p.69) Could it be, however, that Fitzgerald is having his own joke in that Wolfsheim's 'bad-egg' world goes to seed, or is it simply that *all* connections are 'gone' in *The Great Gatsby*?

²⁹¹ In 1920, Scott and Zelda headed from New York to Montgomery in order to recapture something of the past. They travelled in a decrepit Marmon towing car, dubbed 'The Rolling Junk' by the Fitzgeralds. The machine, immortalised in the collection of travel essays '**The Cruise of the Rolling Junk**' (1922) eventually got them to their destination despite a number of mechanical mishaps. Soon after, however, the car broke down utterly forcing the Fitzgeralds to abandon it. Complete with photographs, *Motor* published '**The Cruise**' in three parts in 1924.

²⁹² For a revealing psychoanalytic reading of *The Great Gatsby*, see A. B. Paulson's *Oral Aggression and Splitting* where the author argues that the imagery of chopping, cleaving, and splitting develops the idea of disconnectedness in the novel. See Paulson in Bloom, pp. 71ff

²⁹³ In a way, of course, he is quite correct. Whilst the dreams of both men fail (Hill wanted to connect America up with a vast rail network) neither loses his ability to envision.

²⁹⁴ In rendering this character, perhaps Fitzgerald had in mind his wife Zelda – who, despite her defective vision, refused to wear glasses. She was also a terrible and terrifying driver. See Brucoli: *EG*, p. 144.

²⁹⁵ Whilst yellow in Fitzgerald's fiction is the colour of agency, that it is also the colour of the sun suggests the possibility of blindness.

²⁹⁶ Here, the idea that Gatsby's spiritual vision is defective is further reinforced. He is restlessly flicking through a copy of *Clay's Economics*.

²⁹⁷ See Brucoli in Tony Tanner's notes to *The Great Gatsby*, p. 173

²⁹⁸ See Saarinen, p. 257

²⁹⁹ Fraser also notes, albeit obliquely, that Jordan Baker's quasi-androgyny is symbolised by her name which, as we have seen, combines two makes of automobile: the sporty, masculine Jordan Playboy and the rather more conservative, feminine Baker Electric. See Fraser in Bloom, p.65.

³⁰⁰ Earlier, Nancy, her partner, and a number of hangers-on noisily depart in a powerful machine whilst Jim and Darrow return to the depressing garage in Clarke's rattling, 'chugging' and 'ancient' Ford. (Fitzgerald: *SS*: 144)

³⁰¹ Since the wooden carcasses of early automobiles tended to rot away from mountings, it was relatively common for the body of a vehicle to be shaken loose from the chassis. See *OFW*: 33, p.7

³⁰² The New Zealand writer Ronald Hugh Morrieson employs the trope in *Came A Hot Friday* and in *The Scarecrow*. In the latter, Pop's seriously dilapidated 'old Dennis' emblematises the shattered agency of a small town family man whilst highly polished, chromed automobiles highlight dreams and possibilities. Harper Lee's children's novel *To Kill A Mockingbird* highlights Bob Ewell's unhinged consciousness and delinquency through the symbol of the broken Model T which sits outside his house.

³⁰³ Between 1900 and 1929, the mileage of metalled or first-class roads in India rose from 37,000 to a mere 59,000. See Ansley, p.89

³⁰⁴ Aziz thinks the desire to 'see' India an insidious posing; a veiled expression of the West's wish to rule his country. See *A Passage*, p. 301

³⁰⁵ Note too that Kate Leslie of Lawrence's *The Plumed Serpent*, has an Irish spirit 'weary to death of definite meanings.' (52)

³⁰⁶ I am highlighting the colour equivalence between lavender and lilac.

³⁰⁷ This is one of a number of significant references to ghosts – all of which connect back to Gatsby's Silver Ghost automobile.

³⁰⁸ We remember that both Daisy and Myrtle are named after flowers.

³⁰⁹ The main accident in Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* is foreshadowed when Amory makes up a story about an auto accident in which a horse is killed. The tale is supposed to explain his lateness to Myra St. Claire's bobbing party.

