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WRITING TECHNOLOGIES OF THE BODY IN THE WORK OF DJUNA BARNES AND GERTRUDE STEIN

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Writing Technologies of the Body in the Work of Djuna Barnes and Gertrude Stein

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation joins the recent scholarship regarding the common grounds in the work of Djuna Barnes and Gertrude Stein. Having as a starting point the theme of the body both as organic and as textual and exploring it through the prism of technology, this study depicts its representations in four major texts. Starting with Barnes's first poetry collection, *The Book of Repulsive Women,* the fragmented bodies depicted in the poems come in dialogue with New York Dadaists' mechanomorphic representations of female bodies. After exploring their interaction and Barnes's journalism in avant-gardes contexts, the collection is seen as a series of *tableaux vivants* displaying mechanized bodies with the help of the altering presence of the elevated train. The discussion, then, moves on to Stein's libretto *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* and connections are drawn between the metaphor of electricity that Stein uses and her cinematic way of writing. The linking aspect of this association is the practice of "automatism" that Stein explored through William James, which leads to the point that her Faustian version is an "automaton" body of text. This is also examined through her wish to "make cinema" and add a "vibratory existence" in her work. Following this, Stein's war autobiography, *Wars I Have Seen*, is examined as a linguistic experiment that can be compared to Bob Carlton Brown's conceptual writing. Stein as a linguistic surgeon operates on the text's body with the help of word prosthesis. As a result, her experimentation with the prosthetic parts of prefixes leads to a commodification of the words' bodies. Stein's numerous quotidian scenes are blended with the limited references to the war and the 'missing body' of war becomes prosthetic. The last major work in this study is Barnes's verse play, *The Antiphon*, which is explored via the conceptual correlation of Barnes's violated body with her autobiographical textual body. This interconnection is examined through decoding Barnes's metatheatrical devices that create a play within a play. Barnes's thinking is loud and clear through the antiphonic, polyphonic and autobiographical voices of the text. Finally, in the last chapter, these two writers are brought in dialogue, but also reexamined through their personal embodiment in the texts and through the various manifestations of the themes of body and technology.

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INTRODUCTION

I. When Djuna Barnes Met Gertrude Stein

When Barnes moved to Paris in 1919 or 1920, Stein was already a self-proclaimed 'genius,' and a celebrity among the expatriate circles; in fact a new writer had to get Stein's approval in order to join the expatriate salons. However, Barnes did not intend to become part of "the expatriation's front circle of fame and money" (16).[1] She was introduced to all the American expatriate artists, like Gertrude Stein, but, as Andrew Field notes, Barnes preferred to be among artists that "furnished the fascinating background texture of the expatriation" (16). Barnes was soon acknowledged as an important writer by many of the modernist circle; apart from T. S. Eliot, another admirer of her work was James Joyce.

In her first years in Paris, Ezra Pound was one of the first people to help Barnes and promoted her work in the modernist circles. However, by the end of Barnes's stay in France, Pound seemed to lose interest in her work and in his correspondence with Eliot he wrote about her:

> There once wuzza lady named Djuna,
> Who wrote rather like a baboon. Her
> Blubbery prose had no fingers or toes,
> And we wish Whale had found this out sooner. (Field 108)

This letter was sent to Eliot in 1937, two years before Barnes left Europe to return to New York, in a dreadful health, mental and financial state. Generally the 1930s was a challenging period for Barnes, whose addictions and behaviour led to her isolation and estrangement from literary circles. T. S. Eliot did not seem to have been affected by Pound's letter, since he remained one of Barnes's closest friends and the editor of her major works, such as *Nightwood* (1936) and *The Antiphon* (1958). Pound's description of Barnes, on the other hand, as a "baboon" that has "no fingers and toes" brings to mind Barnes's own early interest in the animal-like and bestial representations of the female body and her emphasis on detailed descriptions of body parts, as seen in *The Book of Repulsive Women* (1915) and *Ladies Almanack* (1928). As far as the "Whale" is concerned, Field notes in his biography that Pound refers to

Ford Madox Ford who had published Barnes's articles in the *Transatlantic Review* and supported her among the modernists in one of Natalie Barney's salons.[2]

Shari Benstock in *The Women of the Left Bank* interprets Pound's change of attitude as the result of "a failed effort to seduce her" a fact that Barnes confirms in an interview many years after she left Paris (232).[3] Bryher in *The Heart to Artemis* writes about Pound's behavior towards her along similar lines:

> He got up swiftly and put his arm round my shoulders. It was a most uncomfortable position, an Elizabethan would have screamed or snatched up a dagger but I decided to be wary and calm.
>
> *Nice hair… nice hair…* he pecked chastely at a cheek. I wondered what in the world I was supposed to do and decided to gaze at him abstractedly and in silence. (106)[4]

"It seems he tried on us all," (Field 106) Barnes is purported to have said when she read Bryher's memoir: this justifies Benstock's claim about Pound's loss of interest in Barnes's work.

Moreover, it seems that Barnes had a competitive relationship with Stein and the recorded instances between them prove this. Barnes's not wishing to join the "front circle" of the expatriates also meant defying Stein and her circle of influence. The latter in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (Chapter 7 - After The War 1919-1932) makes a brief reference to Barnes' name, when she appeared at her salon:

> Kate Buss brought lots of people to the house. She brought Djuna Barnes and Mina Loy and they had wanted to bring James Joyce but they didn't. We were glad to see Mina whom we had known in Florence as Mina Haweis. (188)

Stein avoids elaborating more on their meeting and it can be said that she did this in order to 'pay back' Barnes for her snubbing attitude. Andrew Field mentions one more incident between Barnes and Stein. In this instance, Barnes was sitting with Charles Henri Ford at the back seat of Margaret Anderson's car when Stein appeared carrying her dog. When she saw them, she went and talked to them, since she admired Ford. After Stein left, Field adds that Barnes in a delightful manner asked Ford: "Did you see the jealous look she gave me?" (164). Barnes was known for her beauty, and this was also at stake in another encounter with Stein. As Benstock mentions, Stein in another instance, expressed her admiration towards Barnes, not for her work, but for her legs, a fact that infuriated Barnes and aroused the jealousy of Alice Toklas. The

irony in this instance is that the theme of the body as a spectacle and as a ground of exploration is a common characteristic in the work of both writers and of great interest in this study.

With regard to this, Benstock argues that common characteristics are not obvious and easy to trace in the work of Barnes and Stein. But, as she mentions, they do elaborate on similar themes: for instance, Barnes's *Ryder* (1928) and Stein's *The Making of Americans* (1925) address the suffering of women in patriarchal societies.[5] In the majority of each writer's work there are common characteristics that can be traced throughout her work, especially in terms of complex meanings and themes in their language. Barnes, for instance, employs a complex language both in *Ryder* and *The Antiphon,* the two works that focus on her family history, while in *Nightwood* there is a distinct focus on her relationship with Thelma Wood. Stein experiments with her recognizable stylistics of repetition and wordplays from *Tender Buttons* to her war texts like *Wars I Have Seen* and *Brewsie and Willie.* Benstock stresses that both writers have attracted the interest of critics due to their experimental writing style. Referring to criticisms that see Stein's work as being "so silly and innocuous," Benstock draws on Katherine Anne Porter's interpretation of it as "a cover-up, a cloak hiding the self" (244). On the other hand, Barnes's use of language has been characterised as archaic and Elizabethan. No matter how simple or complex the texts of the two writers are, an undeniable common aspect in their work is ambiguity. This study will focus on representations of the body in their work, and the ways in which these representations come to interact with technology, in distinct and contrasting modes of expression.

II. Djuna Barnes and Gertrude Stein Together: Recent Scholarship

Recent criticism on Barnes and Stein has turned to the themes of technology and embodied experience, while feminist and poststructuralist perspectives press the need to revisit and rediscover Barnes's and Stein's work. This is the case, for instance, in Sarah Bay-Cheng's essay "Famous Unknowns: The Dramas of Djuna Barnes and Gertrude Stein," which sets Barnes and Stein in dialogue. Bay-Cheng addresses Barnes's paradoxical attempt to disguise her painful past, while at the same time she incorporates personal experience into her modernist plays. She explains the different ways with which Barnes and Stein treat the past in their dramas. She argues that

Barnes focused on major, traumatic events, while Stein on everyday and simple instances. She adds that Barnes seems to remain in the past, while Stein "uses past events to express the present" and to embrace the future. (135). Bay-Cheng draws on the importance of personal experience in the work of the two writers, and how they employ their experiences in different ways. My study also draws on the embodied experience reflected in the work of the two writers with an emphasis on their reasons for their controversial exposing of their lives.

As regards Barnes's and Stein's dialogue with modernism and the avant-gardes, Alex Goody brings their work together bearing in mind their distinct characteristics. Goody in *Modernist Articulations* attempts to draw associations between modernist and cultural studies and the work of Barnes, Loy and Stein. She intends to "celebrate the heterogeneity of their work" (3) by analyzing their life and work in terms of their literary achievements, their reaction towards wars and their concurrence with the modernist tendencies that were prevalent in New York and Paris. What Goody proposes is placing the work of the three female writers against the male modernist canon. The carnivalesque element and the representations of the mechanized body explored in this book are two points of interest that my study examines too.

In *Modernist Women Writers and War: Trauma and the Female Body in Djuna Barnes, H.D., and Gertrude Stein*, Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick focuses on gender politics during war and addresses war narratives from the female writers' point of view. Starting from the fact that war writing has long been considered as a genre written by men who are writing about male experiences, Goodspeed-Chadwick introduces the female bodily experience of war. An interesting point that she pursues in her work is her analysis of how Barnes "relies on animals' bodies and inanimate objects to communicate female trauma and suffering" (5). A similar theme is also the case in the use of the puppets in her verse play *The Antiphon* that is the focus of the fourth chapter of this study. Goodspeed-Chadwick draws on trauma and feminist theory in order to examine the female body in the context of war.

III. Framing the Body in Barnes's and Stein's Work

This study primarily focuses on the following four texts: *The Book of Repulsive Women* (1915) and *The Antiphon* (1958) by Djuna Barnes and *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* (1938) and *Wars I Have Seen* (1945) by Gertrude Stein. As this thesis shows,

these works embody different, and even developing, ideas about certain motifs that shape the structure of the texts. The shared aspects in their works are: the various representations of technology, their impact on the organic and textual bodies of the texts and the different portrayals of the writers' experiences (both personal and fictional).

The representations of the bodies and their interaction with technology are portrayed in *The Book of Repulsive Women,* where technology is present in the urban setting of New York City and female bodies are seen from the panoramic view of the elevated train, the 'L.' Barnes offers different representations of female bodies in eight poems that describe women living outside the conventional norms. The commuters within the elevated train are guided in a certain trajectory through the city, observing these bodies through the windowpanes and capturing their figures in unflattering instances. The speed of the train is the element that confers a mechanical aspect to these bodies. In this sense, Barnes creates her own collection of mechanomorphic bodies, similar to the ones that the Dadaists published in *291*, and the collection can be seen as an exhibition that exposes these women in a way that forms a series of living pictures. The intervention of technology in the representation of the bodies mediates their 'repulsive' characteristics that present them as animals or even beasts.

Technology is used as a major motif in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights.* The technological element here is obviously electricity and it shapes the plot of Stein's Faustian version. The constant variation of the lights resembles the repetitive variation of Stein's writing. The body of the text is turned into a self-controlling machine that follows an independent flow of events, which influences and confuses the characters. The description of the text as an automaton is related to Stein's experimentation with automatic writing in the beginning of her writing career. By replacing knowledge with technology as the ultimate prize for selling one's soul, Stein criticizes the ramifications of technology's presence in modernity. Thus, technology is placed at the centre of attention and Stein explores how the bodies are affected by this interaction.

From Stein's libretto in the beginning of World War II, the third major work that is examined in this thesis refers to wartime and to the end of World War II in the French countryside, where Stein remained with Alice B. Toklas. The motif of technology in Stein's memoir merits further examination, since she chooses to write a work that

narrates everyday life and devotes few instances to the recording of facts of war. The imagery of the Second World War is strongly associated with the ramifications of technological progress and in my study with the production of mechanical, artificial body parts. The prevailing imagery of the wounded or mutilated bodies is absent from Stein's memoir. Nevertheless, as argued in this study, the prosthetic word parts found in abundance in Stein's descriptions replace the prosthetic parts of war-damaged bodies. Against the backdrop of Stein's collaboration with Bob Carlton Brown's in his linguistic experiments, a case is made for the mechanical aspect in her war writing.

Starting from Barnes's first collection of poems, this research ends with her last and more candid autobiographical text, *The Antiphon*. A highly charged verse play due to its personal tone, but also because of the traumatic circumstances of its production in a time span of twenty years. Barnes's distinct writing style unfolds in her family drama, in which she chooses to expose her life by using various elements of disguise in the performance of the characters. As argued in Chapter Four, Barnes's body is in constant interaction with the body of the text and the use of metatheatrical devices that appear between the frames of the scenes designate mechanized aspects also in the bodies of the characters. The motifs of time structure the flow of the events and in a way control the plot and the reactions of the characters. As in Stein's *Wars I Have Seen,* in this work, the theme of technology is conceptually grasped and represented, while in *The Book of Repulsive Women* and *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* technological interference is manifest in more explicit and apparent ways.

Autobiographical sources may offer many answers to the questions raised regarding the embodied experience of Barnes and Stein in their work. In Barnes's journalism, for instance, one can discover her primary interests in the body as a spectacle and her inclination to the vaudeville and burlesque. It can be claimed, then, that the journalistic articles constitute an important backdrop for the analysis of the themes Barnes draws upon in her writing. Stein, on the other hand, never stopped recording her life even from her years as a student, but one should always keep in mind that her sayings should not always be taken for granted. This study devotes much attention to the personal elements of these texts, which in many cases are treated as reconfigurations of these personal experiences.

As far as Barnes's journalism is concerned, my research focuses on two aspects: the themes of these articles and Barnes's personal involvement in them. From 1913 to

1919, Barnes wrote many articles in the most recognized New York newspapers and by the time she moved to Paris she was already a well-known journalist. The themes of her articles were unusual and certainly not typical for a woman journalist. The detailed descriptions of various figures seen in the streets of New York have many similarities with the representations of bodies in *The Book of Repulsive Women.* Furthermore, her personal experience in many of the stories she covered, such as, "How It Feels To Be Forcibly Fed" express her need to embody in order to be able to comprehend.

The factor of embodiment also appears in *The Antiphon* in the most engaging way, since Barnes uses the bodies of the characters and the puppets to experience the violation of her own body. The awful family secret is revealed in her drama and the audience witnesses Barnes's testimony of her sexual abuse. In this work, Barnes invites readers to know her troubled past, and at the same time, comprehend her work. The autobiographical supplies the theatrical with important references and vice versa.

In the work of Stein, the genre of autobiography is rediscovered in terms of perspective, context and identity. There is a clear record of Stein's life in France starting from her arrival to Paris, 1903, documenting her famous salon meetings with the most important representatives of modernism. Her second personal work is *Everybody's Autobiography* which she wrote after she returned to the USA for a series of lectures. The significant instance of her seeing her name in the bright lights of a sign became the point of departure for the writing of *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* a work that reflects not only her own confused identity, but also the hesitant attitude towards technology. The importance of the autobiographical narrative in *Wars I Have Seen* is self-evident, since the title suggests its content. The war years as Gertrude Stein experienced them are presented in this war memoir, which was meant to be her last major work since she died a year after its publication. This much-criticised work includes information about her life during the war years and includes interesting instances that describe certain known events. There are a few references to repeated warnings from her background to leave France and move to Switzerland due to the danger that her stay entailed. However, the most emblematic event that Stein addresses in *Wars I Have Seen* is the day that the Americans appeared, marking the end of the war. The chronicle of Stein's meeting with the American soldiers was covered by many American newspapers that added glamour in the so-called rescue of Stein, as suited for a celebrity she was.

Although these four works embody different manifestations of the same major themes, the writing voices of Barnes and Stein differ in the way they express their ideas and operate their linguistic experimentations. Barnes's writing can be characterized as confessional and aggressive, exposing more implicitly her line of thought, while Stein urges the readers to discover meanings hidden in her ambiguous wordplays. In *The Book of Repulsive Women,* Barnes conducts a direct criticism of social conventions and prejudices, and in *The Antiphon,* she viciously attacks her family. Stein in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* transfers the perplexed human perception of technology through her personal experience and in *Wars I Have Seen* proposes her memoirs as a pattern for understanding wars in general. Accordingly, it can be said that Barnes uses language and writing as a means of externalizing her inner struggles, as opposed to Stein's repetitive need to attract attention through the use of more impersonal rather than personal elements. Accepting this contrasting perspective on handling language and imprinting it in the texts is crucial for the analysis of their works. However, there is an intriguing aspect in their work that this study intends not to overlook.

Mary Lee Broe's collection of essays *Silence and Power: A Reevaluation of Djuna Barnes* is a work that has brought together the important tendencies of criticism starting from her early journalism to her final texts. Nancy J. Levine's "Bringing Milkshakes to Bulldogs": The Early Journalism of Djuna Barnes" is of great interest, since she includes important information about her early years in New York and characterises her journalism "subjective". This term encloses Barnes's embodied experience, which is sketched in Levine's research of her articles, and as I also explore, it is integral in her works as a writer. Along with Levine who sees Barnes's journalism as the "seedbed" for *Nightwood,* I would contend that *The Book of Repulsive Women* can be seen as a reenactment of the bodies that are described in her articles. In addition, as I will explain in the fourth chapter of this study, *The Antiphon,* too, shares the same aesthetic with the representations of bodies in her journalism. In a similar sense, Kate Ridinger Smorul's notion of "performative journalism" is also taken into consideration in my research, as it refers to Barnes's active involvement in the stories that she covered.

Melissa Jane Hardie's "Repulsive Modernism: Djuna Barnes' The Book of Repulsive Women," by and Mary I. Unger's "'Dropping crooked into rhyme': Djuna Barnes's Disabled Poetics in *The Book of Repulsive Women,*" introduce crucial themes

in the analysis of Barnes's collection. Hardie's analysis of the poems discusses issues that associate Barnes's representations with urban life, including the theme of the flâneur and the symbolism of the train as a "locomotive site of spectatorship" (129). My reading takes these arguments further, as the train's trajectory becomes the conceptual link of all poems and, I argue that the bodies are seen in a series of open-air *tableaux vivants*. Unger's article stresses the American System and its tendency to exclude whoever did not conform to its norms. In this sense, being 'ugly' is seen as a way of not following the norm (that is following certain standards of beauty) that in Barnes's case is understood in the "repulsiveness" of the bodies.

The female body, its representation in Dada and its interaction with the urban environment is examined in Naomi Sawelson-Gorse's book *Women in Dada: Essays on Sex, Gender and Identity*. More specifically, Amelia Jones in "Women in Dada: Elsa, Rose, and Charlie" elaborates on the mechanomorphic representations in Dadaist works and its realization in the performances of Baroness Elsa. Moreover, Elizabeth Hutton Turner in "La Jeune Fille Américaine and the Dadaist Impulse" explores the idea of "the young American girl" and investigates its manifestations, reflected in the work of Picabia among others. These Dadaist concepts and work are brought in dialogue with Barnes and I suggest that her poems are equivalent mechanized representations.

As regards *The Antiphon,* there has been much criticism regarding the autobiographical issues of its content and the fact that it is in this work that Barnes speaks of her rape and brings into light the family history of incest and abuse. Louise DeSalvo in "'To Make her Mutton at Sixteen': Rape, Incest, and Child Abuse in *The Antiphon,*" puts Barnes in the place of an incest survivor and describes her writing as a revelation of the family's secrets. Furthermore, DeSalvo, in "Justice, Not Revenge," a chapter in her book *Conceived With Malice,* traces Barnes in *The Antiphon's* writing from the beginning to its publication twenty years later. An interesting point that DeSalvo brings in her essay is that Barnes at the end of her life actually becomes one of those "repulsive" bodies that she was writing about in *The Book of Repulsive Women.* My study intends to show how *The Antiphon* and especially how Miranda (the daughter of the family) embodies Barnes's violation through re-experiencing the traumatic past and how the body of the text becomes Barnes's own body.

In terms of *The Antiphon's* textual violation, Lynda Curry's essay "Tom, Take Mercy" analyses T. S. Eliot's editing of the verse-play that led to the fifth and final

revision. The final draft had at least three hundred lines less than the first and Curry notes that: "[I]f these cuts could be put back into the text of the play, especially act 2, the original *Antiphon* would emerge as the beautifully coherent and poignant tragedy that its author had envisioned" (298). Julie Taylor in her recent book *Djuna Barnes and Affective Modernism* strongly disagrees with Curry whether Barnes consented to Eliot's editing. Using Daniela Caselli's reference to Barnes's correspondence with Eliot and Muir, Taylor stresses that Barnes had the final decision on the cuttings of these lines. Referring to this dispute, I would like to express a connection that comes to my mind when comparing the text's cuttings with the abuse of Barnes's body. In her letter to T. S. Eliot in 1956, Barnes wrote: "And Tom, do take mercy on the author who has been twenty months in a fairly gruesome state of tension" (286).[6] Barnes appears to be overwhelmed by the editing process but no matter how painful it is for her she finally agrees to make the corrections. Respectively, in the case of Miranda's rape in the second act of the play, Jack, referring to the incident, recalls Miranda's words: "Do not let him – but if my father wills it-!" (151). This phrase appeared in the previous drafts as "Do not let him – but if it will atone" and explains how Miranda finally consented to her father's instructions (leading to her abuse by a man "thrice her age"). I would dare to say that in a similar manner, she consented to Eliot's cuttings because even though she expressed how painful this re-enactment of her violation was to her, she finally agreed with Eliot. The analysis of *The Antiphon* in this study brings together the violation of the text's body with the reenactment of Barnes's abuse and aims at analysing how the one reflects the other. Another theme that Taylor discusses is *The Antiphon's* metatheatricality by making reference to the presence of a doll's house onstage, an element that has attracted the interest of many critics. One of them is Meryl Altman, who in "*The Antiphon*: 'No Audience at All'" also explores the burlesque performance of the characters and the importance of the spectators. The metatheatrical devices that Barnes uses in her play and the complex meanings in the 'wounded' scenes invite many interpretations.

In *Mama Dada: Gertrude Stein's Avant-Garde Theater*, Sarah Bay-Cheng explores avant-garde drama and its association with cinema and queer identity. In this context, she revisits Stein's libretto *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* and she reintroduces Stein's under-researched dramatic writings, such as *Four Saints in Three Acts* and *Listen to Me.* Due to the fact that Stein chose the legend of Faustus to develop her story makes it anachronistic and the confused perception of the characters with regard to

technology resonates even today. When exploring Stein's work, it is apparent that the theme of automatic writing will emerge. Are Stein's texts products of automatic writing? "Has Gertrude Stein a Secret?" as B.F. Skinner asked in his article. This issue requires a return to Stein's student years, when under the guidance of William James, she was introduced to experimental processes of writing. An interesting point that comes up from this reexamination of Stein's scientific research is the element of "split-personality" that is a prerequisite for automatic writing. Barbara Will in "Gertrude Stein, Automatic Writing and the Mechanics of Genius" notes that Stein was intrigued by the idea of the "automatic" self and not the unconscious that the psychologists explored. The structure and the multiple identities of the characters are two important elements in the work that are controlled by the major theme of the libretto; that is, electricity. Sarah Balkin in "Regenerating Drama in Stein's *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights* and Woolf's Between the Acts" and Sarah Posman in "More Light! – Electric Light!: Stein in Dialogue with the Romantic Paradigm in *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*" establish connections with the classic texts of Goethe and Marlowe. The first emphasizes more the multiple identities of the characters and Stein's literary techniques such as repetition. The latter focuses on Stein's revision of the legend as compared to the previous Faustian texts and the meanings of electricity in the work. In the chapter on *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* I examine the theme of automatic writing and explore the multiplicities found in the characters, structure and themes of the libretto. The findings lead to the conclusion that Stein designates electricity as the altering factor that electrifies the body of the text. She does that in order to bring to life a decaying legend, as if electricity would be used in an organic body as a treatment or a means of recovery.

Recently, critics have shed light on Stein's political connections during her stay in France and have tried to solve the enigma of how it is possible for a lesbian, Jewish writer to survive during WWII. Her refusal to leave the countryside and her reassurance (as seen in her war memoirs) that they will be safe reignites the critics that accuse Stein of being a collaborator of the Vichy regime and therefore a Nazi supporter. Barbara Will in *Unlikely Collaboration: Gertrude Stein, Bernard Faÿ, and the Vichy Dilemma* investigates Stein's relationship with Faÿ, who was one of Petain's closest advisors. Phoebe Stein gathers the contrasting points of critics regarding Stein's war activities and provides the opposing view that emphasizes Stein's intentional "contrariness" so as to attract the attention. Stein's choice to write

about the quotidian life and not record wartime through the eyes of a woman writer living in France reignited a controversy. In Will's words, Stein "dances through [a] grey zone" (144): this reflects the critic's characterisation of Stein as being impassive towards the events of war. On the other hand, Joan Retallack sees Stein's behavior as "her enduring capacity for contradiction" (Phoebe Stein 238) that is closer to how we know Stein through her writing. In "History, Narrative, and "Daily Living" in *Wars I Have Seen*," Phoebe Stein also returns to Stein's repetition in *Wars I Have Seen* and discusses the credibility in her narration: "rather than underscoring the 'reality' of her experience, Stein repeatedly highlights the 'unreality' of wartime" (242). Another element regarding Stein's war writing is her choice to produce children's books during the years of war. *The World Is Round* (1938) is the most known and, as Will explains, children's literature helped her escape the impending war. Stein is not the only modernist that, along with her complex texts, produced works for children. However, the timing of this decision and the fact that her work has been characterised as "childish," make this coincidence even more intriguing. It definitely justifies Retallack's point that Stein enjoyed contradictions and living in arbitrariness defines her life as a writer and as a person. In this study, all the above issues regarding Stein's controversial war memoirs are addressed and analysed through the element of contradiction in her writing. My analysis in the chapter on *Wars I Have Seen* tries to point beyond criticisms of Stein's being impassive or apathetic towards the events of the Second World War, which she of course was aware of. I suggest that Stein follows the same pattern that she did in her children's books; that is, using writing as a means of escape and as a way of creating a reality that one's mind can grasp, under the circumstances of war. As a result, the "double life" that Stein has been living during the war years can be understood through this interpretation of her memoir.

Until recently, the majority of criticism on Barnes's and Stein's oeuvre has been presented from a feminist point of view, and the identity issues that these texts negotiate have been analysed from the perspective of gender studies. My research does not ignore this scholarship, but it does not aim to explore these works through the thematic lines of these fields of study. When I read these texts, I am even now struck by the timeliness of their themes. This sense inspired me to place these two writers in dialogue and to conduct a research that would showcase the similarities in their work. However, it is impossible not to take into consideration the questions of gender identity and sexuality, yet my research aims at the exploration of the body,

organic and textual, as it is represented in the texts and reconfigured through the transforming power of technology. What this study also aims to do is to put these works in dialogue with modernist art movements. In many instances, the texts are appraised as literary manifestations of current artistic trends, which in many cases are rediscovered through literature. On the whole, Barnes's and Stein's work was considered to be eccentric even within the unconventional lines of modernism. It is this aspect of their work that repeatedly leads us to revisit these works anew and it is the inspiring force of this study.

IV. Writing Technologies of the Body: An Overview

The theme of the body as a spectacle and its mechanization in the urban environment of New York City is explored in Chapter One, where I analyse the technological quality that the elevated train imparts on the representations of the body. The title of the chapter "Mechanised Bodies Exposed in *Tableaux Vivants* in Djuna Barnes's *The Book of Repulsive Women*" aims at the exploration of Barnes's first collection of poems that launched her career as a writer. Her interest in the vaudeville, burlesque and grotesque is a common characteristic in her work both as a journalist and as a writer and I would suggest that *The Book of Repulsive Women* connects her early journalistic endeavours with her late writing pieces. This chapter aims at showcasing the different representations of the body seen in a series of *tableaux vivants,* which the author brings in dialogue with the New York Dadaist mechanomorphic bodies. This chapter intends to add to the existing research on the theme of the body in Barnes's collection and explain the power of the train that is not always implicitly present but controls the progression of the events. Furthermore, this work is a reflection not only of Barnes's own ideas, but it also mirrors historical and cultural events of her time. This chapter elaborates on the association of *The Book of Repulsive Women* with the Suffrage movement and the dialogue that Barnes establishes with New York avant-garde contexts.

Chapter Two focuses on Stein's libretto *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* and explores her preoccupation with automatism, technology and cinema. The title of the chapter "Technological Experiments: Gertrude Stein Lights *Dr. Faustus's* Lights" promises to examine Stein's modern version of the known legend, in which she replaces the ultimate prize of knowledge with electricity. In this chapter, I intend to show how

Stein creates an "automaton" body of text, through the metaphor of electricity, and the connection between her cinematic way of writing, and the practice of "automatism" that she explored through William James and later on encountered through Surrealism. Her admiration for Francis Picabia's art that emits a "vibratory existence," coincided with her wish to "make cinema" and led her to incorporate a similar mechanical quality in her work. Stein attempts to establish this vibration in her work by using repetitions and wordplays that lead to her multiple variations in the context and the multiple identities of the characters. A starting point of this research is Stein's student years at Harvard Psychological Laboratory and her first attempts to produce automatic writing. The theme of 'split personality' and automatic writing traced in her early experimentation is seen throughout her work that is categorized into two distinct writing styles. However, Stein's memoir *Everybody's Autobiography* published in 1937, works as a basis for the analysis of her Faustian libretto. The theme that she explores is closely related to what she experienced during her tour in America; the Broadway lights, her recognition as a celebrity and her meeting with other celebrities, such as Charlie Chaplin, contributed to the final outcome of the play. *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* incorporates not only Stein's confused perception of technology, but also her fascination with the embodiment of the cinema's qualities in her literary texts. In this aspect the motif of electricity controls the structure of the work and the constant fluctuation of the lights add a cinematic tone in the text.

Recent work on war writing has paved the way for exploring Stein's controversial war memoir *Wars I Have Seen* and its association with the quotidian. While this study contributes to this body of criticism, in Chapter Three, I intend to expose how Stein's linguistic experimentations reveal a parallel level of narrative. Stein has been criticized for emphasizing everyday life and not on a recording of the war years in the countryside of France during World War II. "Gertrude Stein and Prosthetic War Writing in *Wars I Have Seen*" suggests a close reading of the text, which shows that the absence of the war body is understood in the replacement of the human-bodies with word-bodies. This is understood on account of technology's intervention to the organic body through the prosthesis of artificial parts. In a similar manner, Stein's use of the word body together with the prefixes every-, any- and no-, creates another level of narration that can be associated with the absent body of war. *Wars I have Seen* is a complex work that combines autobiographical with historical events and Stein intentionally blurs the lines between the real and the surreal. An addition that this

research makes in the existing criticism of *Wars I Have Seen* is the interpretation of Stein's war autobiography as a linguistic experiment that can be compared to Bob Carlton Brown's conceptual writing. Stein is considered as a linguistic surgeon who operates on the text's body with the help of the word *prosthesis*. As a result her experimentation with the prosthetic parts of prefixes leads to the objectification of the words' bodies. Stein's numerous quotidian scenes blend with the limited references to the war and the 'missing body' of war becomes prosthetic. Another point of reference in this chapter is Stein's choice to write children's books during the time of war, which functions as an opposing but also connecting point with her war writings.

My reading of *The Antiphon* in Chapter Four explores the interconnection of Barnes's violated body with the autobiographical textual body of her last major work. "A Body Within a Body: *The Antiphon* as Djuna Barnes's Body" investigates the body of text, which is violated by the massive editing of T. S. Eliot. Since the work is the most implicit autobiography of Barnes, her body is understood in the dialogues and it is transfigured in the poetic verse of a revengeful tragedy. Barnes's thinking is loud and clear through the antiphonic, polyphonic and autobiographical voices of the text. The story of the play unfolds in a single day, when a family meets in the ancestral home. Soon Barnes let the readers know that this family gathering was arranged by the men, which intended to cause the death of the women. Barnes outlines her childhood life and family history of abuse in a work that desperately seeks revenge and catharsis. Her family is represented by the characters of the play, which are also embodied in the figures of puppets. T. S. Eliot's corrections led to the re-writing of many drafts until its publication in 1958 and to the re-living of the painful past for Barnes. *The Antiphon* has been characterised as a metadrama and this study aims at showing how the metatheatrical device of a dollhouse onstage, where the puppets re-enact past events, projects to the audience the violation of Barnes's body. The stringed projections of the bodies' representations add a cinematic and mechanical aspect to the play. *The Antiphon* gives voice to Barnes's years of silence and this literary embodiment of physical violations offers a response to her sufferings. The final confrontation of the orchestrated meeting of the mother with the daughter leads to their death and to the end of Barnes's literary career.

The final chapter of this study "Djuna Barnes and Gertrude Stein in Dialogue: *A Reflection on Bodies and Technology*" brings Barnes's and Stein's work in dialogue and elaborates on their convergent and divergent moments. Starting with the aspect of

autobiography found in articles and in literary texts, Barnes and Stein incorporate their personal experiences in the bodies of their texts. This embodiment is mediated by the intervention of technology that is illustrated in various instances in each work. Another issue that the last chapter addresses is the real personas of Barnes and Stein and their portrayal through the characters in their texts. The exploration of the body in the works of the two writers, also, includes the involvement of the two senses of hearing and sight that enhance the characters' capabilities. The ability to see or to hear is connected with the challenged perception of the characters to believe or not and with the personal involvement of the bodies in the works. How technology is applied in the writings of Barnes and Stein is one more point of reference in the last chapter, where I attempt to show how this transforms the texts and the characters into mechanical bodies. Physical or textual, the body is controlled by the different manifestations of technology and the outcome of this interaction is embodied in the four major works that are examined in this study.

Notes

[1] On Barnes's first years in Paris see, Andrew Field, *Djuna: The Formidable Miss Barnes.* Chapter One.

[2] "In 1927 Natalie Barney decided to have a special series of salons devoted to women writers in order to introduce French and Anglo-Saxon women writers to each other. In order to do this it was necessary to prepare little translation extracts for recitation together with the readings. It was difficult when it came to be Gertrude Stein's turn…Barnes had her day on June 3, shared with Rachilde. She was introduced by Ford Madox Ford" (Field 122).

[3] Benstock, Shari. *Women of Left Bank: Paris, 1900-1940.* Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2002.

[4] Bryher, Annie Winifred Ellerman. *The Heart to Artemis: A Writer's Memoirs.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1962. The abstract is quoted in Field 106.

[5] On the similarities of *Ryder* and *The Making of the Americans,* see Benstock 243.

[6] Barnes to Eliot, 21 February 1956. This letter is part of the Barnes collection at the McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, College Park. It is quoted in Lynda Curry's "'Tom, Take Mercy': Djuna Barnes' Drafts of *The Antiphon*."

1. MECHANISED BODIES EXPOSED IN *TABLEAUX VIVANTS* IN DJUNA BARNES'S *THE BOOK OF REPULSIVE WOMEN*

1.1 Barnes's Journalism as the "Seedbed" of *The Book of Repulsive Women*

"I can draw and write, and you'd be a fool not to hire me," (75) are Djuna Barnes's famous lines when she appeared at the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in 1913, applying for a job as a columnist.[1] This was just one of the several newspapers that Barnes collaborated with in her early writing years, which worked as a basis and as an inspiring period for her later work. New York was an ideal haven for the kind of stories that Barnes took an interest in, like the Greenwich bohemians or the suffragettes, but also victims of crime stories or underprivileged citizens. Grotesque and bizarre stories of people and especially women were her favourite topics, which never stopped inspiring her and can be traced throughout her literary career, seen in works such as *The Book of Repulsive Women* (1915) and *Nightwood* (1958). Barnes's first years of journalism were her initiation to the world of writing and especially after moving to Greenwich Village in 1915, she came close to avant-garde artists of New York, such as the Baroness Elsa, and publishers like Guido Bruno. Against this backdrop, this chapter aims at exploring Barnes's *The Book of Repulsive Women* in relation to the journalistic articles that determined her early life in New York. The context of the poems is pertinent to Barnes's own experiences as a journalist, but the protagonists in this case remain nameless. Barnes focuses on the exposure of these bodies in the city's setting and shows how each of them is perceived and placed in a series of *tableaux vivants*. As a result, Barnes creates literary "living pictures" of female representations that become mechanized by the altering presence of technology and come in dialogue with the New York Dadaist mechanomorphic bodies.

Before pursuing a career as a journalist Barnes attended Pratt Institute in 1912 but in less than a year she dropped out due to the need to support herself financially. Her earnings as a free-lance writer reached five thousand dollars a year by 1917, an amount that was satisfying enough for a journalist at that time (28).[2] Until 1920, when Barnes left New York for Paris, she had written more than one hundred articles signed less with her real name and more with her pseudonyms "Lydia Steptoe," lady of

fashion (1922-28) or "Gunga Duhl, the Pen Performer." (9)[3] As described in Levine's study of Barnes's early journalism, Barnes was known for her daring and risky interviews with notorious personalities of New York and working in a male-dominated field her articles would always impress. As seen in Levine's essay, her tough journalistic attitude can be also seen when she covered the murder of a girl: what would shock her most was not the view of the dead body, which she photographed, but the refusal of the victim's father for an interview.[4] Barnes would wander around the city and write about "perverse metropolitan spectacles," (156) as Scott Herring puts it, found in bohemian neighborhoods and unusual places. Brooklyn was a very common setting for Barnes's stories, but also Coney Island would soon become an inspiring spot for her since she spent a lot of time observing people there. Mary Lynn Broe explains "it was when she covered the 'Coney Island Burlesque'" from 1913-1917 that Barnes shifted from objective to subjective journalism" (10). The stories that she covered in articles such as "The Tingling, Tangling Tango As 'Tis Tripped at Coney Isle" (1913) and "If Noise Were Forbidden at Coney Island, a Lot of People Would Lose Their Jobs" (1914) are indicative of what Broe refers to as 'subjective journalism.' Barnes depicts her adventures in Coney Island when she tries "to catch any runaways or any fainting fit or anything like that" (147).[5] She drew inspiration from the decaying period of Coney Island and from characters and incidents that had a decadent aura. In the beginning of her career as a journalist, Barnes remained an objective observer in the stories she covered, but she gradually started becoming part of her articles describing her experiences and not just her observations. It is the theme of witnessing and active observation that Barnes took an interest in, a recurring theme that is also present in *The Book of Repulsive Women*.

In "Bringing Milkshakes to Bulldogs," Nancy J. Levine refers to Barnes's subjective journalism and claims that Barnes's articles were "the seedbed of her greatest novel, *Nightwood,*" (27) however, there is no discussion regarding the connection of her journalism with *The Book of Repulsive Women*. Similarly, Kate Ridinger Smorul in her essay "Of Marionettes, Boxers and Suffragettes" refers to Barnes's interest in performative journalism and she analyses a great number of her articles. She notes Barnes's fascination towards "machines, automatons, and uncanny bodies," (60) yet she again focuses on their connection with *Nightwood.* This chapter posits an interrelation between Barnes's journalist pieces and the poems of *The Book of Repulsive Women* and discusses Barnes's literary contribution in a time of cultural

and political change. The fact that the unusual stories of women in New York were the basis and the source of inspiration for her first collection of poems invites us to rethink the term subjective journalism, discussed by Levine and Broe. Subjective journalism works for Barnes as a type of short autobiographical stories that are not personal experiences but rather shared incidents. Her engagement with the adventures she covered as a journalist adds a personal note in her writing and creates a discourse that will inform her future literary works.

In her exploration of the theme of *la jeune fille américaine* in avant-garde works, Elizabeth Hutton Turner returns to 1913 and Francis Picabia's being "[i]ntoxicated by the speed, rhythms, surging crowds, and heights of New York" (11). Picabia, after his return to Paris, transferred this excitement into his work, which led to two large oil paintings. Although the title of the one is *Udnie (jeune fille américaine: danse),*[6] as Turner explains, it does not have a clear reference to his experience in the city of New York.[7] Shortly after he arrived in New York in 1915, he finishes *Portrait d'une jeune fille américaine dans l'état de nudité*,[8] which was different from his previous work, depicting a spark plug followed by his light bulb *Américaine* (1917).[9] Picabia's machine portraits reflect technological motifs such as the automobile, and the electric lights in association with the New Woman that altered the city's background and its inhabitants. Barnes shares the same interest with Picabia, and their works have in common the mechanization of the body within the cityscape. Starting from the first articles written in New York to her later ones written in Paris, Barnes was always intrigued by the issue of the body, its representation and its display in the public eye as seen both in her writing and sketches: in "Types Found in Odd Corners Round About Brooklyn" (1913) Barnes created sketches of various people seen around Brooklyn, emphasizing their gloomy characteristics. She sketches the body of a man leaning towards saloon doors, the figures of three people rushing through the city streets and a woman with animal-like facial features.[10] In 1914, Barnes published "My Adventures Being Rescued," putting her life in danger and using her own body as an object of spectacle by jumping three times from a skyscraper only to be rescued by firefighters for art's sake, "an act which both Dadaists and Surrealists would applaud" (Nel 24). Barnes addressed this experience by saying "I was a movie," (95)[11] enjoying the fact that she was a spectacle and that her rescue would be the topic of her article.[12] She became a stunt journalist, whose body was the medium of producing a story for the paper, creating a new 'genre' in journalism. This

experimentation allowed her to explore the perspective of the writer within the story and foreshadows her insistence to produce many autobiographical texts in her literary career. The theme of observing and being observed is also seen in the article "When the Puppets Come to Town" (1917) a piece that she wrote about her visit to Kleist's "The Puppet Theatre" (301).[13] She focuses on the expression and the subjectivity of the puppets and how they are used to perform tragic feelings, a theme that she will revisit much later in *The Antiphon* (1958).[14] Even after she went to Paris, she published "What is Good Form of Dying: In Which A Dozen Dainty Deaths are Suggested for Daring Damsels" (1923) in *Vanity Fair,* an article satirizing different types of women, offering different ways of suicide and attacking the standards of female beauty. Gradually, Barnes's writing voice became subjective, making manifest her preference to create her own stories and expose them to the public. It is interesting to note that her experimentation with the exposure of the female body is set in uncommon places and in ways that her readers would not expect. The female body as a spectacle is not something new, however, Barnes introduces to the audience a different way of 'seeing' and of 'being seen.' Her career in journalism coincided with the reconfiguration of these concepts in art and she used the power of the press so as to present the outcome of this interaction.

It should be noted that Barnes's personal involvement in the stories she recounted is most forcefully rendered in her iconic article "How It Feels to be Forcibly Fed" (1914). It was published in *The World* magazine and incorporates the characteristics of subjective journalism that Levine suggests, since Barnes places herself within the story and uses her own body as the medium of producing a story recalling Ridinger Smorul's point about performative journalism. When Barnes published "How It Feels to be Forcibly Fed," the Suffragettes' demonstrations in New York were front-page stories, and women were arrested and imprisoned as a social 'threat.' During their imprisonment, many went on hunger strike and suffered force-feeding, an act that was continuously applied by the prisons' hospital so that the government would not be charged with their death. Emmeline Pankhurst's description of women being tortured while she was in Holloway Prison in 1912 is rather explicit: "[s]ickening scenes of violence took place almost every hour of the day, as the doctors went from cell to cell performing their hideous office"; and she continues: "I shall never while I live forget the suffering I experienced during the days when those cries were ringing in my ears" (188).[15] This practice included instruments like rubber tubes that were inserted

through the nose or the mouth so as to pour food into the body. Four or even five people would hold the prisoner and one – usually the doctor – would use the rubber tube to insert the food, a painful practice that was seen as a form of physical and emotional abuse. It is a "mechanized rape," as Edward P. Comentale describes force-feeding, "a process of cold, alienated instrumentalization" of the female body (255). The intervention of science practiced by male doctors on the female body constitutes a clear symbolism of male violence towards the female body with the use of phallic instruments such as the tube. It also shows the ambiguous use of science in medicine and its ramifications over human existence, a theme that is reflected especially in the work of the Dadaists. The scientific intervention in the human right to react or even to die also affects the organic functions of the body, which is deprived of its basic functions and is controlled by the machines.

Barnes was intrigued by the demonstrations and the acts of the suffragettes in the US and Britain, especially in terms of their using their own bodies and exposing themselves in the public eye. As Barbara Green explains "the suffragettes produced themselves as spectacular, did all they could to maintain a public gaze," and made sure that "they could control the reception of their images" (71). The act of force-feeding was depicted in the posters of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) described as the "modern inquisition" featuring women suffering in prison.[16] It can be said that their corporal torturing was used by them to promote their demands towards the government, "commercializing" their movement through the exposure of their bodies. Green refers to Lisa Ticker on the specific issue regarding the reception of those images: "There was a sado-masochistic element in WSPU posters [of forcibly fed women] which was intended to heighten a sense of outrage at women's suffering, but which might equally invite a covert pleasure in its spectacle" (38). The private female body in pain was exposed in front of the public eye arousing a "sadistic" viewpoint as Green and Ticker argue, and, at the same time, eroticizing the image of the force-fed body. It is rather ironic how the Suffragettes promoted their demands for equality via objectifying the female body and turning it into spectacle.

Barnes was raised by a suffragette, her grandmother Zadel,[17] and her article "How It Feels to Be Forcibly Fed" aims to express support to the imprisonment of the English Suffragettes and their struggle to survive their corporal tortures. However, what interested Barnes dearly was not their voting demands but their resistance and striving for their beliefs. Bonnie Kime Scott refers to Barnes's fascination towards

women's power to survive as seen in her early plays "To The Dogs" and "The Dove," which present examples of strong women struggling to survive (Stretching the Scope of Suffrage 53). Scott explains that Barnes like Woolf and West was "pursuing women's issues" (54) in general and was not only concerned about changing the vote law. In these terms, Barnes's personal involvement in "How It Feels to Be Forcibly Fed" addresses the corporal pain of this enforcement in an effort to ask from her readers to put themselves in her place, as, accordingly, in the Suffragettes' position. Barbara Green refers to Barnes's journalism as "spectacular confession," a description that explains how private moments were turned into an open discussion with the public. Barnes became an activist of a different sort: inspired by the Suffragettes, she is not afraid to use her own body as an exhibit that people could observe and criticize. In the case of "How It Feels to Be Forcibly Fed," there is a similarity with the women activists' campaign, since Barnes's article and picture of her force-feeding reflects the posters of the Suffrage movement. As a journalist that covers the event and at the same time as a woman experiencing the act, Barnes proposes a new viewpoint on the theme of being both the subject and object of witnessing. Green adds that Barnes's article on force-feeding "locate[s] woman on both sides of the gaze, and thus pose[s] a new set of questions that have to do with female (and feminist) spectatorship" (72-73). She proposes and suggests a new type of subjectivity; a new type of flâneur that is not limited in strolling around the city. This flâneur is not a figure of leisure, but rather keeps up with the city's pace, observing people around the city from elevated trains or in underground stations. Nancy Bombaci explains, "Barnes did not merely want to be an embodiment of difference, but she wanted to see it from the vantage point of one who will engage in the act of representation" (Freaks in Late Modernist American Culture 50). This coexistence of the subject with the object in Barnes's journalism is a key point in her articles and, as Bombaci adds, challenges the cliché of the male subject as a spectator towards the female object of the gaze.

In "How It Feels to be Forcibly Fed," Barnes as a stunt journalist became the subject of a story that was known to many but was not presented from a personal viewpoint. Barnes wished to experience this "treatment" herself and write her thoughts, providing to the readers an image of her lying in a hospital bed. She uses her own body and, similarly to the suffragettes, she becomes a spectacle and the object of corporal pain. Below the picture that accompanied the article, there is a description: "clamped in a sheet, the subject is held steady on the table while a

physician examines her nose and throat with speculum and electric lamp."[18] The readers are witnessing Barnes in a shot that makes them intruders into her private space. Kate Ringer Smorul translates the act of force-feeding as an act of silencing the voices of the oppressed suffragettes; she points out that "[f]emale voices are effectively silenced, literally by a tube lodged in the vulnerable tissue of the throat" (86); the tube becomes a symbol of penetration but of silencing too. Barnes writes about the article's photograph: "This, at least, is one picture that would never go into the family album,"[19] using her caustic humour and, she goes on to describe her force-feeding experience:

> I saw in my hysteria a vision of a hundred women in grim prison hospitals, bound and shrouded on tables just like this, held in the rough grip of callous warders while white-robed doctors thrust rubber tubing into the delicate interstices of their nostrils and forced into their helpless bodies the crude fuel to sustain the life they longed to sacrifice. Science had at last, then, deprived us of the right to die (178).