³¹⁰ Nick later tells Gatsby that the woman was 'ripped...open.' (137)

³¹¹ Arthur Mizener records that in 1924, during one of their more tempestuous arguments, Zelda Fitzgerald lay down in front of their Rolls-Royce and dared Scott to run over her. Apparently, Scott started the motor, engaged the gear, and had to be restrained by friends when they saw that he was going to oblige her. See Mizener, p. 77

³¹² The name 'Humbird' suggests flight. That Dick is felled by a machine that bespeaks the same agency is bitterly ironic. It is equally ironic, moreover, that the car's wing-like fender brings about his downfall.

³¹³ In a letter to his daughter dated July 1935, Fitzgerald warns of the perils of automobility. In so doing he foregrounds the difference between driving a horse and driving a car: '...no matter how good you were if the horse was bad there might be trouble. Different from driving, for example, where you only have yourself to blame.' (*Letters*: 7) Of course, *The Great Gatsby* is full of bad drivers: Daisy, Jordan, Tom, Mrs Ulysses Swett, and the drunk man who sheers a wheel off his car outside Gatsby's mansion. Even conservative Nick Carraway is accused of being 'another bad driver.' (168)

³¹⁴ A catalogue of technical images near the end of Zelda Fitzgerald's *Save Me For The Waltz* highlights the paradox of the machine. Like her husband, Zelda is cognisant of the fact that technicism is implicitly destructive - an awareness that is explored in a series of imaginative though increasingly negative extrapolations on the motor-car. Significantly, the glittering, protective 'car-at-your-disposal' in which she rides gives way to 'the mystery-car,... the death-car, the first prize, puffing the power of money out on the summer air....' (Z. Fitzgerald: *CW*: 173) The imagery suggests that for Zelda, as much as for Scott, the automobile symbolises the twentieth century's exchange of the divine for the material; its tragic drive toward its own destruction.

³¹⁵ See Burness, p. 31

³¹⁶ See Lockridge, p.17

³¹⁷ Rickie's physical handicap (he is slightly deformed so that one shoe has to be built up at the heel) perhaps symbolises the fact that he is hopelessly out of step with his time.

³¹⁸ Early in *Manhattan Transfer*, John Dos Passos signals that he will deal with the same theme: '“What right have those golblamed automoebiles got racin round the city knockin down wimen an children?”' (Dos Passos: 25)

³¹⁹ This *verfremdungseffekt*, this making strange, is, as Marcuse says, 'literature's own answer to the threat of [totalitarianism].' (Marcuse: 67)

³²⁰ Margaret is a 'motorphobe': that is, 'one who has a morbid dread or hatred of motor-vehicles.' In 1905, a columnist in *Automobile Topics* wrote: 'The time will come when...the motorphobes will wonder what ever possessed them to act so foolishly.' (*OED*: motorphobe). In 1906, in *Chambers's Journal*, a motorphobe offered the following ironic words: 'In another ten years, there will not be half the autocars on the roads that there are now.' (*ibid*)

³²¹ The words after the colon actually belong to the narrator of *Howards End*.

³²² See Dowling: *BA*, p. 63

³²³ Police traps, in which ‘hidden policemen’ timed cars over a distance of around a furlong, were much hated. The British Automobile Association was very active in defending motorists against them.

³²⁴ The gardeners, for instance, understand it.

³²⁵ See *A Passage*, p.316.

³²⁶ Weber, in *The Protestant Ethic*, states that ‘the development of rational economic conduct’ meets ‘serious...resistance’ when confronted ‘by spiritual obstacles’. (26-27)

³²⁷ When Gatsby stares at his possessions ‘in a dazed way’ it may remind us of Sartre’s Roquentin who, in *Nausea*, stares at a chestnut tree in appalled recognition of the ‘gratuitousness’ of things. (See Sartre: 188)

³²⁸ For a detailed reference to the ‘music of the old American Indian’, see *PS*, p. 116.

³²⁹ Indeed, Don Ramon’s impatience with worldliness is highlighted in the twelfth chapter when, coming out of a religious trance, he has to endure the intrusion of the outer life: ‘...the low, labouring sound of a motor-car struggling over the uneven road, then swirling triumphantly into the courtyard.’ (170)

³³⁰ This is why, of course, Fitzgerald insisted to Maxwell Perkins that Myrtle’s breast be cut off.

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