Barnes tied on the bed, surrounded by four men who held her firmly towards the bed describes her body as a "corpse" that could only hear "the song of a million machines" coming outside of the window (175). Before 'science' intrudes in her body, Barnes chooses to accompany the scene of the 'force-feeding' with the urban noise that comes from out across the city. As Barnes explains, this practice could not be compared with the experience of the British Suffragettes; however, the moment the doctor placed the 'rubber tubing' into her nose Barnes envisioned this practice that would influence her future work. The body of Barnes is the point of reference that connects the suffragettes' 'helpless bodies' with the "repulsive" bodies of her poems. The motifs of vulnerability, confinement and abuse are shared characteristics in these representations of the body, and their coexistence in Barnes's work lead to a combination of a personal (almost autobiographical) with an impersonal tone.

With regard to this, it is worth mentioning that Barnes does not make a clear reference to women's vote in her article but she limits herself to writing about the details of the punishing act. She calls her 'force-feeding' experience an "experiment" (174) and when it comes to an end she names it as "the greatest experience of the bravest of [her] sex" (179). After her 'experiment' is over, Barnes has a discussion with the doctor, who "had forgotten all but the play" (179) and watches the other four men who held her during the act leaving the room "having finished their minor roles

in one minor tragedy" (179). In her final lines, she adds a sarcastic tone in the preceding description that is supposed to raise irritation and susceptibility among the readers. The fact that Barnes did not refer to women's vote and the theatricality of her writing can be interpreted as her unwillingness to openly support the Suffragettes. Nevertheless, as Barnes indicated in "How It Feels to Be Forcibly Fed," she aimed at an experimentation of the way a story was covered until then. It is the embodiment of pain, struggle and resistance that Barnes wished to capture in her articles and later to experience in her writing. The theatricality that she added in these stories paved the way for her to move on from being a stunt journalist into the pursuit of a career as a writer. Nevertheless she never gave up on the idea of incorporating the dual axes of the subjective/objective and the personal/ impersonal, which became points of contact between her journalism and her literary texts. Her first poetry collection would embody these ideas and the different projections of the body as a spectacle is understood through the urban symbol of the train.

1.2 The Metropolitan Train as An Altering Agent of Technology

The Book of Repulsive Women is a work written at a time when urbanism and technological development transformed New York's cityscape. Technologically advanced means of transport offered to the traveller new ways of observing and experiencing the city. New Yorkers could discover the underground via the metro, or over ground via elevated trains and afforded panoramic views of the city and of its breathtaking high-rise buildings. The 'El,' the elevated railway was an important part of the city's life from 1878 to 1955 and connected the busiest veins of NY like the Fifth and Third Avenue.[20] Paraphrasing what Sunny Stalter explains, the sense commuters had when using the elevated train was a completely different travel experience from travelling on the subway because passengers got closer to city life, as the 'L' "opened up otherwise invisible spaces to fantasies of communion" (872). The El offered to its passengers a panoptic, yet fragmented, view of the city and a sense of visual proximity to the apartments of the buildings since "the distance from the tracks to the adjacent buildings was less than thirty feet" (871). The elevated train connected the poorest neighbourhoods to the wealthiest like the centre of Manhattan, carrying people from different social backgrounds of New York. The 'L' was a metropolitan

train that penetrated the city and offered the commuters an intrusive view into the nearby houses, whose residents' life was exposed to them.

The influence of the changing cityscape can be seen in the work of artists such as Edward Hopper, whose work is indicative of the *observing life via windowpanes* theme.[21] For instance, *Summer Interior* (1909) pictures a semi-nude woman sitting on the floor of her apartment and leaning towards her bed.[22] Also the much later *Night Windows* (1928) depicts a lighted apartment contrasting with the building's dark exterior, where a female figure is seen inside through the open windows.[23] In both cases, the women are not aware of someone looking at them through their exposed window, a fact that adds a mysterious and even erotic element in Hopper's work. Hopper, also, reflected city life from the opposite point of view; that is how the city was perceived from the interior of New York's apartments. An example of this is *Room in Brooklyn* (1932),[24] where a woman is seen sitting on a chair: we cannot see her face, but we have a clear view of the rooftops outside her room's window. Cityscape, city life and especially the contrast of light and dark inspired Hopper, and his interest in playing with light and shadows can be traced in his work throughout his career. In 1918, Hopper made *Night on the El Train,*[25] an etching illustrating a couple inside El's wagon, where its lighted surrounding contrasts with the city's darkness as seen through its window.

Hopper's need to reflect on the emergence of the technological and urban environment of NY is similar to Djuna Barnes early work, who as a journalist had the chance to explore different parts of the city and as a writer talked about "the coexistence of marginalized groups" (140).[26] Some of those groups were lesbians, immigrants or bohemians living in particular parts of New York like Brooklyn and Greenwich Village, creating their own communities detached from the rest of the city. The elevated train, however, would expose their private lives to the curious eyes of travellers - coming from different parts and social backgrounds of the city - who indiscreetly observed them through the windowpanes, and it would offer to them a city tour around different city life stories.

In *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism,* Barnes is referred to as a member of the New York Dada movement, mostly because she was part of the artistic circle, meeting at the art collector Walter Conrad Arensberg's salon and sharing their interest in modern art.[27] With regard to this, the basic concepts of New York Dada and the kinetic element of Marcel Duchamp's *Nude* in *Nude Descending a Staircase No. 2*

(1912) are closely connected to the female body in Barnes's work.[28] Its combination of Cubism and Futurism in terms of "the reduction of the nude body to an arrangement of geometrical planes" and "the kinetic motion of the figure" (Levenson 259) made it the most popular work exhibited in the Armory Show and associated with New York Dada.[29] The body is not seen and described as a whole but fragmented and deconstructed in distinct parts: as it is viewed from a fast moving train, a mechanized quality is also bestowed on it. In *The Book of Repulsive Women,* Barnes hints at the intruding train by offering snapshots of exposed female bodies situated around the metropolis that are either found in a poem's title or implied in the abrupt images described in the stanzas. The train works as an altering agent in the collection, connecting the stories of each poem from the beginning to the end. Each poem represents a different point of interest, a different story of a woman that is seen from the observing eye of an elevated train. The titles "From Fifth Avenue Up" and "From Third Avenue On" hint at the existence of the train connecting the stories of the women, in the same way the El connected Fifth and Third Avenue in New York via the Fifth Avenue Line of the 'L' route. The fact of the actual route of the El reinforces the association of the poems with the train image that is, nonetheless, not clearly mentioned but implied. To that end, I argue that Barnes, in *The Book of Repulsive Women,* deconstructs and reconstructs the female body by placing it in the urban setting of New York and invites the readers to explore it from the vantage point of the elevated train.

Barnes's image of the El train -the metaphor for the observing eye in her poems- homonymically sounds like the French "elle" thereby inviting associations with Haviland's use of 'she' for the machine in Stieglitz's *291* in 1915: "Man made the machine in his own image. She has limbs which act; lungs which breathe; a heart which beats; a nervous system through which runs electricity" (cover page).[30] The El is one more invention of the American Machine Age, which is not just seen as a vehicle for the masses but as a metaphor for a controlling machine, a device of surveillance in the city, catching vague pictures of "repulsive" female bodies. As Melissa Jane Hardie suggests in *Repulsive Modernism: Djuna Barnes' The Book of Repulsive Women,* the use of the adjective "repulsive" does not refer to Barnes's own view but and it is a rather direct criticism of the Dadaists' misogynist perception of women and the female body. Barnes's fragmented and deformed images of women, described in her poems and depicted in her drawings, also remind us of Picasso's "Les

Demoiselles d' Avignon." In both works women appear to have bestial facial and bodily characteristics as seen in Picasso's disjointed female bodies and in Barnes's hybrid woman-animal figures.

In *The Book of Repulsive Women,* the poem "Seen from the 'L,'" indicates the dominant role of the train image in the collection. A young woman stands naked inside her apartment, and becomes a spectacle that attracts the interest of the onlookers who watch her from the train. The two first stanzas of the poem, apart from mentioning the nudity of the woman, focus on specific parts of the interior:

> So she stands—nude—stretching dully
> Two amber combs loll through her hair
> A vague molested carpet pitches
> Down the dusty length of stair.
> She does not see, she does not care
> It's always there.
>
> The frail mosaic on her window
> Facing starkly toward the street
> Is scribbled there by tipsy sparrows—
> Etched there with their rocking feet. (17)

The female figure of the poem, which stands naked "stretching dully," can be paired to Picabia's "Portrait of a Young American Girl in a State of Nudity," since both expose a female body "in its prime" but "frail" and fragmented. This is a moment when Barnes's work comes in dialogue with Dada art, offering her interpretation of the *jeune fille américaine*, as it were. Barnes ironically emphasizes the condition of objects such as the carpet, the stairs and the window, which are described as "molested," "dusty" and "frail." The choice of the specific words comes in sharp contrast with the woman's body "in its prime" described in the third stanza, adding a sarcastic tone to the poem. The decadent environment where the body is seen, affects its perception. The naked adolescent body is absorbed by the dusty surrounding as seen from the room's window. The use of antithetical adjectives is repeated in the last stanza of the poem when the young girl's lips are described as "vague and fancy" and ”bloom vivid and repulsive" (17). The imagery of the declining background dominating and altering the perception of the body reinforces Barnes's sarcasm towards the 'repulsiveness' of her representations. She invites the readers to question

themselves whether these women were indeed repulsive and to find the answer through their observation. The false impression of the body is reinforced by the train's speed that does not allow the observer to make a careful examination to the object of spectacle. As a result, the youthful body is assimilated in the decaying background and acquires the characteristics that prevail in the snapshot caught from the elevated train. Barnes explains the outcome:

> Chain-stitched to her soul for time.
> Ravelling grandly into vice
> Dropping crooked into rhyme.
> Slipping through the stitch of virtue,
> Into crime. (17)

Not only the body, but also the soul of this woman acquires a decaying aspect when seen in the urban setting. The vividness of her body is now lost and is replaced by vice and crime. Barnes illustrates the false perception of the young woman and how the "dusty" and "molested" room turned her into a "crooked" criminal. She becomes an object of observation, on which crookedness is projected, reflecting how people perceived her and not necessarily how she actually was. As a result, the subject, observed from the elevated train, acquires similar characteristics with the room's objects. Her representation as "slipping…[i]nto crime" suggests that she should be punished for this and it can be considered as parallel reading for Barnes's article on the Suffragettes and their punishment through force-feeding.

Michel de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* talks about spatial stories, as he names the narratives creating spaces in a place. He explains how the Greek word "metaphorai," which is used for mass transportation, also refers to the narration of stories in a "metaphorical" way.[31] He points out that stories "traverse and organize places; they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories" (115). In the case of *The Book of Repulsive Women*, Barnes creates new trajectories with the different stories of her poems, which are "selected and linked" with the help of the elevated train. In this way, it offers a new mapping of the city, where Barnes through the poems creates loci of attention that have a beginning and an end. Barnes's route brings the bodies in dialogue with the city and each poem offers a different interpretation of their interaction. The city of New York is the place in which the poems, or else, the stations that the readers

follow, result in the creation of a new spatial trajectory; this means that the collection is Barnes's own spatial story.

De Certeau explains that narratives of places, especially in New York, are categorized into two types: "the map" and "the tour." As he adds, most of the stories based in New York belong to the second type, which he names a "speech-act." Adding to this, De Certeau explains that the map type and the tour type of narrative are different in the following ways:

> [E]ither seeing (the knowledge of an order of places) or going (spatialising actions). Either it presents a *tableau* ("there are…"), or it organizes *movements* ("you enter, you go across you turn…"). Of these two hypotheses, the choices made by the New York narrators overwhelmingly favored the second. (119)

The Book of Repulsive Women combines both types of narrative; this is made by the presence of the metropolitan train that goes around, creates movements and takes the travellers in an order of places, which appear in front of them in a form of a *tableau*. The panoramic view of the city that the El offers can be related to Foucault's metaphor of the panopticon, the pervasive force of which controls the bodies inside the apartments. However, in the case of the panopticon the guard-observer stays motionless inside the "inspection house," while in Barnes's narrative the traveller-observer inside the metropolitan train travels around the city, delineating its route. As Andrew Thacker notes, De Certeau "draws upon Foucault's analysis in *Discipline and Punish* of the creation in modern societies of a 'disciplinary power' that seeps through the social body," but what differentiates them is the fact that De Certeau examined this power "in the quotidian activities of the ordinary person" (Moving Through Modernity 30). De Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* describes the experience of train travelling as an "incarceration-vacation" and the feeling when reaching the terminal as a "lost paradise" (114). He names the machine as the "primum mobile" that "not only divides spectators and beings, but also connects them" (113). It is the machine that, according to De Certeau, modifies the relationship of the immobile observer and the observed, because although they do not change their position, the movement of the train affects their frame of reference. In addition, he suggests that although the objects of observation do not move, the objects' relationship with the observer is altered because the observer's "vision alone continually undoes and remakes the relationships between these fixed elements" (112).

Similarly in Barnes, in the poem "Seen from the L," the relationship of the immobile figures of the observer from the 'L' and the repulsive women are mechanized by the mobilizing power of the moving train. The parts of a female body provide the different perspectives the observer develops by intruding on the women's private space. The observer looks closely from the train's windowpane at the woman through "The frail mosaic on her window" and shares with the reader how "her lips are vague and fancy / In her youth – / They bloom vivid and repulsive / As the truth" (17). Barnes uses opposing descriptions for the woman's lips that are both "vague" and "fancy" or "vivid" and "repulsive": these contradictory images occur, as it were, because the locomotive notionally provides to the observer different photographic shots. The train, as previously mentioned, may be seen as a symbol of the altering ability of technology, offering to the immobile passenger or observer a complex view of the city and the bodies. Michel de Certeau concludes his chapter "Railway Navigation and Incarceration" by noting that there is always a terminal stop to this train journey and the people who were the observers continue their lives having experienced a kind of illusion (114). Likewise, in *The Book of Repulsive Women*, when the "incarceration-vacation" of the passenger ends, the images of the women may not look repulsive anymore. However, because the train is a vehicle for the masses, when one observer leaves another enters, so interaction between observer and observed not only does not end but also different modifications of space are produced due to the various perspectives of the observers combined with the continuous movement of the train back and forth to the starting and terminal point.

1.3 Representations of Bodies Exposed in the Urban Setting

In *The Book of Repulsive Women,* Barnes devotes each poem to the description of female bodies seen around the city; a pregnant woman, a lesbian, a cabaret dancer and "other unspecified "deviants"—who lurk on the outskirts of society, seemingly unaware of being surveilled" (Unger 128). This surveillance is made with the help of the El that brings together the different stories, as already explained, which are scattered in various sites of the city. *The Book of Repulsive Women* also includes an autobiographical tone, since it encompasses various themes associated with Barnes's

life; stories from her early journalism, depiction of fragmented female bodies influenced by New York Dada, symbolisms showcasing historical facts.

After a few years of its publication, Barnes expressed her aversion towards the collection and described it as a "disgusting little item" that led her to its destruction: "[a]t one time in the 1920s I collected as many copies as I could find and burned them in my mother's backyard" (O'Neal 98). Fortunately, some copies survived and the work was republished in 1949, without Barnes's consent, who characterized the reissue as an "act of piracy" (Hardie 120). It is quite interesting to see how Barnes through this reaction brings forward the theme of the body's violation. Not providing her consent to the re-issue of *The Book of Repulsive Women* is similar to the Suffragettes' refusal to be fed. This means that Barnes experienced the new publication of her collection as a case similar to the force-feeding, depriving her from the right, as the owner of the body's text, to protect it. It is the body of the text that Barnes wishes to destroy, ironically enough, because she believed that it was in a sense "repulsive."

The Book of Repulsive Women consists of eight poems or *rhythms* as Barnes calls them: "From Fifth Avenue Up", "In General", "Seen from the 'L'", "In Particular", "From Third Avenue On", "Twilight of the Illicit", "To a Cabaret Dancer" and "Suicide". As a work written at the time of the emergence of the New Woman and of the Suffrage movement, it can be said that it is Barnes's own protest and the poems of the collection are the rhythms – or slogans – that frame her effort to bring to the public stories of women's corporeal sufferings. Esther Sánchez-Pardo suggests that Barnes's insistence on grotesque themes of tortured bodies "create[s] portraits of women who experience brief moments of freedom outside the conventions that would capture and silence them" (281). These moments of freedom are placed inside the private space of their apartments that are captured by the conventional eyes of the observers. Those portraits of women, mentioned by Sánchez-Pardo, interact from the beginning to the end, following a linear direction of meaning that leads from the creation of life to the end of it.

In the first poem, "From Fifth Avenue Up," Barnes sarcastically and implicitly, associates a dissident sexuality with the figure of a pregnant woman with her "belly bulging stately," ironically implying that the image of procreation is a repulsive sight (13). The hopeful image of a woman carrying a new life is strongly contrasted and concluded with the gloomy theme of the dead body in the last poem of the book,

"Suicide," describing a rather inglorious end. The contrasting dual themes in the collection, are expressed in more ways in the rest of the poems: the "diptych" of "In General" and "In Particular," for instance, suggests again a lineal order.[32] Adding to Barnes's new trajectory in the city, the stories can be "Seen from the L," which is present throughout the work, providing captions of women's images in different moments: "From Fifth Avenue Up" and "From Third Avenue On," delineate a route that the readers of the book will take.

A close reading of the book's poems offers multiple representations of the body that Barnes chooses also for a Dadaist mapping of the city. As already mentioned, elements of New York Dada can be traced in the portraying of these bodies, challenging the way they are perceived, in terms of standards of beauty, in a differentiated retrospective seeing through the mind's eye. Starting "From Fifth Avenue Up," Barnes chooses to talk about less-discussed parts of a woman's body like the "spleen" (13) or the "under lip" (13) together with other body parts which are scattered in all the stanzas of her poems. Barnes's description of different parts of the female body –legs, spleen, thighs, under lip, breast and belly– as unflattering features, coupled with physical pain, such as "strangled" and "bulging," can be related to Haviland's description of the female body. Haviland in "We Are Living in the Age of the Machine" (*291,* nos. 7-8, September-October 1915) describes the machine as a "daughter born without a mother" (1). His description of this female machine emphasizes specific organs, like limbs, lungs and heart. In both cases, either the components are grotesque and animate or prosthetic and inanimate, as if implying that these are aspects of a women's "repulsive" existence. Brian M. Reed in "Hart Crane: After his Lights," claims that "From Fifth Avenue Up" […] explicitly counters the long male tradition of the poetic *blazon* of a woman's body, which by and large limits itself in decorously enumerating secondary sexual characteristics" (49). Reed compares Barnes's poems with Hart Crane's poem "C33" in terms of sharing a need for perplexing meanings and stylistics. Although both writers used a more decadent form in their early poems, they were influenced by the contemporary trends. Especially Barnes and her effort to attack this "male blazon" can be read in the context of her Dadaist and avant-garde influences.

Characters in *The Book of Repulsive Women* are similar to the ones Barnes mentioned in her journalism and as Nancy J. Levine notes "Tango dancers, chorus girls, Greenwich village bohemians, and British suffragettes" were some of them (27).

The woman's struggle in the modern urban setting of New York is implicit in all poems of the collection, and Barnes seems to allude to this effort as "short sharp modern Babylonic cries" in the poem "From Fifth Avenue Up." New York becomes the modern Babylon and the women's cries make a desperate effort to be heard over the bustling noise of the city. Those female cries cannot be separated from the city's sounds of the cars, trains and the bustle of city life in general. In "From Fifth Avenue Up," there is an instance that shows how the body is seen in snapshots from a fast moving train: "With your legs half strangled / In your lace, / You'd lip the world to madness / On your face. […] With your belly bulging stately / Into space" (11, 13). The speed of the train only allows for glimpses of parts of a woman's body. In "From Third Avenue On" the female figure will not "lip the world to madness" (11) with her face because "she grins too vacant into space" (16) while "A vacant space is in her face." She is also seen "Beside the litter in the street"(15) or "beneath a dirty sheet" contrasting to the "beneath some hard / Capricious star"(11) in "From Fifth Avenue Up." The body is seen in fragmented pictures, the description of the parts is brief and elliptical, and the use of words unusual. Again Barnes replaces positive words with negative ones, following the same pattern of the collection, from the beginning of life to the end of it. Barnes's gloomy illustration of the decaying body also suggests an oscillation between how marginalized women thought of themselves and how people perceived their condition as their punishment for living outside of the boundaries of social conventions.

The poem "In General" shares three identical lines with "In Particular," while in the other three, Barnes is offering a variant of the previous one, creating a puzzling result:

> In General
> What altar cloth, what rag of worth
> Unpriced?
> What turn of card, what trick of game
> Undiced?
> And you we valued still a little
> More than Christ. (14)

> In Particular
> What loin-cloth, what rag of wrong

> Unpriced?
> What turn of body, what of lust
> Undiced?
> So we've worshipped you a little
> More than Christ. (18)

The two poems do not address a specific story as the rest of the collection but as Mary I. Unger explains "provide cryptic commentary on the place of women in modern culture" (128). An "altar-cloth" is part of a spiritual place used for religious reasons, while "loin-cloth" refers to the piece of garment that covers a specific part of the body, mostly the genitals. Barnes, then, "In General" starts from a spiritual object, which is a "rag of worth" and moves to "In Particular" with a corporeal one that is a "rag of wrong." It can be seen as a statement that Barnes makes for women that were treated as objectified bodies of no worth. It also suggests the changing attitude towards the female body that was once deified and worshipped. Barnes once again displays a misogynist representation of the female body either as an objectified image of no worth or as a lifeless installation. This representation can be related to Picabia's spark plug and electric bulb, which although they are both important parts of a technological device, they are 'lifeless' on their own. Furthermore, this changing attitude can also be understood in the shifting phrasing from "And you" to "So we." The change of the pronouns reflects the replacement of individuality by massification in a city where codes of conduct and beauty were constantly shifting. The use of the body in relation to religious images and the clear reference to Christ, can also be interpreted as Barnes's effort to compare the suffering of the female body with the "Passion of Christ."

The "Twilight of the Illicit" is followed by the poem "To a Cabaret Dancer" and both refer to two different types of New York women, a woman with animal-like features and a cabaret dancer. In "Twilight of the Illicit" fragmented parts of a body are seen where a woman appears to be almost like an animal as Barnes illustrates her with unnatural physical characteristics that are definitely not human. More specifically:

> You, with your long black udders
> And your calms,
> And your spotted linen and your
> Slack'ning arms.

With satiated fingers dragging
At your palms.

Your knees set far apart like
Heavy spheres;
With discs upon your eyes like
Husks of tears;
And great ghastly loops of gold
Snared in your ears. (19)

The depiction of this woman "breaks the modern code of streamlined simplicity," while "these Repulsive Women embody the waste, sham, and excess detested in the modern American System" (130). In this system women had to comply with new standards of beauty. The drawing that accompanies Barnes's poem completes the verbal description of the animal-woman seen as non-human having animal characteristics like donkey ears and a tail.

A woman that embodies the whole idea of being outside social conventions was Barnes's dearest friend, Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, "a lived transgression of the boundaries of human– animal– machine," as stated in *Modernist Articulations* by Alex Goody (115). An avant-garde artist and a cult figure of New York, but a rather underrated figure, Elsa used her own body, along with costumes and body adornments, to express her distrust towards conventional society. Baroness Elsa would walk around the city disguised in bizarre outfits, performing in a sexually explicit manner, making a spectacle of herself, which is actually an intentional act of self-exposure. Through eroticized self-performances, Baroness Elsa offered a new way of perceiving and representing the female body, complicating in this way the Dadaists' perspectives on the body. Barnes acting the force-feeding woman is not much different from Baroness Elsa performing as an eroticized and masqueraded woman wandering around New York, since they both shared with the public a private moment of their bodies. She dreamt of an actress's career, however, she only managed to work "as a 'living statue' in a travelling *tableaux*, and next as a chorus girl" (Harding Cutting Performances 40). She would always shock the public either with her eccentric physical appearance or with her fierce writing. In her avant-garde manifesto "The Modest Woman" published in *The Little Review* (1920),[33] she criticizes America's taboos regarding self-awareness and sexuality. Baroness Elsa

tried to define the relationship between the organic and the mechanical body and in a way present their combination through her performances. "America's comfort:–sanitation–outside machinery–has made American forget own machinery–body!." (38). The Baroness Elsa declares and posits her questions regarding the interrelation "between the mechanical and the organic, the abstract and the sensual, the fixed point of view and multiple viewpoints" (36).[34]

The Book of Repulsive Women anticipates Elsa's critique in "The Modest Woman," where she exposes American superficiality and the obsession with technology and artificial beauty, since the body was for her the symbol of one's individuality and authenticity. It can be argued that the character of Elsa is a recurrent motif in Barnes's work, either her journalistic or her literary writing. The Baroness can be associated with the "Types Found in Odd Corners Round About Brooklyn," standing for the woman with the animal-like face characteristics that Barnes sketched. Adding to this, Man Ray took a series of photographs of the Baroness performing Dada acts, in dramatized but at the same time erotic poses, similar to what Barnes describes in "Twilight of the Illicit" where the woman is seen as a "human-animal."[35] Amelia Jones points out that this intentional exposure of sexuality and of a confusing identity in the relationship between the artist and the viewer "challenged post-Enlightenment subjectivity and aesthetics far more pointedly than did Dadaist paintings and drawings" (Women in Dada 144). As it is understood through the themes of her poems, Barnes addresses the same questions as Baroness Elsa did and their representations, either acted out or evoked in written texts, aim at the reconceptualization of the female body observed in a technologically altered environment.

The second poem that attacks the new American system is "To a Cabaret Dancer," which evokes a woman who started "with laughter wide and calm;/ And splendid grace" working in a cabaret, and then stumbled "among the lustful drunk" who would see her only as a body for pleasure (21-22). The cabaret dancer presented as an object of spectacle again follows a declining route, as also "Seen from the 'L,'" starting with "laughter" and ending with a "songless soul." The setting of the poem's story is a New York cabaret where the dancers were usually pretty and young girls dressed in their flamboyant costumes, attracting their customers with their dance. The cabaret dancers and more particularly their body was "worshipped" within the walls of the cabaret hall, but outside it people "passed her forty times and sneered/out in the

street." Barnes in her poems dramatizes the decaying body of the characters by using a repetitive pattern that unfolds as the reader goes through the lines. The readers watch the stories of these women unravel until the characters reach the point of despair, misery and death.

Barnes's route of New York reaches its final destination at the collection's last poem, "Suicide." It consists of two parts: Corpse A and Corpse B and concludes the stories of the decaying women's bodies with two dead bodies, tortured and mistreated.

> SUICIDE
> Corpse A
> They brought her in, a shattered small
> Cocoon,
> With a little bruised body like
> A startled moon;
> And all the subtle symphonies of her
> A twilight rune.
>
> Corpse B
> They gave her hurried shoves this way
> And that.
> Her body shock-abbreviated
> As a city cat.
> She lay out listlessly like some small mug
> Of beer gone flat.

If we connect the meaning of this poem with the first one which can be read as referring to the pregnant woman with her "belly bulging," then, the two corpses can be read as addressing the mother and her child. In "Corpse A" the dead body is a "shattered small/Cocoon," an image that resembles to the foetus's posture inside the amniotic sac or wrapped in its swaddling bands. In "Corpse B" the body is compared to a "city cat," a description that has characteristics of someone wild, unapproachable and dirty, fed by the city's garbage. The combination of these two images of a dead mother and her dead daughter may have belonged to a woman of Barnes's journalism and symbolizes the loss of hope that a new life would bring. They come to represent the ending of most marginalized women, who were considered as repulsive and their

death would be the only way to end their suffering or the only way for society to get rid of them. The use of the pronoun "they" in "Suicide" is particularly symbolic. Unger suggests that it refers to the "modernist purveyors of the American System that mistreat and misrepresent women as objects to be consumed in the literary and cultural marketplace" (146). The bruised body of Corpse A and the 'hurriedly shoved' Corpse B were deprived of the right to live and their "suicide" was directed and determined by the system's power. The denial of this right brings to mind "How It Feels to Be Forcibly Fed" and Barnes's statement that science deprived women of the "right to die," creating one more connecting point between her articles and the poems.

As with Barnes, the representation of the body is a common characteristic in the work of Mina Loy. Being close friends, Barnes and Loy shared a decentered point of view as writers and their works question the woman's position in the urban setting. The same year that *The Book of Repulsive Women* was published, Mina Loy published "Parturition" in *Trend* magazine,[36] where she talks about motherhood and the experience of labor from the woman's perspective:

Rises from the subconscious
Impression of a cat
With blind kittens
Among her legs
Same undulating life-stir
I am that cat
Rises from the sub-conscious
Impression of small animal carcass
Covered with blue bottles
—Epicurean—
And through the insects
Waves that same undulation of living
Death
Life. (4)

Loy, like Barnes, was interested in writing about the female body and the emergence of the New Woman in the urbanized setting of the metropolis. The dual imagery of life and death is prevailing in the two verses of the poem and creates a dialogue with the scenes of *The Book of Repulsive Women*; in the first verse the mother-cat is seen with her "blind kittens," while in the second the cat has become an "animal carcass"

and the babies "blue bottles." Like Barnes, Loy's figures follow a declining direction and the protagonist of "Parturition" is compared to animals and objects, as we also see in Barnes's "Suicide" where the dead body of a "city cat" looks like a "small mug / Of beer gone flat" (24).

Both Barnes and Loy explored how the modern woman is perceived especially by men and as Barnes traces different characters of New York, Loy does the same in Paris, as seen in "Magasins du Louvre."[37] As Carolyn Burke explains: "the glass-eyed mannequins in the department-store windows and the shopgirls and streetwalkers inside represent the range of cultural images of women" (Accidental Aloofness 70). Loy's mannequins can be related to Barnes's use of puppets that will be discussed in the chapter on her autobiographical work, *The Antiphon.* The different representations of bodies in *The Book of Repulsive Women* can also be considered as puppets. By this I mean that the way Barnes presents these bodies as gradually losing their human existence or feelings can be compared to the lifeless mannequins seen in Loy's writing or in her own reference to puppets in her later work.

1.4 *The Book of Repulsive Women* as a Series of *Tableaux Vivants*

Since the seventeenth century, the technique of *tableaux vivants* was very common in representations of the Passion of Christ; for example, the Oberammergau Passion Play was performed in a public space showing all the stages of Christ's Passion. In film, too, *tableaux vivants* with a religious theme were used from the beginning of filmmaking, a prime example being Giulio Antamoro's *Christus* (1916); as pointed out by Steven Jacobs, *Christus* "told the story of Christ by simply staging *tableaux vivants* successively based on Fra Angelico's *Annunciation,* Correggio's *Nativity,* Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper,* Mantegna's *Crucifixion,* Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross,* Michelangelo's *Pietà* and Raphael's *Transfiguration.*" Antamoro reenacts the theme of the specific paintings in *tableaux vivants* and creates living pictures adding a sense of three-dimensionality in the work. Before 1900, *tableaux vivants* or "living pictures" were already a form of popular entertainment that were "gradually replaced by the melodramas and silent films" (25).[38] It started as an upper class form of entertainment in New York salons, where classical works of art were reenacted. This meant that the city's apartments were turned into art galleries of sorts where one

could see the representation of classical statues, known paintings and even literary texts.[39]

In 1914, Barnes interviewed Flo Ziegfeld, producer of the Ziegfeld Follies that were performances of women wearing impressive costumes arranged in theatrical, vaudeville and *tableaux vivants* spectacles. The interview was entitled ''Flo Ziegfeld Is Tired of Buying Hosiery'' and Barnes exposed the producer as a "glorified pimp" since she seduced him with her stunt journalistic-personality, which in this case was that of a vamp woman (Bombaci 164). During the 1900s, the feature of nude and semi-nude poses in *tableaux vivants*, led to more burlesque and less sophisticated performances seen in Broadway shows and many other places, similar to the aesthetics of the Ziegfeld Follies' *tableaux vivants* performed in 1917.[40] The main characteristics of this type of show are, on the one hand, the silent and immobile acting of the participants, who were mostly women and on the other hand, the observing eyes of the audience (the male gaze). In certain cases, "living pictures" were also employed in reenactments of murder and punishing scenes, where the audience could even watch a reenactment of women's decapitation. Mary Chapman explains that those scenes were addressed to "women who challenge male authority, through usurpation of the male gaze, disobedience, or participation in the public sphere" (38). These women were "considered unfeminine, and unchaste, and are therefore punished" (38). Their punishment with decapitation explains the intention not only to kill them, but also to silence them for daring to go against social conventions. In the case of *tableaux vivants,* men did not get major roles and they were mostly observers or voyeurs, as Chapman explains. She also adds that men were situated at the borders of the stage framing the women that were on it "suggesting that the male look controls the spectacle of woman framed by its gaze" (30). The men either as guests or as actors would also play the role of the observer that would control the scenes with the female "living pictures."

In the case of *The Book of Repulsive Women,* each poem of the collection can be considered as a living picture where a certain representation is being reenacted; a cabaret woman that starts in her youth and dies "in awful haste" (22), or a young girl that turns into a repulsive figure. Barnes places her representations of fragmented bodies into different rooms all over New York City, which work as different display areas for a series of *tableaux vivants.* On a further note, there is a conceptual link that connects Barnes's choice of certain representations of bodies as corpses in "Suicide"

or the body of Christ in the poems "In Particular" and "In General" and the fact that the collection itself can be seen as a series of *tableaux vivants*. It can be also said that Barnes's series of *tableaux vivants* alludes to the classic images of the Christ's Passion, understood in the theme of suffering of those bodies, but it is also closely associated with the vaudeville representations of female bodies seen in the Ziegfeld Follies performances.

Due to its association with the woman's place in the public sphere, The National American Woman's Suffrage Association used the form of *tableaux vivants* in their demonstrations. As mentioned in Chapman's work, members of the NAWSA "marched to the Treasury Building in Washington, D. C. in 1913, to present a series of *tableaux* representing Justice, Plenty, Columbia, Peace, Charity, and Liberty to campaign for the woman's vote" (26). At that time, Barnes had just started working as a journalist and it is very possible that she was present or at least had read about this event. In their demonstration, the Suffragettes, again, used their bodies as means of protest, while becoming a spectacle by objectifying themselves in front of the observing eyes of the public.[41] They created *tableaux vivants* in the public sphere of New York City, dressed in Greek costumes offering a rather impressive sight for the audience. The parade was massive, more than 8,000 marchers took part and the spectators were more than ten thousand, many of whom assaulted almost one hundred protesters. However, the Suffragettes did not stop organizing similar events, which attracted thousands of participants and observers, creating spectacular *tableaux vivants*, as for example in the parade that took place the same year, two months later, in front of the Metropolitan Opera House in Manhattan. This way of performing maximized the effect of their action, but most of all placed the female body at the centre of the city's sphere of attention.

Ellen Ecker Dolgin's work focuses on the Suffragettes' use of *tableaux vivants* as a way of protesting against the objectification of woman, explaining the oxymoron in this act. More specifically, she claims that the "stasis" of the women's bodies in the *tableaux* comes in sharp contrast with their demands on their more active involvement in everyday life. However, Dolgin clarifies that the use of *tableaux* offered to the Suffrage movement new ways of promoting feminist interests and making them front page stories. By these parades, the suffragettes placed women into public space, which supported their effort and confidence in performing, while encouraged them to identify with the women they represented. Although it may indeed sound like an

oxymoron, the use of static *tableaux vivants* in active political protests, enforced the Suffrage movement and mobilized the women's bodies in the public space. The opposing ideas of stasis and mobility are crucial elements in *The Book of Repulsive Women,* expressed through the motionless bodies seen through an elevated train. The intervention of technology, via the train's speed, exposes the bodies in the public sphere and at the same time allows for a reenactment of their stories that unfold in front of the observers' eyes in a form of *tableaux vivants.*

In Alfred Stieglitz's *Camera Work*, the representation of urban people and places was a common theme. Barnes's work is interrelated with Stieglitz's effort to challenge perception with the pictorialist aesthetics of his photographs, which aimed at the creation of a scene rather than just capturing it. The projection of the scene is actually the point of contact between the 'staging' in Barnes's journalism and poems, early twentieth-century photography and *tableaux vivants*.[42] Taking this into consideration, we can suggest that *The Book of Repulsive Women* was for Barnes, what *291* was for Stieglitz; a space to promote her ideas about the urban experience and modern existence as it was also illustrated by Dadaist and avant-garde artists at the time. Barnes's collection of poems on female bodies is, then, a viewpoint concurrent to the Dadaist representation of bodies in *291*. The women's public performance in the public space of the city is observed and altered from the intrusive power of the gaze peering through the El's windows. Barnes, in this way, uses the city of New York as an open gallery space where images of female bodies are perceived as exhibits and their scattered photographic stills around the El's route, form *tableaux vivants*. In her essay, Esther Sánchez-Pardo brings in dialogue Barnes with Bruno Schulz as both being visual writers influenced by Aubrey Beardsley. She interestingly explains that Barnes combines the verbal with the visual in *Nightwood* and uses "linguistic descriptions of tableaux vivants" (275). Sánchez-Pardo stresses that almost in all her work Barnes accompanies her texts with drawings and in this way she reinforces the visual element. I would agree with Sánchez-Pardo's statement and I would add that *The Book of Repulsive Women* is a prime example of verbal "living pictures" as Barnes implicitly and explicitly uses the image of the train, from where the travellers and, as it were, the readers of the poems can observe the women enacting a certain story, standing nude in "Seen from the L" or carried dead in "Suicide." Steven Jacobs states that "[t]he tableau's inherent oscillation between movement and stillness is [..] often used as a metaphor for the tension between life

and death," (96) a description that could apply to Barnes's female protagonists in the poems. The motionless bodies of abused and dead women are antithetical images to the speedy metropolitan train and the comparison indicates the immobility or death of natural life (human bodies) and the mobility of mechanical life (train). In *The Book of Repulsive Women,* there is a procession of different stories of female abused bodies and each poem can be seen as a different scene of this tableau ending to the final stage of suicide where Barnes closes the collection with two corpses. The route from life to death, with depictions of corporeal tortures in the middle brings to mind the *tableaux vivants* depicting the "Passion of Christ." Interestingly enough, as discussed, Barnes refers to Christ in two of her poems "In General" and "In Particular": "And you we valued still a little / More than Christ" (14) and "So we worshipped you a little / More than Christ," (18) accordingly, implying that *The Book of Repulsive Women* is a series of representations of female bodies, mechanically reconfigured also in dada art, and exposed in the public eye just like the *tableaux vivants* of Christ's passion. Another trait that connects Barnes's work with the *tableaux vivants* aesthetics is the musical background. *Tableaux* performances were most of the times accompanied by classical tunes that would frame the artistic scenes. In the case of *The Book of Repulsive Women,* it can be said that the musical accompaniment consists of the urban noise of the fast-moving train and the "short modern babylonic cries" of the women. The collection as a whole consists of "living pictures" of women, and the representations of the body in each poem create photographic scenes that acquire a pictorialist element. As Stieglitz explained through the Photo-Secession movement, these shots are not just a simple record of how these bodies are (dead or alive), but rather offer a new aesthetics of perceiving and understanding them.

Notes

[1] "You need me," Barnes also added as it is mentioned in Phillip Herring's *Djuna: The Life and Work of Djuna Barnes.*

[2] On Barnes's life as a journalist, see Nancy J. Levine, "Bringing Milkshakes to the Bulldogs: The Early Journalism of Djuna Barnes."

[3] Barnes also remained anonymous as mentioned in the Mary Lynn Broe's *Introduction* of *Silence and Power: A Reevaluation of Djuna Barnes*, 3-23.

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[4] "This was the kind of thing that made me get out of the newspaper business" is what Barnes confessed for this incident described in Levine's essay, 32.

[5] See Barnes's article "If Noise Were Forbidden at Coney Island, a Lot of People Would Lose Their Jobs."

[6] See illustration 1.

[7] In Turner's essay, when questioning the identity of Picabia's *jeune fille américaine,* two possible answers are given: it is either Npierkowska, a music star he met in New York or a cleric that Picabia met on his return trip to Paris (12).

[8] See illustration 2.

[9] See illustration 3.

[10] See illustrations 4, 5, 6.

[11] It is quoted in John Jervis, *Sensational Subjects: The Dramatization of Experience in the Modern World*.

[12] Herring describes, "On her first descent, she went out of a window and shinnied down a rope from about a hundred feet up. The second time, a fireman descended from the roof in a sling and took her to the net in an embrace" (90).

[13] On Barnes's visit to Kleist's "The Puppet Theatre," see Rebecca Loncraine, "Djuna Barnes: Nightwood."

[14] In the chapter "A Body Within a Body: *The Antiphon* as Djuna Barnes's Body," the theme of witnessing shapes the plot of the play and explains Barnes's fascination with the binary of observing / being observed throughout her literary career.

[15] The excerpt is from Pankhurst's autobiography "My Own Story" as quoted in June Purvis's *Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography*, 188.

[16] See illustration no. 7.

[17] Zadel was a life-model for Barnes and recreated her character in her work *Ryder*. For a detailed biography of Zadel Barnes, see Phillip Herring, *Djuna: The Life and Work of Djuna Barnes*.

[18] See illustration no. 8.

[19] Djuna Barnes, "How It Feels to be Forcibly Fed."

[20] Sunny Stalter explains "The embodied connection to city space should not suggest that El riders experienced a more *real* version of the city than urban riders did – it was a wholly different one," (872) in *Farewell to the El: Nostalgic Urban Visuality on the Third Avenue Elevated Train.*

[21] Edward Hopper (1882-1967) moved to Greenwich Village in 1913 and he participated in *The Armory Show* with only one oil painting, *Sailing,* which he managed to sell it. This event was a defining moment for him, which encouragement to pursuit his artistic career.

[22] see illustration no. 9.

[23] see illustration no. 10.

[24] see illustration no. 11.

[25] see illustration no. 12.

[26] See Justin D. Edwards in *Exotic Journeys: Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature, 1840-1930.*

[27] Walter Conrad Arensberg and his wife were close friends with Marcel Duchamp and collectors of modern art. Their apartment in New York became a haven for avant-garde artists and writers and Barnes was a regular guest.

[28] see illustration no. 13.

[29] The international exhibition of modern art, *The Armory Show* (1913), had as main purpose the introduction of European artists to the American public. Degas, Monet, Van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso, Renoir, Cézanne, to name but a few, took part in the show.

[30] Paul B. Haviland wrote the introduction in *291 Magazine* 7-8 (Sept.-Oct. 1915).

[31] "metaphorai" coming from meta+pherein meaning "to transfer."

[32] The word "diptych" is used in Sánchez-Pardo's essay regarding the description of Barnes's poems.

[33] Elsa Freytag-Loringhoven in "The Modest Woman" *The Little Review* (7 Jul.-Aug. 1920): 37-40.

[34] See *The Politics of Cultural Mediation: Baroness Elsa Von Freytag-Loringhoven and Felix Paul, eds.* Paul Hjartarson and Tracy Kulba.

[35] See illustrations no. 14 and no. 15.

[36] Mina Loy's "Parturition" is included in the collection *The Lost Lunar Baedeker: Poems of Mina Loy*.

[37] "Magasins du Louvre" is included in Loy's collection *The Lost Lunar Baedeker: Poems of Mina Loy*.

[38] Mary Chapman in "'Living Pictures': Women and Tableaux Vivants in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction and Culture."

[39] "The heroine of living pictures," Olga Desmond's performances capture this.

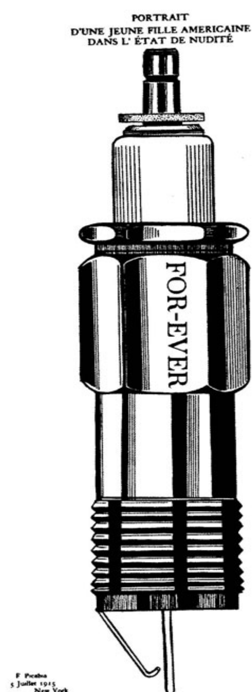
[40] See illustration no. 16.

[41] See illustration no. 17.

[42] The aesthetic movement of Pictorialism intended to establish photography as a form of art and not as a means of recording realistic images. Stieglitz and Haviland supported the ideas of the movement and added to the acceptance of photography as a fine art with their work in *291* art gallery.

List of Illustrations:

1. Picabia, Francis. 1913. *Udnie (Jeune Fille Américaine: Danse)*. Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris [online].



2. Picabia, Francis. 1915. *Portrait d'une jeune fille américaine dans l'état de nudité* (Portrait of a Young American Girl in a State of Nudity). From: *291,* nos. 5-6, July-August 1915 [online].

3. Picabia, Francis. 1917. *Américaine* (American Woman). From: *391,* no. 7, July 1917 [online].

Types Found in Odd Corners Round About Brooklyn

What Can He Have Sown That He Reaps Thus Fully—Barley?

ORPHAN BOYS VISIT THE EAGLE BU

4. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Brooklyn, New York, 5 August 1913, page 17.

Types Found in Odd Corners Round About **Brooklyn**

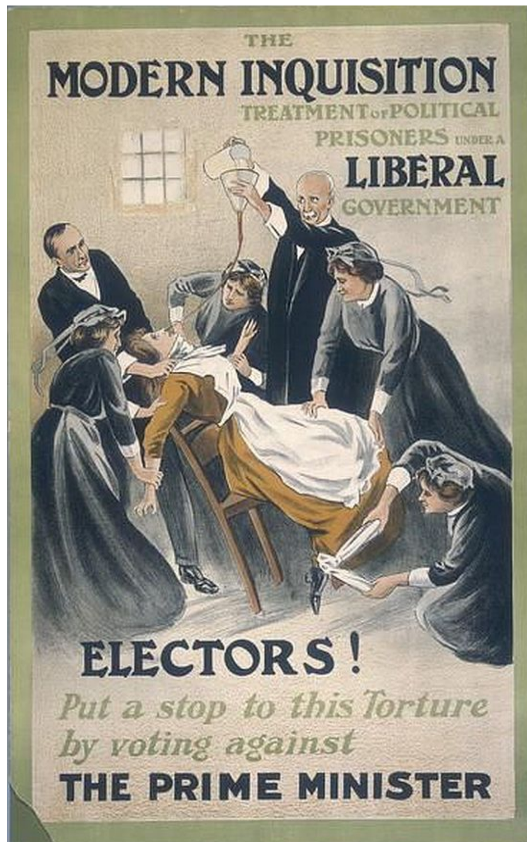
TWELVE P.M.

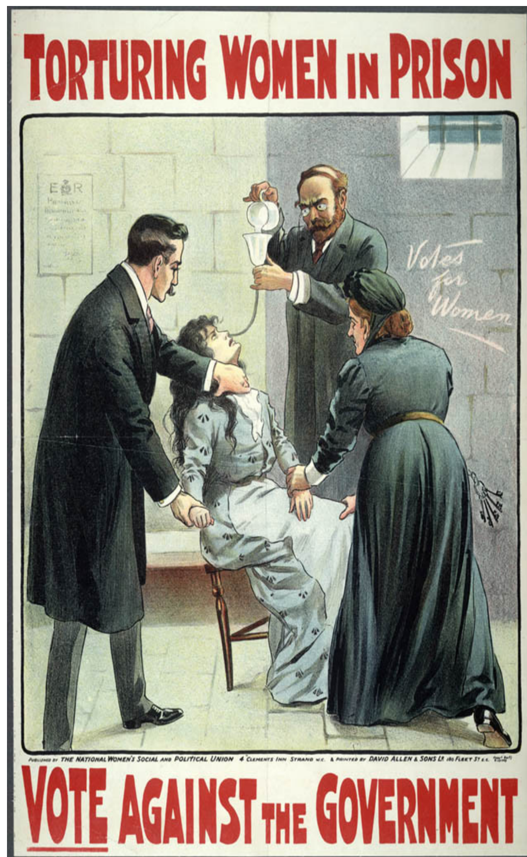
5. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Brooklyn, New York, 25 October 1913, page 14.

Types Found in Odd Corners Round About **Brooklyn**

“I’ve Spent All My Life Getting Old”

6. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Brooklyn, New York, 24 July 1913, page 17.





7. WSPU posters on force-feeding of the Suffragettes, c. 1910-1913 [online].

8. Barnes, Djuna. 1914. *How It Feels To Be Forcibly Fed*. From: *The World Magazine* [online].

9. Hopper, Edward. 1909. *Summer Interior.* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City [online].

10. Hopper, Edward. 1928. *Night Windows.* MoMA, New York [online].

11. Hopper, Edward. 1932. *Room in Brooklyn.* Museum of Fine Arts, Boston [online].

12. Hopper, Edward. 1918. *Night on the El Train*. The Met, New York [online].

13. Duchamp, Marcel. 1912. *Nude Descending a Staircase No. 2.* Philadelphia Museum of Art [online].

14. Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, c. 1910-1920 [online].

15. Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, 1915 [online].

16. Ziegfeld Follies, Ziegfeld Girls, *Tableau Vivant,* c. 1915 [online].

17. Hedwig Reicher wears the costume of "Columbia" with other suffrage pageant participants standing in background in front of the Treasury Building in Washington, District of Columbia, on March 3, 1913. The performance was part of the larger Suffrage Parade of 1913. From: *The Atlantic* [online].

2. TECHNOLOGICAL EXPERIMENTS: GERTRUDE STEIN LIGHTS *DR. FAUSTUS'S* LIGHTS

2.1 Automatic Writings and Stein's Experimentation

In a comparable way with the altering presence of the train in Barnes's series of *tableaux vivants,* Gertrude Stein employs electricity to bring into life a modern version of the Faust legend. Through this technological intervention *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* (1938) is born and this chapter aims at its exploration by questioning Stein's automatic writing and her intention to 'make cinema.' Stein keeps the known characters of Faust and Mephistopheles in her version and creates new ones with multiple identities like Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel. The ultimate prize of knowledge is replaced with electricity, which becomes the altering factor in the plot and the structure of the libretto. These characteristics that define Stein's oeuvre can be traced back to her early life when she was introduced to psychological theories in Radcliffe College.

In the 1890s, Gertrude Stein as an undergraduate student at Harvard became familiar with automatic writing under William James and Hugo Münsterberg's direction. James as a psychologist was much interested in the exploration of the role of consciousness in the process of writing and wished to explore whether unintentional writing could exist. According to Francesca Bordogna, at the time Stein was a student at Harvard Psychological Laboratory, James "conducted experiments designed to test the hypothesis that in automatic writing the automatic hand could be the site of a type of local anesthesia similar to hysterical anesthesia" (198). This meant that people induced into the practice of automatic writing, would lose control of the reactions of their own bodies and in a form of trance, they could produce a written text. This included the use of planchettes and hypnotism in the experiments, a fact that Stein herself confirms in *Everybody's Autobiography* (1937), as she describes her experience working with Leon Solomons on automatic writing: "William James added a planchette, he liked a planchette, we made one of a piece of wood and strings and then we were to try each other" (273). Stein was familiar with this writing practice that influenced her own work, and even and her contemporary

critics did not miss to characterize her early texts as typical examples of automatic writing.

American psychologist B.F. Skinner wrote an article under the title “Has Gertrude Stein a Secret?” published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1934 where he posits a major question regarding Stein’s writing. Skinner clearly points out that Stein created a double persona as an author and produced works of two different kinds; the one includes works that are more comprehensible, such as *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* and works such as *Tender Buttons* that have a more complex style. In 1896 Stein together with Solomons published the article “Normal Motor Automatism.” Skinner explains that this article investigates “to what extent the elements of a 'second personality' (of the sort to be observed in certain cases of hysteria) were to be found in a normal being” (50). This experiment included Stein’s and Solomons’s personal experience in automatic writing, which as Skinner mentions would be possible after “they could ‘split’ their own personalities in a deliberate and purely artificial way” (50). When this ‘split’ occurred, the author could produce automatic written texts that would include sentences that did not make sense or substitutions with words of similar sound and not meaning. In the article, Stein and Solomons describe experiments done in the context of research on automatic writing and Stein tries to, as Barbara Will explains, “blur the distinction between “normality” and “abnormality” by proving that the “normal” subject shows tendencies toward automatic behavior similar to that of the “abnormal” (that is, hysteric) subject” (Gertrude Stein, Modernism 24). The result of the experiments showed that the “normal” being is as capable of automatic writing as the “hysteric” one. And to use Stein’s words both “normal” and “abnormal” subjects have “definite motor reactions unaccompanied by consciousness” in the writing process (24). Will’s essay supports Skinner’s analysis regarding Stein’s writing practice and shows that she believed in the existence of “automatism” and unconscious writing, a fact that however she denied later on.

In 1898, a second article followed entitled “Cultivated Motor Automatism; A Study of Character in its Relation to Attention” that Stein wrote by herself this time. It was a continuation of the first one, but different, since it was not based on her personal experience but on her observation of different types of people and behaviors in relation to automatism. Barbara Will refers to Stein’s retrospective account, regarding what her article “Cultivated Motor Automatism” suggested, which actually is the point “that all human beings could be reduced to an essential “bottom nature”

(33). A characteristic matter that Stein discusses in this essay is the existence of a double personality that is divided into the self that produces conscious writing and the other that can be induced through automatic writing. At this point, it is important to mention that Stein's interest in the theme of split duality can be traced throughout her work in double-named characters (such as Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* for instance) or double meanings in words and symbolisms, proving the fact that her early findings in automatism as a student never stopped intriguing her.

In *Everybody's Autobiography* (1937) Gertrude Stein clarifies her opinion regarding automatic writing and whether she indeed followed this practice to finish her works. She writes that in the experiments she conducted none of the students produced automatic writing:

> Here I had no results there was no automatic writing, there were some circles and sometimes a vague letter but never any word or anything that could be called writing, there were about forty of them (students) finally chosen at random and there were none who wrote anything (274).

She, then, denies the existence of one's ability to write unconsciously and mentions that although Solomons described their writing as automatic, she did not share his opinion. Stein explained that it was impossible to do automatic writing when everybody was monitoring their progress or when they were constantly observing other people. In order to justify her sayings in the 1890s, she noted that as an undergraduate she was very obedient to what she was instructed to do and with hindsight she did not comply with this practice anymore. She characteristically writes:

> I did not think it was automatic I do not think so now, I don't think any university student is likely certainly not under observation is likely to be able to do genuinely automatic writing, I do not think so, that is under normal conditions, where there is no hypnotism or anything of that kind. (Everybody's Autobiography 275)

Whether she accepted automatic writing or not, it is impossible not to agree with Skinner's view on the fact that Stein has two different types of writing and that one can be easily identified as automatic. This writing practice, the way I understand it, has two levels for exploration; the first is the intervention of both the conscious and the unconscious mind in the final result and the second is the result itself as the production of words and sentences. Stein may not have been keen on the

psychological implications of this practice, but she was definitely intrigued by the use of words and their combination in order to form a sentence. An overview of Stein's work from the early experimentations to her last texts can show that there are numerous instances of the practices that Stein was initiated to as a student, as discussed in Skinner's article, which can be seen from *Tender Buttons* (1914) to *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* (1938).

In order to showcase Stein's use of 'split personality' and exploration of automatic writing, the overview of her work should begin with *Tender Buttons.* In this collection of poems, Stein turns simple everyday life into avant-garde literary experimentation and modernist intellectualism as Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick points out.[1] Stein's sense with the quotidian and with technology in discourse is better seen in her war memoir *Wars I Have Seen* (1945); however, it can be also traced back to *Tender Buttons* and more specifically to the poem "A Long Dress." [2] In this specific poem, Stein associates a garment that veils or unveils the female body with a current that makes machinery "crackle" establishing a comparison of the female body with the machine. What Stein questions in the following lines is the mobilizing power that sparks life to a body wearing a dress in the same way that current crackles the machine. Question marks are replaced by periods and her questions remain unanswered left to guessing of the readers:

> A LONG DRESS.
> What is the current that makes machinery, that makes it crackle, what is the current that presents a long line and a necessary waist. What is this current. What is the wind, what is it. Where is the serene length, it is there and a dark place is not a dark place, only a white and red are black, only a yellow and green are blue, a pink is scarlet, a bow is every color. A line distinguishes it. A line just distinguishes it. (8)

"Stein wants us to see the long dress as it actually appears and moves; she wants us to see its changing colors and lines in the light and in the shadow," Margueritte S. Murphy explains (148). Stein juxtaposes the movement of the dress caused by static electricity leading to the creation of different shades of colours together with the sounds of the machine generated by electricity. Murphy explains the multiple meanings of the word current in "A Long Dress." The two prevailing references are electrical current that generates a machine and the static electricity creating in the interaction of the body with clothes. Further two explanations that Murphy mentions

are the currents of wind (What is the wind, what is it) and the use of the word current as trend. Focusing on the electrical vs. static current, or else artificial vs. natural current, the poem anticipates the way the theme of artificial vs. natural light is employed in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*. It can be said that the theme of natural and artificial in *Tender Buttons* foreshadows *Dr. Faustus* and the multiple meanings of her ideas reveal her exploration of writing through automatic practice.

The question of automatism is Stein's work can be also examined through *An Exercise in Analysis* (1917); it is a unique piece in terms of stylistics since it is written in a vertical format where most of the acts include one line. The constant change of acts forces the reader to make long pauses at the end of each sentence. In this way, Stein fragments her writing and the sentences acquire a rather telegraphic style.

Act II

Here is plenty of space.

Act III

There is an excuse.

Act IV

There is no excuse.

Part XXIII

We went to-day.

Act III

We went there to-day.

Act III

I cannot repeat what they say.

Act IV

Neither can I.

Part XXIV

Can you speak to me.

Act II

Can you speak to me here.

Act III

Can you speak to me about it.

Act IV

Can you speak to me about anything. Can you speak to me.

Part XXV

Can you complain to-day.

Act II

Can you. (127-128)

An Exercise in Analysis is an actual exercise for Stein's writing techniques, since the practice of repeating the previous sentence and adding new words in the following one is also made in her later works in the context of long paragraphs. This play introduces not only Stein's inclination to the use of simple words but also to the repetition of pronouns which will be a prevailing motif especially in texts of her last writing period. The use of repetition adds a more circular flow to her writing, as opposed to James's linear "stream of consciousness" and the arbitrary use of numbers can be seen as her refusal to follow a direct unfolding of events. This rather circular flow of events that moves narration back and forth can be compared to the circular movement of an electric circuit. Stein's notion to intermix the meanings of the lines, together with the use of abrupt and repetitive sentences, confer to the text a circular line of thought. In this way, *An Exercise in Analysis* is a verbal play that is an experiment in the literal and metaphorical associations of repetition and circularity.

A few years later, Stein wrote *A Circular Play* (1920) in a similar style with *Exercise in Analysis* and as Katrien Vloeberghs explains it is a work that "resist[s] the functionalization of language as the representation of a well-ordered reality or plot that develops in a linear and progressive fashion" (298). Adding to this, Stein's flow of thought causes 'anarchy' in her expression by suggesting incomprehensible combinations of words as seen in the following excerpt:

Can a circle enlist.

Can a circle exist.

Can we be all tall.

50 pounds and 40 pounds makes 80 pounds. We paid for thirty pounds. I paid it for it all.

Crushed circle.

Red or cranberries.

Strawberries or meat.

Sugar or potatoes.

Roast beef or water.

Melon or rehearsed.

Take a street.

> One does not run around in a circle to make a circular play.
> Do not run around in a circle and make a circular play. (144)

Stein plays with the idea of circular writing not only in the stylistics of a text but also as a theme, as seen in the above excerpt. Her experimentation with this writing technique offered her the ability to combine different word variations and meanings that would not be possible in a linear line of thought. In the specific fragment, we notice that Stein creates a circular flow of meanings when the reader has to go back and forth to understand her choice of words, for instance, she writes "red or cranberries/ Strawberries or meat" rather than placing red with meat and cranberries with strawberries. Stein's combination of words invites two interpretations; it is the result either of inducing herself into automatic writing or of intentionally mixing the words. The first is supported by Skinner's explanation regarding Stein's personality and the second by Stein's stating that she did not produce automatic writing.

The theme of experimental writing could not have been excluded from Stein's Broadway success, *Four Saints in Three Acts* (1934). A libretto similar to *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* in terms of stylistics, since in both texts the performers' words blend with stage directions. Stein's preference for playing with antithetical words and punctuation can be seen in the following excerpt:

> Act I
>
> Saint Therese seated and not standing half and half of it and not half and half of it seated and not standing surrounded and not seated and not seated and not standing and not surrounded and not surrounded and not not not seated not seated not surrounded not seated and Saint Ignatius standing standing not seated Saint Therese not standing not standing and Saint Ignatius not standing standing surrounded as if in once yesterday. (446-447)

In *Four Saints in Three Acts,* Stein uses the pattern of movement and stasis in the same way that she did, a few years later, with the fluctuation of lights in *Dr. Faustus* turning night into day and vice versa. Joseph Cermatori explains Stein's Saints may seem "idle," however, "they are not entirely static" but "they are caught between stasis and flux, both fixed and in motion" (358). The dual theme of stasis/flux is closely connected with the flow of electricity that empowers a technological device. In this aspect, the constant presence of the electric lights in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* empowers the body of the text, which actually comes to life, a fact that will be explained in this chapter. The writing practices that were explained in the works

discussed so far are more or less incorporated and further developed in Stein's libretto *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*. With reference to the poem from *Tender Buttons*, the theme of electricity is an integral part of the plot and the text itself. The dynamics and the possible movement of the electrical current that permeates an object is a theme of great interest to Stein, even if by object we also mean a text. Stein's experimentation in writing *An Exercise in Analysis* and *A Circular Play* are combined and incorporated in her libretto on Faust:

> Act I
>
> Will it
>
> Will it
>
> Will it be
>
> Will it be it.
>
> Faustus sighs and repeats
>
> Will it be it.
>
> A duet between the dog and Faustus
>
> Will it be it
>
> Just it. (92)

The above excerpt merges the characteristics of all previously mentioned works; these are the vertical format of the text seen in *Exercise of Analysis* and *A Circular Play*, the confusing punctuation of *Tender Buttons* and *Four Saints in Three Acts*, and the repetitive patterns of words that can be traced throughout her oeuvre.

In the *First Manifesto of Surrealism* (1924), André Breton places automatism as a defining point in the essence of the movement:

> Surrealism, n. Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express – verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other matter – the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern. (309)[3]

The intervention of consciousness and unconsciousness in Stein's texts raises questions as to whether her writings can be associated with Surrealism and the psychologists. In 1933, André Breton returned to the practice of automatism in the "Automatic Message." Surrealism and spiritualism seem to share common characteristics as far as automatic writing is concerned. Breton, however, establishes a defining difference when referring to the mobilizing power of the writer or the artist

that produces automatic work. In the case of surrealism, the moves that result into the creation of writing and drawing are done spontaneously, while in spiritualism spirits are presumed to control the moves of the hands. As Breton states, the artists, who are practicing this type of writing, "are totally ignorant of what they write or draw, and their hand, anestheticised, behaves as if it were guided by another hand" (André Breton, What is Surrealism? 102). Interestingly enough, Breton's elaboration on the process of automatic writing bears a resemblance to Stein's description of automatism in her early articles, but also with Skinner's description about Stein's 'split personality.'

In "The Automatic Message," Breton goes back to the question of the 'split' of one's personality, as propagated by the psychologists. Breton partly accepts his responsibility regarding the misconception over the term automatic writing "or 'mechanical' writing, as Flournoy would have it, or better still 'unconscious' writing as Mr René Sudre prefers" (105). Contrary to spiritualism, surrealism according to Breton does not aim at splitting the conscious from the unconscious mind of a writer's double personality but "proposed nothing less than the *unification* of that personality" (105). In *Everybody's Autobiography*, Stein confesses that she was never interested in Surrealism, mostly because the Surrealists accepted Giorgio De Chirico as their precursor and were influenced by his metaphysical period. However, by the time Stein's text was published, De Chirico and the Surrealists had parted so that Stein's words seem to foresee this situation:

> So Dali was beginning to be well known, at that time I did not meet him I was interested in him, surrealism never did interest me, because after all it all came from Chirico and he was not a surrealist he is very fanciful and his eye is caught by it and he has no distinction between the real and the unreal because everything is alike to him, he says so, but the rest of them nothing is alike to them and so they do not say so, and that is the trouble with them and so they are dead before they go again. (31)

As it is understood from the above excerpt, Stein's principles in writing came in sharp contrast with Surrealism's division of the real and the surreal. On the other hand, a basic principle in Stein's work is the existence of dual contrasting concepts: the confusion of a writer with a persona in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, the alternation of dark/light in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*, the opposing references to real/unreal instances in *War I Have Seen.* Although Stein's work has been described

as surrealist, it differentiates from the movement's basic principles in terms of her conscious choice of words and meanings.

Critics have associated her work with Surrealism, yet Stein did not think much of Breton and his ideas. As she writes in *Everybody's Autobiography,* in a discussion with Picasso and Braque, she claims: "Breton admires anything to which he can sign his name and you know as well as I do that a hundred years hence nobody will remember his name" (37). For all her dismissal of Breton, the notion of the uninterrupted 'speed of thought' in Surrealism is close to Stein's fluid writing that, in Stein's case, would lead to multiple interpretations of a text. Clifford Browder explains that according to Breton "only the free flow of words can restore the world to its pristine purity" and that "the words that Breton seeks are alive, grasped in a vital context where they are linked mysteriously to one another" (74). The lack of subjectivity and intentionality seen in surrealist thinking comes in sharps contrast with Stein's creation of a pattern where every new word or phrase connects with the previous one, creating images that alternate quickly. One such instance is when Faustus and Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel meet because a viper has bitten her. She is informed that the only person who can cure her from the viper's poison is Faustus and she rushes to look for him. The character of the boy, who is Faustus's alter ego, finds him and says:

Act I Scene III

> A viper has bitten her she knows it too a viper has bitten her believe it or not it is true, a viper has bitten her and if Doctor Faustus does not cure her it will be all through her a viper has bitten her a viper a viper. (101)

The fluidity in expression and the repetition of certain words both in the beginning and at the end of the specific excerpt are examples of Stein's tendency to write in a circular and not in a linear manner, as discussed earlier. It also illustrates a main difference with a Bretonian text that is the absence of punctuation. Borrowing Browder's words, Breton "considered punctuation a necessity in automatic writing, like so many knots in a rope," (77) but for Stein punctuation is mostly uninteresting and unnecessary as she explained in her *Lectures in America.*[4]

The second level of exploration of Stein's work addresses the final result of the text as a composition of words and sentences. In 1924, Mina Loy, included in her collection *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, a poem for Stein and describes her as the Marie Curie of letters:

Curie
of the laboratory
of vocabulary
she crushed
the tonnage
of consciousness
congealed to phrases
to extract
a radium of the word. (26)[5]

Loy's poem characteristically describes Stein as a scientist or researcher of words and suggests that, for Stein, writing was like a laboratory experiment comparing the importance of her findings in automatic writing with Curie's achievements. The poem suggests that Stein's texts were the result of subtracting any psychological implications from the words that the conscious or the unconscious mind would permeate them with. The result of her writing practice is compared to Curie's extraction of radium, suggesting that Stein follows a scientific method of extraction/ subtraction. Loy's words in the particular poem imply that Stein's experimentation included the 'removal' of consciousness from the words in order to produce the result that she desired. It can be said that Stein's writing proposes a new linguistic variation that transcends the practice of automatic writing as evoked by the psychologists and the Surrealists, turning to more scientific patterns.

Barbara Will in "Gertrude Stein, Automatic Writing and the Mechanics of Genius" states that "Stein turned to the technology of *writing*" meaning that after leaving Harvard, Stein continued her research through her writing (170). She was not interested in using words in terms of their psychological connection with one's feelings, but in the use of letters that would be regarded as units without taking their connection to the conscious/unconscious mind into consideration. Will explains that although Stein experimented with automatic writing under the guidance of psychologists, her view should not be confused with theirs. Stein, according to Will, treated automaticity as the "ground-zero murmur of the psyche" and not as a means of expressing the unconscious (170). Stein's experiments with words - disassociated from any intentional or unintentional content – led to the production of works that were, in Will's terms, the result of the mechanism inside the human psyche, and more specifically Stein's own psyche. Barbara Will does not forget to draw on the

association of the psyche's motor with a machine's motor and she specifically uses the paradigm of automobiles comparing a car's motor with a human motor and how artists in order to produce a work must follow their inner motor, a notion whereby the human turns into a machine. However, what meant to challenge mostly Stein's writing was the cinema and more specifically how words were turned into movies.

2.2 Cinema in Stein's Writing: Turning Literary Texts into Films

In 1934, Gertrude Stein made a six-month trip to the US, after almost 30 years of absence, and she was the main speaker in a series of lectures all over the country. Stein describes her anticipation, visit and return from America in *Everybody's Autobiography,* her second personal memoir after *The Autobiography of Alice B.* Toklas (1933). Visiting her homeland after all those years was a life-changing experience for Stein, since she realized how technology had affected the everyday life of Americans. Carl van Vechten, Stein's close friend and publishing manager, sent to her photographs with her name on Broadway lights preparing her for the forthcoming visit, a fact that filled Stein with excitement. However, this feeling was reversed into frustration after she herself experienced viewing her name in those bright lights. She writes:

> And then we went out again on an avenue and the elevated railroad looked just like it had ever so long ago and then we saw an electric sign moving around a building and it said Gertrude Stein has come and that was upsetting. Anybody saying how do you do to you and knowing your name may be upsetting but on the whole it is natural enough but to suddenly see your name is always upsetting. (180)

Seeing her name in blazing lights challenged her perception in terms of her identity and this is a fact that she keeps on referring to in *Everybody's Autobiography.* It was during her stay in America that Stein started writing *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*, a modern version of the known Faustian story. She actually intended to write a different play as she explains in her autobiography: "(w)hen I am writing a play I am writing one now I am writing about Daniel Webster" (199). Webster was a leading American

statesman and senator whom Stephen Vincent Benét also related to Faust through his short story *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, a year before Stein started writing *Dr. Faustus*.[6] Interestingly enough, the story of Faustus was a popular theme during the 1930s, and inspired many writers like Samuel Beckett (1936) and Thomas Mann (1943) to produce modern versions of the legend.[7] However, Stein's text, which became a libretto for an opera, stands out for replacing ultimate knowledge with electricity and introduces her final writing period, associated with technology, history and identity. Modern technology in the form of electricity enters Faustus' story, and published in 1938, this text reflects the influence her electrically bright surroundings had on Stein, who wished to explore the known legend and its moral implications in a time when human identity was being redefined.

The application of electricity in everyday life started in the nineteenth century, and it was used as a treatment to people who suffered from headaches in certain cases of hysteria. The use of electricity began as an alternative method to deal with medical problems and it was an innovative treatment that was supposed to stimulate the nervous system and revitalize the human body. Tim Armstrong in *Modernism, Technology and the Body* explains that since the emergence of electricity, there were two important uses of electricity on the human body: in the beginning, there was the "nineteenth-century fascination with the application of electricity to the human body" in order to "spark" life as he puts it (14). In the 1900s, "the application of electricity to execution" started and it was presented as a more efficient and humane way of death than decapitation or hanging (34). After the technological breakthroughs that took place, human life was adjusted into new models that could cope with a new reality. Organised time, public means of transport, and new ways of communication transformed everyday life into a constant race to keep up with the pace. As argued in Armstrong's work, this new reality led to the creation of an "electro-vitalism" that was based on the idea that the human body needed recharging on its energies in the same way that a machine like a car, or a train depends on its fuels. The nervous system of the human body was compared to a machine's central system, the misusing of which could lead to mechanical problems, or in the case of the human body to "nervous exhaustion," also described as "neurasthenia." The modernists responded to these cultural concepts, and that meant adjusting their experiments to the current tendency and creating texts that were "electrical, plunging into a scientific rhetoric which channels flows of energy and information" (19). Stein's text works as a telling

instance of Armstrong's words, incorporating the literary metaphor of electricity, which permeates the text's body and creates a flow of its current throughout.

In *Everybody's Autobiography,* it becomes apparent that her interaction with the Broadway lights, her meeting with Charlie Chaplin and the revival of Faustus's story in the interim of the two World Wars were the sources of inspiration for her text. In *Everybody's Autobiography,* Gertrude Stein refers to the interesting discussions she had with Charlie Chaplin regarding cinema and its development. When Chaplin asked her what she thought of the cinema, she replied, "films would become like the newspapers just a daily habit" (291). Stein believed that the work of authors was threatened by the mass production of films that would lead to the reduction of the reading audience. She was aware of this cinematic force that would soon prevail over any other form of entertainment and she knew that in order to adjust her work to the current trend, changes in her style should be done. In July 1938, Carl Van Vechten wrote a letter to Stein after he had read *Dr. Faustus*: "It seems to me to be written in a new style, a new manner, a new vein, a new Gertrude. Is this true?" (599).[8] However, Stein did not give him a straight answer but thanked him for his compliments. Stein long before she visited the US had written two texts that were called *A Movie* (1920) and *Film. Deux Soeurs Qui Ne Sont Pas Soeurs* (1929), which had a plot similar to Chaplin's, but those two-page texts were more like summaries than complete scenarios. Those two texts show Stein's first experimentation with cinematic writing, and this invites us to think that Stein wished to combine cinema and writing in a way that a new genre would emerge. Another point that should be mentioned from Stein's encounter with Chaplin is the exchange about what interested them most; Chaplin said "the sentiment of movement invented by himself" and Stein replied "the sentiment of doing nothing invented by myself," referring to the characters of her work *Four Saints in Three Saints* (Everybody's Autobiography 292). Stein states in her autobiography that even in Shakespeare's plays nothing really happened and the most interesting thing was that the characters lived and died. In an effort to compare herself with Shakespeare, she uses an example talking about a dog and lights, which would be obviously part of her future work *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* in order to showcase how "the sentiment of doing nothing" can make a play interesting. The following two excerpts are from *Everybody's Autobiography* and from the last act from *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* where Faustus appears confused through the character of the boy*:*

> I said that the moon excited dogs because it did nothing, lights coming and going do not excite them and now that they have seen so many of them the poor things can no longer see the moon and so no lights can excite them. (292)
>
> Act III Scene I
>
> The dog says,
>
> […]
>
> I cannot, of course I cannot, the electric lights they make it be that there is no night and if there is no night then there is no moon and if there is no moon I do not see it and if I do not see it I cannot bay at it. (111)

In those two extracts, we can see Stein's synthesis of characters doing nothing in terms of plot: on the other hand, with the use of lights (natural/artificial) she accomplishes the "sentiment of movement" that Chaplin refers to. By doing this, Stein wants to prove the superiority of writing over cinema, since writing could adjust the characteristics of cinema. In Barbara Will's essay, there is a reference to how Stein's use of repetition creates "a kind of restless movement" in her works, as if the story starts "again and again," a characteristic that is also seen in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* (Gertrude Stein, Automatic Writing 171). This means that Stein was not interested in the connotations of the specific words, but rather her intention is to use the words as units whose repetition will create this "restless movement" as Will puts it. An example of this is the following moment from *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*:

> Act I Scene III
>
> Doctor Faustus Doctor Faustus are you there Doctor Faustus I am here Doctor Faustus I am coming there Doctor Faustus, there is where Doctor Faustus oh where is there Doctor Faustus say it Doctor Faustus are you there Doctor Faustus are you there. (98)

The repetition of the words in conjunction with the lack of punctuation creates the sense that there is no ending: the long sentence ends with the words with which it begins "are you there." The rest of the words that are mentioned in the sentence have no use in terms of meaning since Stein uses them only in order to show movement in the form of the text. Stein's words in both cases criticize the existence of light and its opposing forms as natural and artificial, a theme that is integral in the theme of *Faustus*.

Gertrude Stein in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933) makes a reference to her meeting with Picabia and how she thought highly of his work by calling him "the Leonardo da Vinci of the movement" (126). As Stein describes, she was impressed by his ability to "understand and invent everything" recognizing in his work a mutual interest in applying scientific influences. She describes Picabia's art as truly meaningful, while she mentions that the Surrealists failed to surpass the high standards that he set with his works. What is of great interest in Stein's analysis of Picabia's style is how his interest in scientific developments and scientific techniques led him to the mechanical style of his paintings. She explains:

> Picabia had conceived and is struggling with the problem that a line should have the vibration of a musical sound and that this vibration should be the result of conceiving the human form and the human face in so tenuous a fashion that it would induce such vibration in the line forming it. It is his way of achieving the disembodied. It was this idea that conceived mathematically influenced Marcel Duchamp and produced his The Nude Descending the Staircase. (198)

Stein's fascination for Picabia's work can be understood in the way that he would use lines in his paintings, which created a sense of movement. This sense is similar to the way one understands the composed tune by just reading, and not listening, to notes on music sheets. This "vibration" as she calls it, is achieved by the use of mathematical techniques, and Stein found similarities in Picabia's art and her own writings, since she was also aiming at creating a certain structure in her words by using repetitions and wordplays in the same way that Picabia used his lines. Richard Frances comments on Picabia's work *I Am a Beautiful Monster* and explains that he "merged the Dadaist practice of automatic writing with the idea of the word as readymade to produce a 'mechanomorphic language.'" [9] This description could also be read as an interpretation of Stein's writing, whose experience and knowledge of automatic writing affected her style in "mechanomorphic" pieces of writing. The use of words as entities, without taking into consideration their meaning, placing them in a certain order, causes a "vibration" that gives to Stein's work its mechanomorphic character. As Stein wrote in her youthful essay on "Motor Automatism," authors succeed in performing automatism when they manage to combine more than one act, namely, reading and writing. Similarly, Stein's texts simulate automatism by providing both the narrative level of the story and by performing a "vibratory" understanding for the

readers. This leads to the conclusion that the intervention of science both in literary and artistic works was a prerequisite for achieving the "vibratory existence" Stein was looking for in her work.[10]

Gertrude Stein in *How Writing is Written* (1935) compares the act of listening to the story from different points of view with the idea of the cinema and how films are made. What matters is the general meaning of the story that is repeated rather than the words that each person uses every time. Likewise, in the case of Faust's legend, Stein produces her own version of the story that revisits the previous perspectives of Marlowe and Goethe. The rewriting of the same story from various perspectives and angles of shooting lead to a type of writing that can be described as "cinematic," since every scene is the continuation of the previous one as in montage. It is three years before *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* that Stein mentions in *How Writing is Written* that she wants to make a "talking cinema" and her writing to "get the movement of a human being" (158-159). A moving picture, or film, starts from a specific scene, which the director uses as a basis for the story's progression. This means that a film is a whole consisting of many different pictures that take on the moving aspect by being projected one after the other. It is the element of repetition that gives a tune, a picture or a story a moving dimension that can be compared to the movement of a human being. Picabia's four-dimensional paintings in his series *Transparencies* (1924-1932) encompass superimposed figures and exemplify the movement, by composing different aspects of figures that appear as progressions of a basic image.[11] As in Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase," the moving dimension can also be understood in Picabia's *Transparencies*. Moving pictures are produced through the repetition of certain pictures or stories, as tunes are completed after repeating a certain rhythm, on which different melodies are developed. In Stein's version, repetition is a key element that helps the story get the moving dimension in the composition of Faustus. As a result, she creates a moving picture of the story, similar to film and this is why *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* is a piece of cinematic writing.

There are two ways technology is understood in Stein's work; one the one hand there is Stein's interest in psychiatry and psychoanalysis and the fact that electricity was used "for cases of hysteria," as Tim Armstrong notes, is a connecting point with Stein's argument against automatic writing (31). Stein denied that she did automatic writing, mostly because she could not accept that there could not be any intentional thinking in the process of writing, but only the unconscious. Meyer adds that Stein did

not wish for her work "to be taken as a simulacrum of the unconscious writing of a hysterical woman−as little more, and perhaps much less, than the work of female hysteria" (227). On the other hand, Stein's interest in the movies is traced in what she was interested in most, which is word play and verbal experimentation. She explains that she did not write in an automatic way, but she wished to "make cinema" so as to add to her work vibration and movement as Picabia did with his paintings. *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* therefore, can be seen as the product of Stein's experimentation with what she calls "cinematic" writing, forming each sentence so as to get the movement of the text's body in the same way that the script comes alive on the screen. This could not be done without the use of electricity that turns the body of the text into a type of 'automaton' that if it were to be seen as a Picabia painting, it would be like an electric bulb.

2.3 Electrifying *Faustus*: Stein's Use of Electricity

In *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* Stein revisits the legend of Faust that represented the new modern man, the modern anti-hero. A rather prophetic work, *Dr. Faustus* is a modern version of the known story of a man from the sixteenth century who sold his soul to the devil for the ultimate knowledge of modern times, technology and more specifically electricity: a sixteenth-century hero who was so similar to the twentieth-century anti-hero who still believes that he can get ultimate power by selling his soul. Stein's work has kept characteristics from both Marlowe's and Goethe's texts, like the ballet which works as a chorus and of course the characters of Faustus, Mephistopheles, Helen and Marguerite, combined in one character, Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel. The title gives a more positive perspective to the story, as opposed to Marlowe's *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus,* and prepares the readers for a different story. The tense used in the title implies that Faustus has already acquired the light, which means that he has already sold his soul. As the story begins, the character of Doctor Faustus appears to be bitter and remorseful for selling his soul to Mephisto, which as he claims was a hasty decision:

Act I

Faustus growls out. -The devil what the devil what do I care if the
devil is there.

Mephisto says.	But Doctor Faustus dear yes I am here.
Doctor Faustus.	What do I care there is no here nor there. What am I. I am Doctor Faustus who knows everything can do everything and you say it was through you but not at all, if I had not been in a hurry and if I had taken my time I would have known how to make white electric light and day-light and night light. (89)

Stein explains from the beginning the prize Faustus earned in exchange for his soul and that it is the ability to create "white electric light" so to turn night into day. It seems that Stein took the story from where it stopped in Marlowe's text, which ends with Faustus's damnation and his famous line: "Ah! Mephistopheles" (394).

The title *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* ironically proposes a new historical period of 'enlightenment,' but of a different kind; the actual Enlightenment offered figuratively the lights of knowledge to the Western mind and a legacy that spanned virtually all fields of human activity. As opposed to this, Stein suggests that the period of an electrically lighted environment and cinema introduced a new 'enlightened' period but in its literal sense. The electric lights became the ultimate knowledge one could get, and Stein ironically explains that if the legend of Faustus had been first created in 1938, then, electricity would be the prize as a return for his soul. The story starts with Faustus's dissatisfaction, however; we assume that he would have been enchanted by the glowing power of the electric light; hence, Stein has him selling his soul for it. It can be said that Stein's Faust version brings together ideas embraced by artists from various movements such as Dada, Surrealism and Futurism. As Sarah Bay Cheng, in *Mama Dada: Gertrude Stein's Avant-Garde Theatre* explains, *Dr. Faustus* "incorporates not only the Surrealists' interest in the unconscious […] but also the Futurist fascination with technology […] as well as the Dada distrust of technology clearly warranted by the horrors of mechanized warfare" (80). If Dr. Faustus reflects Stein's troubled perception, the libretto can be seen as an inner process of Stein's unconscious mind produced via automatic writing. However, Stein explains her intention to write a play for an opera that will be on Faust and lights in *Everybody's Autobiography,* a fact that contradicts the unintentional intervention of unconsciousness. As far as the theme of technology is concerned, both the futurist obsession and the Dadaist skepticism are reflected through the dubious meanings in

Stein's work. Stein, on the hand, rejects cinema while, on the other, she embraces cinematic writing in order to add 'movement' in her texts. In a similar way, Faustus exchanges his soul for electricity and then regrets it. Therefore Stein through Faustus reflects both her own ambiguous attitude but also the general divergence in modernism regarding technology.

Technology in *Dr. Faustus* is depicted through the electric lights that constantly fluctuate throughout the progression of the plot and give a 'dream-like' impression to the readers combined with the fragmented characters with multiple personalities. In *Theater of Avant-Garde, 1890-1950,* Robert Knopf, notes that in *Dr. Faustus* Stein "exhibits all the idiosyncrasies of her earlier work - lack of punctuation, multiple identities for major characters, disembodied voices, punning, non sequiturs, and repetition" (397). These characteristics that Knopf describes strengthen Stein's intention to defy a linear stream of thought and create a rather circular progression of events that are not just repeated but interconnected with the previous ones. In *Lectures in America* (1935), and especially in her essay "Portraits and Repetition" Stein explains that "there is no such thing as repetition" but rather insistence on certain words and this, as Stein herself suggests, adds movement to her writing, a technique that she started before she had seen cinema, as she characteristically mentions (196). For instance, in *Dr. Faustus* she insists on words associated with light: electric light, day-light, night light, make a light, bright light, star-light, not light. Stein's repetition or insistence on lights in the Faust libretto leads to the forming of an integral pattern that produces new images, which also contain previous ones. In *Lectures in America,* then, Stein compares her writings to films that - according to her- both have scenes that are repeated one after the other, creating an overall picture that includes everything already seen or mentioned.

The theme of electricity is introduced in the first lines of the play, when Faustus had already sold his soul and he appears frustrated and betrayed for doing this in a hurry; this may be seen as reminiscent of Stein's reaction towards the bright Broadway lights that turned her excitement into confusion. It seems that Mephistopheles tricked him and deceived him into damnation:

Act I

> I am Doctor Faustus who knows everything can do everything and you say it was through you but not at all, if I had not been in a hurry and if I had taken my time I would have known how to make white electric light and day-light

> and night light and what did I do I saw you miserable devil I saw you and I was deceived. (89)

In Stein's *Dr. Faustus,* there is no dilemma whether he will or won't sell his soul, but whether he can or cannot go to hell or die. Faustus explains that by acquiring electricity he is damned to live in the lights forever, but in lights that have various properties; they can bring brightness in the room but they can also bring darkness "the electric lights are bright but the room is dark" (110). In Stein's libretto, the electric light turns excitement to confusion, brightness to darkness and the ultimate prize to a curse. Her sarcastic tone is present throughout the text underlining that the excitement for the new "electrically" lighted life depicted either in lighted signs or in cinematic scenes may soon be reversed.

The electric lights are present from the beginning of the play to the end and shape the plot as they shed new light on Faustus's story. As the story unfolds we see Faustus surrounded by electric lights: "Faustus standing at the door of his room, with his arms up at the door lintel looking out, behind him a blaze of electric light" (89). This opening scene justifies the title of the work and comes into sharp contrast with the closing scene when Faustus "sinks into the darkness and it is all dark" (118). It is not clear whether this darkness is indeed hell, or it is just a state of being. The beginning of the story shows that Faustus has already sold his soul, so this means that he has already gone to hell. The final scene, however, with Faustus plunging into the dark, is an action that could have happened before the first scene of the libretto. This means that when reading the final scene of *Dr. Faustus* and then return to the opening scene, it seems that there is a continuation of events: Faustus kills the boy and the dog on Mephisto's advice, he sinks into darkness and then he appears alone, feeling deceived for selling his soul and accusing Mephisto of deception.

The interaction of the final scene with the beginning of the work creates a sense of a flow of events that are accompanied by the constant flow of electric light. Sarah Balkin explains that "a play where the ending is the beginning runs in perpetuity," (9) and in the case of *Dr. Faustus* this is reinforced by the artificial lights that as Faustus desperately repeats are constantly bright and have replaced any other source of light "any light is just a light and now there is nothing more either by day or by night but just a light" (91). The artificial lighting is constant throughout the story and flashes in an inconsistent way, following a descending fluctuation. As the plot of the story unfolds, in Act I, there is a "blaze of electric light" behind Faustus (89) and by the end

of scene I, the lights are described as "very gay" (91), lights that "come and go" (92), "get brighter," "get pale," they "glow," and "commence to dance" (94). When the female character Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel appears in the second scene, there is a reference only to natural lights but when Faustus returns in the third scene, the electric lights "glow softly" (99) and "flicker and flicker," (102) during their meeting. Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel is bitten by a viper and Faustus is the only one who can cure her since he can even "make white electric light" (89).

In Act II, Faustus has cured Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel and she appears with "a halo around her not of electric light but of candle light" (104). The halo has religious connotations and presents Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel as a saint and immaculate by the 'unchaste' electric light that Faustus had to sell his soul for. By the end of the second act, the female protagonist is seen sitting "with her back to the sun" (106) and "turns her back" to "the man from over the seas" (108) who is actually Mephistopheles trying to deceive her to sell her soul for electricity. Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel rejects both natural and artificial light, an act that can be interpreted as rejecting both God and technology while "some of the lights go out" (108) and "fade away" (110). From the moment Faustus cures Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel with his electric light, she is presented as more confident and sure of her identity. This self-confidence appears in her provocative statement that she like Faustus has the same powers, without having sold her soul like him. At the first scene of Act III, in Faustus's room "the electric lights are right but the room is dark" (110) and he tries to "sleep in the dark with the electric light all bright" (112) when he is awaken by the chorus that will lead him to a last confrontation with Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel, who declares that she can turn night into day without having sold her soul to the devil. It is then in the last scene of the play that Faustus kills the characters of the dog and the boy, so he can go to hell. Before this happens, Mephisto tells Faustus that he can make him young again and he can also take Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel with him, so he will not be alone. When Faustus is young again, he appears and announces to her that she will go with him. Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel does not believe him, refuses to follow him and she watches him as he "sinks into the darkness" where "it is all dark" while she repeats:

Act III Scene II

> I am Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel and I know no man or devil no viper and no light I can be anything and everything and it is always always alright. (118)

The presence of the electric lights from the beginning to the end of the work plays a major role since they fade or glow according to the story's progression. For instance, the lights are bright when Faustus appears but when Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel enters the scene, they flicker and flicker or even go out. Electricity can be seen as a necessary agent of the play, as a source of power to a machine, which gives a 'spark' of life and energy. The lights respond, as it were, to the reactions of the characters and the constant flashing, and together with the lack of punctuation and repetition create a "continuous present": as Stein mentions in "Composition as Explanation," (1926), the lights are creating a feeling of simultaneity.

The presence of light from natural sources is also present in the text and is always mentioned as compared to its artificial counterpart. The sun, the moon, daylight, night-light, starlight and twilight are replaced by the electric light that is always bright. There are two characteristic examples that show the dialogue between natural and artificial light; the first is with Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel and the second is with the character of the dog. In the first instance, Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel has already been cured by Faustus and she appears to stand against the natural source of light:

> Marguerite Ida sat with her back to the sun. Marguerite Ida sat and sat with her back to the sun. The sun oh the sun the lights are bright like the sun set and she sat with her back to the sun and
> sat. (106)

At this point, Stein refers to Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel with her first two names and uses a past tense, while another reference follows with her full fourfold name and a present tense:

> Act II
> And she sits
> With her back to the sun
> One sun
> And she is one
> Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel as well. (107)

Repetition in those two instances takes the form of variation as is seen in the female protagonist's name but also in the near-homonymy of the words sat/ set/ sun and light/bright. Although Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel appears as one character from the beginning of the story, Stein chooses to emphasize her single existence after Faustus cures her with the help of the electric light. She also rejects the power of the artificial light by turning her back to Mephistopheles, who tricks her by telling her that she is two and not one person. Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel turns and probably after seeing her shadow from the electric light, she becomes confused and faints. The shadow of her figure creates a sense of three-dimensionality that reasserts her existence, a fact that she affirms throughout the text: "Am I am Marguerite Ida very well am I Helena Annabel" (97). The image of a shadow or its quality of causing one's confusion of identity is a motif that is also present in Stein's *Ida A Novel.* Dana Caims Watson claims that "identity is only a shadow" (143) in Stein's work, and cites a most telling instance from the text: "any shadow was a rabbit to them" (142) referring to dogs chasing sheep and confusing them with rabbits.

Electricity is what unites and controls the three major characters of the story, since their progression is affected by its constant fluctuation. In the following instance, the character of the dog refers to the light of the moon as compared to the electric one. The prevalent force of electricity creates illusions by turning night into day, intensifying the brightened-up environment:

Act III Scene I

> I am a dog yes I am just that I am I am a dog and I bay at the moon, I did yes I did I used to do it I used to bay at the moon I always used to do it and now now not any more, I cannot, of course I cannot, the electric lights they make it be that there is no night. (111)

In contrast to the dog, the theme of duality characterizes the multiple personalities of the play's characters that can be seen as antithetic counterparts, reflections or even word puns. The most characteristic example of a fragmented character is, of course, the female persona Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel, whose name is amenable to many interpretations. Starting from the first pair, there is Marguerite Ida, which refers to Goethe's Gretchen there is Helena Annabel, which refers to Helen of Troy mentioned both in Goethe's and Marlowe's text. Stein combines the naïve Marguerite with the ghost-like image of Helen, two weak female characters as described in the previous versions of Faust. As Shirley Neuman notes, the name Ida is associated with

Mount Ida of Crete (the Mountain of the Goddess) and Annabel is a pun for "Isabel/ is a belle" whose first part "Anna" has a religious connotation (184).[12] The multiple personalities of this character work as a continuation of the older ones, and her duality, as Sarah Bay-Cheng correctly points out, "is visible not only in her name, but also in the events that surround her" (Mama Dada 83). This fact is seen in her interaction with Faustus, where she initially turns her back to him as an act of ignoring him but when she realizes that Mephistopheles tricked her, as mentioned before, she faints. Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel becomes gradually more and more confident from the beginning to the end of the play as opposed to the character of Faustus. It is the electric light that forces the two protagonists to interact; in the beginning of the play Faustus is presented as powerful while Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel is seen as lost, while in the end she decidedly rejects Faust, who sinks into hell. The two characters seem to have a polarized interaction, which is vital to the story's progression, since it is connected to Stein's attempt to create the "endless movement" in the text. The electric light works as an agent in the two characters' interaction and the unfolding of their personalities.

Another example of multiple personalities is Faustus's coexistence with the boy and the dog, both accompanying him from the beginning of the play until the moment he kills them. Faustus appears both as a saint for saving Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel from the viper's bite and as a sinner for killing his two companions. Faustus, the boy and the dog act as one personality; Faustus is bothered by their constant presence, while the presence of the boy and the dog can be interpreted as Faustus's inner voices of conscience, or his "inner light," to put it in other words. Faustus seems annoyed by their constant presence as it is seen in the following extract:

> Act I
>
> Let me alone
> Oh let me alone
> Dog and boy let me alone oh let me alone
> Leave me alone
> Let me be alone
> little boy and dog
> let let me alone. (93)

Apart from being companions to Faustus, the characters of the boy and the dog have the role of warning him for upcoming events, like the appearance of Marguerite Ida

and Helena Annabel. Faustus's inner voices expose his confused self; the boy repeats what Faustus says or thinks and the dog keeps saying "thank you." It can be said that the boy symbolizes Faustus's naïveté to believe in Mephistopheles's words, and the dog symbolizes Faustus's appreciation for acquiring the electric light. Faustus being in distress regarding who he is and not being able to differentiate himself from them – "man and dog are the same each one can take the blame"– kills them, after Mephistopheles tricks him again by saying that through this he could go to hell (98). What Faustus kills, however, is his "inner light," that is his soul that Mephistopheles wanted and at the end of the story he "sinks into darkness" where "it is all dark" (118). By this act, Faustus acquires a single identity, while Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel remains as a multiple personality until the end of the story.

The character of Mephistopheles is of great interest, since he is also constantly present throughout the story having an ambiguous relationship with Faustus. A research in the etymology of the word Mephistopheles, suggests the Hebrew origin *mephitz* + *tophel* meaning "destroyer" and "liar"[13] and the Greek origin *me*, *phos* and *philos* meaning "not," "light" and "friend" or else not a friend of the light, alluding to the etymology of Lucifer's name as the "light-bearer."[14] Interesting associations can be drawn with Stein's version of Mephistopheles, since it was he who persuaded Faustus to sell his soul for electric light and to commit a sin so as to sink into darkness. His persona is represented in more than one instance; there is a clear association with the viper that stung Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel, the man from over the seas and possible the dog that can be an anagram for god. The character of the viper is mentioned in three different ways: as real, as artificial and as Mr. Viper. Neuman interestingly points that the viper is a "symbol of healing as well as of death" (Gertrude Stein 189). It heals in Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel's case because it helped her see and it kills because it caused the death of the dog and the boy: "There is a rustle the viper appears and the dog and the boy die" (117). As the story unfolds, Marguerite Ida and Helena sits in the woods and she feels a bite on her foot. Not having seen what it was and after asking a woman with a sickle passing by, she decides that it was a viper that stung her. The woman with the sickle informs her that the only person that can cure her is Dr. Faustus, so she sets to look for him. Mephistopheles is hiding behind the viper's sting and the woman's words, wishing to lead Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel to a confrontation with Faustus. After

Faustus cures her, she appears holding an artificial viper and having a halo around her head, when Mephistopheles tells her disguised as the man from over the seas:

Act II

> Come come do you hear me come come, you must come to me,
> through away the viper through away the sun throw away the lights until there are none. (108)

Mephistopheles tricks Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel by using the man from over the seas in the same way that he fooled Faustus by making him believe that she will join him to hell just because he turned him young again. However, she did not end up in the darkness because she did not betray her multiple identity as opposed to Faustus.

A question to be answered is why Stein chose to frame Faust's story with the theme of electricity: not only did she replace the ultimate prize of knowledge with it, but she also turned it into the catalytic agent of the plot. When reading Stein's *How Writing is Written,* the theme of "contemporariness" and writing about the present seems to contain an answer to this question. Stein points out that every writer cannot predict the future or express past trends, but is forced to write about present events and under contemporary circumstances, presented in the work that they create. More specifically, she writes, "a man who is making a revolution has to be contemporary" and Stein wanted to propose a new genre in writing that would be cinematic, something that would be achieved only by being contemporary (158). After her trip to the USA, Stein sensed that technology and electricity is what defined her time, and this became the motif with which she set out to modernize Faustus's legend. Stein also explains regarding the need of expressing "contemporariness":

> The writer or painter, or what not, feel this thing more vibrantly, and he has a passionate need of putting it down; and that is what creativeness does. He spends his life in putting down this thing which he doesn't know is a contemporary thing. If he doesn't put down the contemporary thing, he isn't a great writer, for he has to live in the past. (447)

Gertrude Stein put down her need to be contemporary by using the theme of electricity in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights.* The presence of electricity in the work, however, serves a different purpose to the text's own existence that Stein composed with mathematical accuracy. Most of all, as is already explained, the use of repetition helped Stein start from an initial theme in the story and create progressions of it, just

as it is done in films. The developing pictures that Stein carefully structured in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* can be compared to the scenes that form the parts of a film. It can be said, then, that Stein constructed a mechanism of words, set in front of the readers' eyes. The constant presence of electricity in the work 'sparks' life to Stein's mechanism, which is the structure-body of the text, creating the sense of movement and its vibrating aspect. This cinematic writing that Stein applies to the text with successive scenes animated by electricity, can be seen as a literary metaphor for the moving pictures seen in the cinema. Stein's literary technique of repetition, the intervention of technology through electricity and the cinematic aesthetics merge and produce a new form of textuality that relates the text to a machine and makes it behave like an automaton. In those terms, Stein succeeds in achieving the "vibratory existence" in her work, in the same way she recognized it in the work of Picabia and Duchamp.

Notes

[1] Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick in "Reconfiguring Identities in the Word and in the World: Naming Marginalized Subjects and Articulating Marginal Narratives in Early Canonical Works by Gertrude Stein."

[2] Stein's juxtaposition of everyday life with technology in the light of war will be explored in the following chapter "Gertrude Stein and Prosthetic War Writing in *Wars I Have Seen.*"

[3] André Breton, "First Manifesto of Surrealism," in *Modernism*: An Anthology of Sources and Documents, eds. Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goldman and Olga Taxidou.

[4] "When I first began writing, I felt that writing should go on, I still do feel that it should go on but when I first began writing I was completely possessed by the necessity that writing should go on and on and if writing should go on what had colons and commas to do with it, what had periods to do with it what had small letters and capitals to do with it to do with writing going on which was at that time the most profound need I had in connection with writing. What had colons and semi-colons to do with it what had commas to do with it what had periods to do with it." The passage is from Gertrude Stein's "On Punctuation" in *Lectures In America*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1985, pages 214-222. Originally published in 1935 by The Modern Library, Inc.

[5] It is quoted in Steven Meyer's *Irresistible Dictation: Gertrude Stein and the Correlations of Writing and Science*.

[6] Stephen Vincent Benét's story *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (1937) was based on the story *The Devil and Tom Walker* written by Washington Irving in 1824.

[7] Samuel Beckett was an ardent reader of Goethe and his extensive notes on *Faust* are indicative of his creative thinking in the beginning of his writing career. Thomas Mann published *Doktor Faustus: Das Leben des deutschen Tonsetzers Adrian Leverkühn, erzählt von einem Freunde* ("Doctor Faustus: The Life of the German composer Adrian Leverkühn, Told by a Friend") in 1947. This version of Faust focuses on the fictional character of Adrian Leverkühn and takes place in Germany during WWII.

[8] For the complete correspondence, see *The Letters of Gertrude Stein and Carl Van Vechten, 1913-1946*, ed. Edward Burns.

[9] Richard Frances's article "Rudely Mechanical" on Francis Picabia's *I Am a Beautiful Monster: Poetry, Prose, and Provocation.*

[10] "Vibratory existence" is a borrowed term from Meyer's *Irresistible Dictation*.

[11] Francis Picabia took inspiration from classicism, Rubens and Catalan frescoes of which characteristics can be traced in his *Transparencies.*

[12] Shirley Neuman also refers to the fact that Stein started writing *Ida A Novel* in 1937 but in the meanwhile she was more intrigued by theme of Faust and left *Ida* aside. She published *Ida A Novel* in 1941, and apart from the protagonist's name, it shares many common characteristics with *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights.*

[13] source from http://dictionary.reference.com

[14] source from www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary

3. GERTRUDE STEIN AND PROSTHETIC WAR WRITING IN *WARS I HAVE SEEN*

3.1 Stein's Living and Writing During World War II

After the outburst of the Second World War, Stein and Toklas moved to the French countryside, first Bilignin and then Culoz, where they remained until the defeat of the Germans. During their stay there, Stein started writing *Wars I Have Seen,* a war memoir, which she completed in 1945. Even though it is a work that was written under odd circumstances, it encompasses distinct Steinian characteristics such as automatic writing, the motif of sight and the interest in quotidian things. The years 1938-1946 is the last and very productive period for Stein, who managed to publish over ten major works reflecting the turbulent years of war. Foreshadowing her perspective on the ambivalent impact of technology in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* (1938), illustrating the French reaction to war in *Paris France* (1940) and concluding her view on the future of humanity in one of her last works "Reflection on an Atom Bomb," (1946) Stein's works offer an overview of the prewar, postwar and war period in Europe providing a detailed but not realistic description of daily life. *Wars I Have Seen* is Stein's third autobiography and together with *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* and *Everybody's Autobiography* it completes the trilogy about Stein's persona that starts from "she," moves to "everybody" and leads to "I."[1]

Her first autobiography refers to the years before Paris until 1932 and describes the "golden era"of Paris with the well-known gatherings of the avant-garde scene at Stein's salon, the second talks about the years 1933-1937, focusing mostly on her visit to the US after forty years of absence, while the third one maps the war years, 1938-1945. *Wars I Have Seen* became a great success and is considered as Stein's most important war text not only because it includes historical facts and autobiographical references but also because its fictional time is intermingled with historical time**.** The fact that Stein wrote so many works about war, but not in the classic form of war-themed texts, reflects her need to differentiate herself from an utterly masculine genre as she did with her autobiographical works.

In fact, a close reading of Stein's texts from 1937 until her death reveals her constant need to express her ruminations regarding human existence and the

dominance of technology in daily life. Starting from electricity in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* and ending with nuclear weapons in *Reflection On the Atom Bomb,* Stein is interested in the fast development of technology and its impact both on human thought and the human body. On account of technology's intrusion on the human body through prosthesis of artificial parts, this chapter explores Stein's word prosthesis in *Wars I Have Seen.* Due to the absence of bodies of war in her memoir, Stein replaces prosthetic human-bodies with bodies of words and establishes a dialogue with "prosthetic modernism," which Tim Armstrong defines as "the general filed of bodily interventions, technology and writing in Modernism" (78).

Wars I Have Seen starts by narrating Stein's early childhood years, and their connection with wars and then moves on to the years 1943-1945 where she portrays her everyday life in the French countryside, mingled with much irony and sarcasm. For instance, the description of a morning walk in the small French town where Stein and Alice lived, or a conversation with people focuses more on everyday goods rather than war. Having or not having honey and butter are usual topics for discussion and the fact that they could not find sugar is a matter that she mentions a lot. A characteristic example that shows Stein's ironic sarcasm on writing about trivial matters during wartime is the following:

> [W]e seem to have everything but sugar. We even had lemon and an orange which should have gotten to Switzerland but did not, the bridges keep being blown up and nobody wants to go out to repair them it is too dangerous, the Germans tried to pass an armored train through the other day, but did it get there, nobody seems to know. (206)

As she mentions they had "everything" they needed and not having sugar was an important matter to bother with while on the other hand the blowing-up of bridges was an issue that "nobody" knew, or maybe, nobody bothered to know. The specific excerpt shows Stein's sarcasm through the juxtaposition of everyday life with war, a practice she does throughout the work, which was initially criticized as naïve. David Rando makes an interesting point on the fact that *Wars I have Seen* is a work written in parallel with WWII and completed by the end of it. More specifically, he points out "Stein's daily writing is a form of waiting, a writing whose goal is to cease writing" (136). This is a fact that Stein refers to at the end of her war memoir:

> What a day what a day of days, I always did say that I would end this book with the first American that came to Culoz, and to-day oh happy day yesterday and to-day, the first of September 1944. (244)

A shift in the tone of the text is evident when one reaches the final part of *Wars I Have Seen* and Stein's descriptions of everyday life that have proceeded begin to seem metaphorical. The unending depictions of their life in the French countryside that are presented as almost unaffected by the ongoing war conclude with Stein's relief on the arrival of the Americans.

Before moving to Culoz in 1943, Gertrude Stein was warned by close friends to leave for Switzerland as soon as possible since her life was in danger. Stein mentions in *Wars I Have Seen* one of these discussions with her friend Maurice Sivain:

> I was in Vichy yesterday, and I saw Maurice Sivain, […] and Maurice Sivain said to me, tell these ladies that they must leave at once for Switzerland, to-morrow if possible otherwise they will be put into a concentration camp. […] No, I am not going we are not going, it is better to go regularly wherever we are sent than to go irregularly where nobody can help us if we are in trouble, no I said, they are always trying to get us to leave from France but here we are and here we stay. (50)

Were Stein's connections that strong that she felt secure even under those circumstances? This is a question that preoccupied many critics who deal with Stein's choice to stay in France during World War II. How possible was it for a Jewish, lesbian writer to survive in a town, which was just a few kilometres away from train stations where whole Jewish communities were sent to camps? A characteristic example of this risk is the capturing of 44 Jewish children hiding in an orphanage in Izieu just 20 kilometres away from Culoz.[2] Janet Malcolm refers to this incident in her article "Strangers in Paradise" published in *The New Yorker* where she mentions her correspondence with Joan Chapman, the granddaughter of Stein's friend Paul Genin. More specifically Malcolm cites:

> No, we had no idea that a group of Jewish children were hidden in a boarding school at Izieu, they were indeed deported, we only found out months later. I'm sure Gertrude and Alice had no idea of the incident at the time. Izieu is about 20 km from Belley and 30 km from Culoz. In those days the only way of getting to and fro was walking or on a bike, people were

> pretty isolated from each other. Anything confidential was never mentioned by phone.[3]

It is possible that Stein was not aware of the specific incident, but she was definitely aware of the risk over remaining in France. In fact, she mentions quite a few times the fate of Jews in case they were caught but she ironically displaces the tension on trivial matters and switches the subject to everyday life. The following excerpt is indicative of this:

> Everybody is ashamed, everybody is crying, everybody is listening to everything and the trains go on, with Germans who are not Germans and French who are not French, oh dear me, […] and in the meantime Alice Toklas came along with six lemons. (Wars 143)

Barbara Will explores Stein's friendship with Bernard Faÿ, an official of the Vichy government and a suspected Nazi collaborator and she points out that *Wars I Have Seen* "dances through [a] grey zone" that attracted opposing views and misinterpretations of her work (Unlikely Collaboration 144). By this phrase, Will refers to Stein's statements in the work that are clearly in favour of Petain. For instance: "Petain was right to stay in France and he was right to make the armistice and little by little I understood it. I always thought he was right to make the armistice" (Wars 87). On the other hand, she remains "anti-German" throughout and celebrates the defeat of the Germans stressing the help of the Americans (Unlikely Collaboration 144).

One of the first to criticize Stein's narration of her everyday life during WWII France was Djuna Barnes who wrote a review of *Wars I Have Seen* in the June 1945 edition of the *Contemporary Jewish Record*. Barnes's remark is hard to be missed:

> You do not feel that she is ever really worried about the sorrows of the people; her concern at its highest pitch is a well-fed apprehension. She says well-fed people – that is, people who love their food as the French do – never lose wars; the Germans lose wars because their food is awful. (137)[4]

Barnes's reaction expresses the general disapproval of Stein's text by critics at the time it was published. She also added "I should like to keep the book, but she always takes her writing away": Barnes is expressing disappointment over Stein's insistence on the mundane as a way of showing disrespect to the victims (138). Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick explains her reaction by pointing out "Barnes intuits that Stein is part of a larger project, one that encompasses her as well, of writing women into

war experience and war history" (Modernist Women 127). Although she admired Stein, Barnes disapproved of the writing style in *Wars I Have Seen*, which she described as full of "happy idiot" simplifications and baby-like repetitions" (127). Having lived herself in France, Barnes, as a writer and as a woman, expected from Stein a more realistic account of her life during the war, suggesting that she should have avoided her sarcastic wit especially for a book of this specific kind.[5] This is not the first time that Barnes criticizes Stein as careless and her language as inappropriate. In an interview that Barnes gave, long after her Paris years, when asked what she thought of Gertrude Stein she replied:

> D'you know what she said of me? Said I had beautiful legs! Now what does that have to do with anything? Said I had beautiful legs! Now I mean, what, did she say that for? I mean, if you're going to say something about a person…I couldn't stand her. She had to be the centre of everything. A monstrous ego. (104)[6]

In both cases, Barnes suggests that Stein was inconsiderate about how influential her opinion was; in the first instance, the outside world was curious to learn about Stein's experience and what happened during WWII, while in the second instance, her indifferent reaction towards Barnes as a writer would influence critics of her work. It is in these terms, according to Barnes, that Stein should have written a more realistic work that would depict the reality of war.

However, there were some positive reviews from people who appreciated Stein's personal style: her close friend Carl Van Vechten, after reading her war piece, sent her a letter in March 1945 to congratulate her. He wrote:

> It is an amazing book in which you have imprisoned your feeling about all the world in the microcosm of a small French village. Never has your 'style' been so wedded to your subject matter or to the effect you planned to make on your reader. (Burns The Letters 124)

Van Vechten's opinion comes in sharp contrast with Barnes's criticism, since according to him it is her choice to write in her own personal style that made this piece "amazing." Recent critics are closer to Van Vechten's view, proposing different viewpoints regarding Stein's narrative. Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick, for instance, suggests that Stein's insistence on quotidian things is made on purpose so as to "distance her female characters and narrative voice from trauma by concentrating on the mundane" (Modernist Women 93). She also adds that the brief references to war

actually exist so that the issue of the "women as sufferers and survivors" is emphasized (93). Stein and Toklas were indeed survivors of WWII, certainly not out of sheer luck: they definitely witnessed and heard of stories that were happening close to them. The public, in contrast to critics like Barnes, had a positive reception to the book, which soon became a best seller. As Barbara Will aptly puts it:

> Stein was immediately hailed in the postwar press as a survivor and, for the two years remaining of her life, enjoyed a triumphant return of the public admiration she had experienced in America in the 1930s. (Unlikely Collaboration 116-117)

Ironically, after the war, her friend Bernard Faÿ was sentenced to life imprisonment, while she was never criticised or accused as a Nazi collaborator while she was alive.[7]

In 1940, Stein wrote "The Winner Loses: A Picture of Occupied France," an article that she published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in the same year and she describes her meeting with the American diplomat in Lyon who warned her that they should leave France the soonest possible. Stein did not follow his advice because she did not wish to leave France and go to a place where nobody knew her. Liesl Olson in *Modernism and the Ordinary* stresses the fact that Stein felt secure with the farmers and the residents of the village in which she lived and she strongly believed that they would protect and help them. Olson refers to Stein's relief when the armistice was signed and explains that she "celebrates the way that ordinary life might continue under the new Vichy regime" (102). This is evident in Stein's lines from the article:

> But anyway our light is lit and the shutters are open, and perhaps everybody will find out, as the French know so well, that the winner loses, and everybody will be, too, like the French, that is, tremendously occupied with the business of daily living, and that will be enough. (191)

Stein suggests that the armistice will at least make the French win their daily life back, which will help them regain a sense of normality back in their lives, keeping their mind away from war. In the same way, writing was part of Stein's daily life, and the fact that the Vichy regime reassured that there will be no bombardments, she could move on without worrying at least for that.

Another war text by Stein, *Mrs. Reynolds,* was written during the years 1940-1943 and it is a political satire about Hitler and Stalin who are seen in the characters of Angel Harper and Joseph Lane. This work depicts in a clearer way than *Wars I Have Seen* Stein's worriedness about the war; as Dana Caims Watson notes, Stein in *Mrs.*

Reynolds wishes "to convey the experience of a private person emotionally devastated, but not personally destroyed, by World War II's happening all around her" (154). The character of Mrs. Reynolds reflects Stein's personal devastation, which comes in sharp contrast with Stein's confident and less intimidated persona in *Wars I Have Seen.* In the epilogue of *Wars* Stein refers to what G.I.s asked her to do: "Write about us they all said a little sadly" (247). And she indeed wrote about them in 1946 when she published *Brewsie and Willie*: this account of two American G.I.s and their imagined discussions with nurses in France reflects Stein's anxiety for the future of America and Europe after the war.

Although Stein appears to be calm and reserved throughout *Wars I Have Seen*, causing negative criticism, in her correspondence with William Rogers in 1940,[8] she appears worried about their future in France:

> [W]e go along peacefully and then sometimes about 10 o'clock in the evening I get scared about everything and then I complete[ly] upset Alice and she goes to bed scared and I walk in the garden and I come in and I work and I am all peaceful and luckily Alice can sleep and that is the worst moment, during the day we are busy and that is the way it is. (200)[9]

Rogers also notes that in the case of *Wars I Have Seen,* Stein kept the work in the handwritten format and Alice typed it only after the war was over because Stein's letters were difficult to read and "so that it might remain safe from the possibility of German confiscation and its consequences" (202). Rogers describes Stein as courageous and characterizes her choice to remain in France despite the circumstances as a "childish willfulness," and *Wars I Have Seen* as "a document of the artist's ability to make a pleasure of hell's despite" (218). Stein gives hints of friends being persecuted by the Germans and she incorporates their stories in her narrative as short instances in her daily life: "[t]hese days, nobody knows why the Germans surround a town take the mayor prisoner and sometimes they let him go and sometimes they do not" (Wars 146). Stein's brief references to similar events can be interpreted as being made intentionally so as to avoid the acceptance of reality, "the hell," as Rogers puts it.

Stein's "childish willfulness" can also be revisited in the light of her first children's books that were written in the beginning of WWII. Stein's interest in children's literature during the war period constitutes an important backdrop for her writings, and was much encouraged by Margaret Wise Brown.[10] Their interaction led

to the publication of four books, two of which, *The World Is Round* (1938) and *To Do: A Book of Alphabets and Birthdays* (1940) became the most known.[11] As Barbara Will points out, writing for children allowed Stein "to escape her thoughts about the coming war" (And Then One Day 343). It is through writing that Stein could transform the world she was living in into a safe environment and through these texts she recreates her own everyday life. Stein tries to describe her fears through the eyes of Rose, the protagonist of *The World is Round* who starts a long journey and appears to be concerned and distressed regarding the world's movement. It can be said that Rose's concerns indicate Stein's distress towards how things progress in the real world:

> Once upon a time the world was round
> the moon was round
> The lake was round
> And I I was almost drowned. (17)

Will adds that "Rose the terrified child confronting an illusory adult world becomes the uncanny double of the author trying to escape her world through the illusion of storytelling" (343). Stein finds shelter in children's innocent imagination as a way of going back to a safer place in order to get away from adult troubles. Adding to this, the theme of childhood and her early age is a theme that she is preoccupied with *in Wars I Have Seen*, which is divided into different age stages. Child innocence in Stein's writing is also traced in her other three books for children: *To Do: A Book of Alphabets and Birthdays, The Gertrude Stein First Reader and Three Plays.* These works did not attract the attention of any publishing house in Stein's lifetime, nevertheless the stylistics of Stein's children literature share many common characteristics with her major works. It can be said that Stein's choice to write stories for children, at the same period with her war writing, shows that these two genres cohere on a certain level and is a way for Stein to defend her writing against the critics who considered her texts as childish. Combining the theme of childhood innocence with the war threat can be interpreted as Stein's unwillingness to accept the reality of war and as an effort to take refuge in stories for children. In 1940, before the armistice was signed, she published *Paris France* (1940), an account that focuses on French people and culture and describes childhood memories.

3.2 *To Believe, or Not to Believe*: Autobiography and History

As discussed, *Wars I Have Seen* is not a typical work of the war genre, although its title suggests the contrary. The use of the pronoun 'I' in the title of the work prepares the readers for a possible autobiography of Stein's personal experiences in World War II France. However, the use of 'I' can be seen both as referring to the historical personality of Stein and as an instance of the avant-garde use of the 'I' as a persona. Another possible suggestion would be that the 'I' in *Wars I have Seen* could be also interpreted as the 'eye' of humanity, which has experienced all wars, since Stein has not actually seen some of the wars she mentions. As Phoebe Stein notes: "Stein herself makes no claims for the authenticity of her account of the war. In fact, rather than underscoring the "reality" of her experience, Stein repeatedly highlights the "unreality" of wartime" (History, Narrative 242). What is real and what is unreal is getting even more confusing when Stein combines fictional and historical events; what she has experienced and what she has heard or read about. A strong moment in which Stein appears as herself in *Wars I Have Seen* is in a few pages before the epilogue of the story when war is almost over and American soldiers make their first appearance. As Stein writes, it was the first time they contacted anyone American for the last two years. She adds:

> We held each other's hands and we patted each other and we sat down together and I told them who we were, and they knew, I always take it for granted that people will know who I am and at the last time at the last moment I kind of doubt, but they knew of course they knew […]
>
> [By] that time I was confident and I said I was Gertrude Stein. (245)

Stein's confidence is restored at the final part of her war memoir, when she does not question the reality of the events. Her meeting with the G.I. Joes puts an end to Stein's sense of unreality and she describes their arrival as a proof of the war's end, and this can be seen as Stein's political comment. It is the first and last time that Stein's name is mentioned and it is a deliberate reference at the end of the work, the end of war, after the arrival of the Americans.

As discussed, *Wars I Have Seen* is a work that Stein wrote in an effort to escape the reality of war and feel safe during its writing process, her own quotidian habit as I already explained. The combination of autobiographical and historical facts adds to the complexity of an unclassifiable text that cannot be accommodated in any genre,

neither that of the war memoir, nor of autobiography. Stein dares to create her own sub-genre of autobiography by creating word plays with the genre's integral component: the subject. In Stein's autobiographies, the historical meets the fictional persona and Stein places them in constant dialogue. As Laura Marcus points out:

> Autobiography is itself a major source of concern because of its very instability in terms of the postulated opposites between self and world, literature and history, fact and fiction, subject and object. [...] Autobiography will appear either as a dangerous double agent, moving between these oppositions, or as a magical instrument of reconciliation. (7)

Wars I Have Seen is a work that reflects the human concern and search for individuality during WWII, in a time of massive deaths and destruction. Stein manages to reconcile what Marcus names "postulated opposites" and forms not only a personal recollection of the period that she describes but a rather collective one.

Stein's war autobiography is a work that reflects collective memory through its theme that represents the human experience of war in the sense that she (or better "I") could have been everybody or anybody. Writing in a chronological order, Stein refers to various wars, which frame the Shakespearean tragedies, the American Civil War, the Mexican-American War, the Boer War and the two World Wars. There is, however, a greater emphasis on the two World Wars and Stein explains that to her the first represented the nineteenth while the second the twentieth century. She makes this point as far as the factor of science is concerned and how people's belief in scientific progress during the nineteenth century was replaced by disbelief in the twentieth. Elena Lamberti explains Stein's emphasis on the World Wars and their interconnection, which leads to the creation of a collective memory. More particularly she adds that "together with her autobiographical reflection, the war experience is used by the author as a paradigm to record epochal changes, new lifestyles, new national characteristics and to take sides, albeit indirectly" (123). The Second World War, as Stein puts it in *Wars I Have Seen*, killed the nineteenth century ("It does end the nineteenth century, kills it dead, dead dead" 79) and everything it represented "belie[f] in progress and in science" (61). Stein's insistence on writing about daily life in the heart of Europe shows her need to write a text that combines her personal experiences, people's feelings towards wars, political views and historical facts. The wars she experienced, she heard of or she read about had one common characteristic; that of the human factor which is threatened by the technological dominance.

Stein combines different spatiotemporal periods and events and divides the work in three age-stages of life, starting from infancy to when she was fourteen years old, then, from fifteen to twenty-five years old and, then, to the periods of the world wars. In Janet Hobhouse's words, Stein "describes her own growing up in terms of the developments of modern history" (218). The first stage of life is connected with Stein's classical readings of Shakespeare's tragedies, which introduced her to the theme of war since "there was always war" (8). She refers specifically to the historical plays of *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar* and *Henry V*, which she continued to read throughout her life. It can be said that Stein made references to Shakespeare's plays to contrast them with her own historical text wishing possibly to create a work that would have a similar literary and historical importance. In 1935 in a lecture at Wesleyan University, she mentioned: "I don't care to say whether I'm greater than Shakespeare, and he's dead and can't say whether he's greater than I am. Time will tell" (222).[12] Stein knew that she was witnessing one of the most crucial events in the history of humanity and wished to be part of it in future references. This is why she compares all the previous wars with WWII, which was still ongoing. When comparing wars described in Shakespearean tragedies she mentions:

> I read all the historical plays of Shakespeare and all the other plays of Shakespeare and more and more this war of 1942-1943 makes it like that. The horrors the fears everybody's fears the helplessness of everybody's fears, so different from other wars makes this war like Shakespeare's plays. (Wars 13)

Phoebe Stein Davis points out that "Stein makes a direct parallel between the plays and the war; she goes one step further to explain that it is not art that imitates life, but real life that imitates art" (5). Stein's comparison with Shakespeare is also traced in the following lines: "But in Shakespeare there is no meaning and no dread, there is confusion and fear, and that is what is now here" (Wars 14). Shakespearean tragedies and WWII have in common fear and confusion and Stein categorizes them as "unreal," a word she does not use for other wars like the Spanish-American, the Boer war and WWI. More particularly, she notes: "[t]he war 1914-1918 was not like Shakespeare but this war is the meaninglessness of why makes all the nothingness so real" (12). Through the war timeline that Stein unfolds, she constantly questions the collective historical memory and she ironically suggests that she writes about the historical events of WWII in the same way that Shakespeare wrote about sixteenth-

century wars. As an avid reader of Shakespeare in her childhood, she compares herself to Shakespeare since she presents herself as a historical writer of WWII events.

Wars I Have Seen is written along two parallel and antithetical axes; the fictional and the historical. Stein juxtaposes strong war images against daily events in a sarcastic and ironic way. A major theme that is traced in more than one instance is human incarceration and imprisonment as concluded in Stein's words: "[a]nybody can be a prisoner now, even those who are only in a training camp feel themselves to be prisoners" (54). Stein's comparison of the confined people inside camps with her sense of confinement in the French countryside is one more ironic reference and rather provocative that alludes to the existence of concentration camps, which she masterfully avoids to mention explicitly. In a last scene probably from the end of the war, the motorized German army returns from war on foot attracting people's interest. Stein expresses her astonishment at the soldiers' appearance:

> [I]t was absolutely unbelievable that in July 1944 that the German army could look like that, it was unbelievable, one could not believe one's eyes, and then I came home having put my dog on a leash and when I got home there were about a hundred of these Germans in the garden in the house all over the place, poor Basket the dog was so horrified that he could not even bark, I took him up to my bedroom and he just sat and shivered he did not believe it could be true. (216)

The repetition of the phrases "unbelievable," "one could not believe one's eyes," "did not believe it could be true" is intended to emphasize the sense of "unreality" that Stein suggests through her word plays, as will be discussed later on in this chapter. What is expressed as shocking in Stein's description is probably the realization of the fact that war is almost over. Watching Germans being powerless is a moment of realization that is followed by the reaction of Stein's dog Basket. As she describes: "perhaps Basket will never bark again, I am trying to induce him to bark again, it is not right that a dog should be silent" (216). From what we read, the dog appears to be more shocked by the soldiers' appearance when Stein shifts the attention away from war and focuses on daily issues. Stein uses again her wit to support her sayings on the unbelievable events of war by projecting onto the dog's inability to bark. The silent dog is the reversed reality of the silent man that remains speechless when facing the reality of war. This inability to express reality is seen in different moments in the

work, for example in the apathetic reaction of the people, in Stein's insistence on the pastoral scenes and in the overall avoidance of mentioning war scenes, or detailed war stories. Again, Stein justifies her own words when she later mentions that it "is funny it is awful but it does make it all unreal, really unreal" (201).

Stein characterizes WWII as a war with no end, as if everyone has lost faith and hope that the end will come, while there was a concern on how it would end. The insecurity and disappointment that everybody felt reflects the denial and inability to accept reality. She narrates, "[t]hey (the veterans) feel disappointed, not about the 1914-1918 war but about this war. They liked that war, it was a nice war, a real war a regular war, a commenced war and an ended war" (74-75). The fact that WWII does not come to an end and it is not just a historical period of time, but rather a part of everyday life, differentiates it from the other wars Stein refers to. It can be said that Stein in her description of WWI and WWII characterizes the first as a linear historical event that has a certain starting and final point in the timeline, while the second follows a circular direction. Stein's repetition of WWII being a non-ending war can be compared with the circular plot of works such as *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* or *The Circular Play.* When comparing the First with the Second World War Stein explains that the cruelty and massiveness of the Second is beyond comprehension. The realization of WWI is based on the fact that it is part of the past, while at present Stein explains the opposite situation. In Stein's words:

> Anybody can understand that there is no point in being realistic about here and now, no use at all not any, and so it is not the nineteenth but the twentieth century, there is no realism now, life is not real it is not earnest, it is strange which is entirely a different matter. (44)

This is the time when propaganda emerged and it is known that during World War II, it got out of proportion, especially through the radio, which was the primary medium of information. Stein explains the sense of isolation that people felt during war in the following lines:

> We have the terror of the Germans all about us, we have no telephone, we hear stories and we don't know whether they are true,…we seem separated from everything, we have our dog, we have the radio, we have electricity, we have plenty to eat. (144)

The radio was already an important device in everyone's life and it immediately appealed to many people. Stein mentions, "everybody listens to the radio, they listen

all day long" (161). In the same way that the train was turned into a means of transport for war supplies and Jews to death camps, radio broadcasting was adjusted to the reality of wartime. The radio, a mass-mediated device, was widely available during World War Two: "[a]nd any evening one can go on listening to any one propagandizing over the radio and one thing is very certain nobody seems to be loving any one" (125). Stein reflects on the experience of the people who remained isolated in their houses, whose fate cannot in any case be compared to the ones sent to the death camps. In this reflection, Stein gives the picture of living under the constant German threat and not having a reliable means of information for the current situation. This is a fact that is much criticized by Stein who comments:

> Even the propagandists on the radio find it very difficult to really say let alone believe that the world will be a happy place, of love and peace and plenty, and that the lion will lie down with the lamb and everybody will believe anybody. (102)

Even though Stein explains the issue of the radio propaganda, as she suggests, it was inevitable not to listen to its broadcasting since it was their only connection with the outside world. Stein stresses the fact that human communication was lost in the same way that human interaction was and criticizes this lack of interaction together with the fear this prohibition raised. However, as she points out after a certain point, propaganda was becoming obvious to people who didn't "believe the newspapers nor the radio but they do believe what they tell each other and that is natural enough" (161); only human interaction, whenever possible, was the only way to maintain as sense of reality and truth. As she characteristically narrates, they were not allowed to exchange cards and letters. In "The Letters of Gertrude Stein & Thornton Wilder" there is a reference that Stein did not send any letters between 1942 and 1944. In his correspondence on 25 March 1942, Wilder informs Stein that he will join the army and Stein's last letter during that year mentions that she was working on her book for children *To Do*. As it is explained, the publication of the book was postponed due to the complete occupation of France and Stein's "cut off from communication with America."[13] After the last exchange of letters between the Wilder family and Stein, in a letter that Isabel Wilder wrote to Stein on 8 September 1944, she mentions that *New York Herald Tribune* published the article "Gertrude Stein Safe in France with New Book,"[14] a fact that confirmed that she was safe and sound. This article was written by Eric Sevareid, a CBS correspondent, who went on a mission to seek out Stein and

"liberate" her.[15] Stein celebrates the moment of their meeting in *Wars I Have Seen* "What a day what a day of days" which signed the end of the war and of the book (244).

To return to the motif of the radio, Stein's treatment both as a popular means for information and as a propagandistic medium adds to the general blending of historical and fictional time in *Wars I Have Seen*. Sarah Wilson in the essay "Gertrude Stein and the Radio" posits as the starting point of Stein's interest in radio broadcasting her USA visit in 1934. More particularly, Wilson notes:

> Stein was not alone in responding powerfully to radio. By the time Stein returned to the United States for her lecture tour of the mid-1930s, radio had been the subject of a powerful discourse of technological utopianism for more than a decade. (262)

Stein's main purpose for her visit in the USA was to promote her work and address her writings and ideas to a large audience. In this way, Stein's enthusiasm for her first broadcast is understood, as she describes it in "I Came and Here I Am" in 1936:

> We sat down one on either side of the little thing that was between us and I said something and they said that is all, and then suddenly it was all going on. It was it was really all going on, and it was, it really was, as if you were saying what you were saying and you knew, you really knew, not by what you knew but by what you felt, that everybody was listening. It is a very wonderful thing to do, I almost stopped and said it, I was so filled with it. And then it was over and I never had liked anything as I had liked it.[16]

In the beginning Stein was impressed by the large-scale immediacy and straightforwardness that radio could offer. Wilson describes it as the "ear-to-mouth-to-ear-to-mouth" experience that is "more complex and chaotic and more formally and intellectually promising" (268). In fact, Stein used the motif of seeing and hearing in an effort to believe especially in her war texts. However, Stein's fascination with the radio soon faded; its association with war propaganda led Stein to decide "it is quite natural that some hear more pleasantly with the eyes than with the ears" (Wars 90). While in France during World War Two, Stein would then be aware of the power and influence the person talking on the radio would have. As Wilson puts it, "[b]roadcasting fills Stein with the feeling of everybody—of everybody listening. Radio creates the everybody by creating the audience, a kind of community," (263) that would associate themselves with whatever and whomever they would hear.

However, war was about to alter this new potential that the radio had brought forward, adding to the general confusion of people and creating more uncertainty.

As Stein knew very well how influential radio was, she writes that having a radio at home was a sign of good nurture and education: she sarcastically adds "now in the twentieth century anybody can listen to the radio, in any language and everybody is civilized enough to do that" (Wars 62). Stein was aware of the power a person who would talk on the microphone had and how the message would be broadcasted in different parts of the world. As Stein mentions, there were no choices of getting informed during the Second World War; the newspapers and magazines were forbidden, while exchange of post cards was also banned. The audience could not respond or ask for clarifications, as they would probably do in postcards or letters, which was a two-directional way of communication. During war the radio was used as a kind of a psychological experiment that would guide the masses towards certain beliefs, spread terror and encourage false hopes or excessive fears. People had to believe everything happening with their ears and not with their eyes. The radio challenged people's perception and became a device that produced and controlled discourse. Stein stresses the lack of any other source of information when she explains:

> But a world war particularly this present one where everybody had to stay at home and could not even write letters to friends not most of the time, as some one said not long ago, any public figure can talk and talk all day long over the radio […] but […] we have to stay at home and not meet anybody. (64)

Yet in order to believe a fact, seeing it with one's eyes was more powerful than hearing it with one's ears; vision was more trustworthy. Wanda Van Dusen traces the importance of vision and hearing in Stein's work, when in the "Portrait of a National Fetish: Gertrude Stein's "Introduction to the Speeches of Maréchal Pétain"" (1942), she notes:

> In a culture in which vision more than hearing determines perception and representation, not listening to the mediated presentation of the war on the radio is easier than not looking at the unmediated sight of German airplanes. (85)

The reality of what one sees is undeniable as opposed to what one hears as Van Dusen argues, since in the case of the radio there is always a mediator that can be

misleading. In this way, Stein, by naming her work *Wars I Have Seen* and not *Wars I Have Heard* makes a statement from the beginning, granting, ironically, truthfulness to her words.

3.3 Mechanomorphic Bodies of War

As already explained, *Wars I Have Seen* elaborates on themes such as human incarceration and isolation during war and loss of individuality due to the war's ramifications in everyday life. In the first pages of the text, Stein represents German soldiers, as exhausted male bodies, seen as nothing more than a bunch of bodies inside a train penetrating the serene scenery of the French countryside. Stein narrates:

> This train that came along and kept moving and did not stop had on it tanks and trucks and seated anywhere were Germans all naked except a little trouser nothing on their heads and sitting there the train went on slowly and all the French people were as if they were at a theatre that was not interesting and the train went on slowly and then our train came in and I got on it with my white dog Basket and the French people were pleased, Basket was a real circus, he was a theatre that they found interesting and they were interested and they said so, and nobody had noticed the train full of Germans. (47)

The locomotive stops at the station and those unarmed, half-naked soldiers are almost invisible since people walking around are presented as apathetic towards their intrusion. The fact that the observers at the station find more interesting the presence of Stein's dog, Basket, than the soldiers can be interpreted as Stein's sarcastic statement about French people's need to remain indifferent towards the war. This attitude described by Stein is another ironic criticism of people's wish to remain neutral and not accept the fact that a war is happening literally next to them, because if they did then this would destroy the tranquility of their country just as the train did. The audience, as it were, does not participate in the act happening in front of them because they do not want to be part of it.

Similarly, in the final pages of the work Stein narrates another appearance of the soldiers that this time draws the attention of the passersby. The motorized German army that used to "travel on the trains" now appears as a group of "worn bodies,"

attracting the interest of Stein and her friends who were shocked by the way they looked. She narrates:

> These childish faces and the worn bodies and the tired feet and the shoulders of aged men [...] it was unbelievable, and about a hundred of them more on women's bicycles that they had evidently taken as they went along, it was unbelievable, the motorized army of Germany of 1940 being reduced to this. (66)

The common element of those two scenes is that the soldiers are described simply in terms of a number of bodies. Both scenes refer to the appearance of the soldiers not as the main event of the scene where everything is associated with this fact, but, on the contrary, the scenes of the soldiers are not as powerful as to distract people from their daily life. Stein sarcastically ridicules the appearance of the German army, even though the reality was much different from this. It can be said that although her work was criticized for being indifferent to war issues and for being a friend of Petain, instances like these in her work prove the contrary. *Wars I Have Seen* is an anti-war text and Stein repeatedly shows her aversion towards was through her sarcastic points and the unreal elements in the plot. Stein blames science and its influence for the disasters people were facing during WWII:

> Science was not interesting any longer, and evolution was so completely confined to the earth and the earth was all there, and so the nineteenth century is over, killed at last, by the twentieth century. (64)

The use of science not for humanity's benefit, but for war and mass destruction is the reason why Stein believes that humanity went a step back. Stein refers to the lost faith in the potential science could have brought to people's lives. She declares that the unreality that this war has caused in people's heads has turned time backwards:"[a]nd so the world is medieval just as medieval as it can be" (120). A similar warping of time is seen in the description of the soldiers, who started as young faces of fourteen to sixteen years old and returned as aged men with tired feet. As Stein mentions, the exhausted bodies of soldiers transferred on the train are treated as a spectacle by the public: "and all French people were as if they were at a theatre that was not interesting" (47): it can be said that the medieval practice of punishment in the public eye revived in the Second World War but as a mass and not as an individualized punishment. The idea of massiveness and the fact that everybody can be a prisoner in that war is criticized in Stein's work. After the train scene, Stein keeps on repeating

the word "prisoner" and constantly characterizes the period of WWII period as an inexplicable time:

> It is funny funny in the sense of strange and peculiar and unrealizable, the fact that so many are prisoners, prisoners, prisoners every where, and now Berard where we used to lunch is in prison, for black traffic, and an Alsatian and his wife and his son. (47)

In the abstract above, Stein combines the real event of war prisoners with the adjectives "funny" and "unrealizable" in an effort to transfer the sense she had of her life as a Jew living in Europe during WWII. It can be said that she shows how the threat of being captured and sent to death camps was literally "every where" and by not accepting this reality Stein would in a way be saved. The fact that the events of war were happening on a massive scale and applied to everyone - either to the ones who were prosecuted or the ones who protected them - is a point that connects everyday life with warfare.

Wars I Have Seen transcends every characteristic of a war genre especially in terms of theme and style and the two major scenes of the work regarding war soldiers are incorporated in the general descriptions rather than developed differently. The transition of the German army from a mighty force to a bunch of worn bodies can be traced throughout the work. Stein mentions a couple of times how technologically advanced the army of the Germans is but in a sarcastic tone throughout. For example, she notes that:

> Here where we see the trains pass, continuously the German army moves with all its automobiles but all of them on the train […] All of them on flat baggage cars with soldiers sitting around them and this must be a pleasure to every one. (66)

The dual symbolism of the train as the means of transferring people for pleasure and of taking victims to concentration camps can be rethought in the light of de Certeau's analysis of train travel as an "incarceration-vacation" experience. The use of the word incarceration in relation to the train alludes to war scenes and especially to locomotives used for transferring either soldiers to battlefields or civilians to concentration camps. By this, de Certeau draws attention to the dual meaning of the train image that is not just a means of transport for vacation but it incarcerates passengers who are "pigeonholed, numbered, and regulated in the grid of the railway car" (The Practice of Everyday Life 111). What de Certeau also does is to provide

two spatial dimensions; the inside of the train and the outside world that are only connected by the human sense of vision. In *Wars I Have Seen*, the train with the male bodies intrudes into the serene environment of the French countryside. The observers outside the train see the bodies of the soldiers confined, incarcerated and Stein ironically presents this incident as offering "pleasure" to the observers. What is supposed to be a description of one's experience from the war period, that is watching soldiers going to battle, is not described as an incident worth mentioning. On the contrary, Stein focuses on how war deprived people of the joy of travelling. Stein writes a lot about how she, like French people, enjoyed train travelling and what an important part of their everyday life it was until war broke out:

> The middle of March and it is as if it were almost likely to end some time, the winter and the war, the war and the winter. We like to take the train to Chambery, we always see something or somebody, everybody travels, the French people do like to go up and down on trains, and to stand and wait in stations, and there is so much of that. (157-158)

The specific text ironically meddles everyday life with war: firstly anticipating for the end of the winter and the end of the war, and secondly travelling by train. In the latter instance, Stein's use of the present tense to describe people going "up and down on trains" is a sharp sarcasm of people being forced on taking the trains heading to concentration camps. Stein intentionally reverses the use of the war motifs in the text and minimizes their loaded meaning not because she ignored the truth, but in order to maintain the level of unreality. In a war memoir, recalling events during the war period, she chooses to refer to previous states of life and especially to past habits of French people that war was not able to write off from their memory. In this way, the image of the train is repeated throughout the book and it works as an important motif that is used in different terms adding to the general comparison that Stein draws between life and war, past and present. The irony with which she elaborates on instances with German officers is provoking, even if we keep in mind the word play Stein establishes in her *Wars:*

> And we all talked and everybody gave advice and a German officer looked as if he wanted to join in but naturally nobody paid attention to him nobody ever does which makes them quite timid in a train. (117)

People ignoring German officers, not paying attention to them and treating them as an entertaining spectacle is an unreal war incident. Stein's words aim at the humiliation

of the Germans and it can be said that she proposes a form of resistance through her writing.

Similarly, Stein portrays scenes of people resisting the Germans by using the train in order to attack them. The train in this instance is not seen as a means of travelling but as a dangerous weapon the exploding of which would help the resistance forces. In this way, the pleasure that train travel offered had been replaced by the fear of explosion.

> Now in September 1943, they are blowing up the trains as they come through the tunnel, […] Well nobody just knows why they do it, but they do and the young people including the young girls want to do it too. (66)

The train is a strong image that is an example of technological advance that was transformed from a vehicle for pleasing the masses into a vehicle that was used to blow up places and to carry people to death camps. Stein, however, describes its existence in both cases, either, as seen previously, through its blowing-up or as a means of transport for her and Alice. The convergence of daily habits with the fear of death is made through the existence of technology, which is here represented by the mechanized body of trains.

At the time *Wars I Have Seen* was written, the theme of body and especially, the body of the soldiers can be traced in art. Until the end of World War II technological advancement had affected prosthetics and artificial body parts as much as one would expect. After the end of World War I, thousands of soldiers suffered serious physical wounds caused by new weapons that led to the increase of prosthetic bodies. The mechanomorphic bodies of the soldiers challenged artistic thought, and works by Dadaists, Futurists and Expressionists represent the general notion. Otto Dix's famous painting "The Skat Players" (1920) shows three German soldiers after the end of World War I playing cards.[17] The bodies of the soldiers seem almost monstrous with obvious amputation in various parts of their bodies. The prosthetic legs, jaws, ears, eyes, hands and noses do not distract them from playing cards, a habit much popular in war trenches that helped soldiers to reduce stress. At this point, a connection between these representations with Barnes's repulsive bodies should be addressed. The violated female bodies seen in *The Book of Repulsive Women* can be compared to the prosthetic limbs of the soldiers in modernist art. In both cases, it is the intervention of technology that adds to their appearance a monstrous or repulsive look, leading to the fragmentation of the body. In art, artists like George Grosz and

Gottfried Brockmann produced works that reflected both the physical and psychological effects of war on human existence: for example, Brockmann's "The Existence of a Cripple" (1922) and Grosz's "The Survivor" (1936) show how the theme of the mutilated and grotesque body in art was present during the interwar period.[18]

Stein's work resonates with art's tendency to conceptualise and to depict the human body. A close reading of *Wars I Have Seen* shows that the body is more than present; it is omnipresent from the beginning of the work. The vague terms of 'anybody' or 'everybody' constitute the general idea of 'everybodiness,' of a seemingly universal experience in which the person that acts does not matter; it is rather the fact that it could be 'anybody' or 'nobody' that is highlighted. Stein's 'everybodiness' can be seen as an alternative word for the massiveness that necessitated the redefinition of the individualized self. As it will be argued, the body works as a prosthetic part to the words already mentioned, and defines the meaning of these words; war has deprived people of their individuality and uniqueness, and anybody can be everybody. It should be noted that human life and existence was counted in numbers or codes (see concentration camps) in the same way that Stein exposes the lost individuality and the idea of everybody potentially being anybody and nobody.

The theme of 'everybodiness,' mass destruction and fear for the future of humanity after war, is also illustrated in Stein's last piece "Reflection on the Atom Bomb" published posthumously a few months after her death in July, 1946. Stein reveals what she skillfully avoids to talk about in *Wars I Have Seen* in her most openly expressed anti-war piece of writing:

> They asked me what I thought of the atomic bomb. I said I had not been able to take any interest in it.
>
> […]
>
> I never could take any interest in the atomic bomb, I just couldn't any more than in everybody's secret weapon. That it has to be secret makes it dull and meaningless. Sure it will destroy a lot and kill a lot, but it's the living that are interesting not the way of killing them, because if there were not a lot left living how could there be any interest in destruction. (3-4)

Stein as an influential thinker makes a political statement through the specific text and its intention is to find supporters to her clear anti-war viewpoint.[19] Again, Stein's not

expressing interest in the atomic bomb is understood as a way of avoiding the reality of its existence and the fear of the complete destruction it can bring. Why would, then, Stein be interested in the atomic bomb since she divinizes the quotidian and the simplicity of everyday matters? In *Wars I Have Seen*, Stein chooses to talk about "the living that are interesting," the daily life, the conversations and anything that would distract her from the reality of war that did not interest her at all. An atom bomb would only lead to nothing and the issue of having no-body and thus nothing left. Stein stresses on the absurdity of war and destruction in *Wars,* and claims that war and anti-war supporters coexist in an endless opposition:

> William James was of the strongest scientific influences that I had and he said he always said there is the will to live without the will to live there is destruction, but there is also the will to destroy, and the two like everything are in opposition. (63-64)

James's dual references can be seen in the majority of Stein's work, starting from her 'split personality' traits in her early work and traced in the opposing symbols of her war texts. "Reflection on the Atom Bomb" as much as her previous war/historical texts serves the purpose of showcasing this repeated pattern of life and death and in a Steinian way celebrating the ultimate gift of life, the quotidian and its triviality.[20]

3.4 Prosthetic Writing in *Wars I Have Seen*: Some-Bodies Becoming Any-Body

Within the context of the binaries of real and unreal, everyday life and wartime, the major imagery of the body is absent from Stein's war text. In a common work describing life during world wars, the theme of the body could not be omitted but it would rather be an integral part of the story's descriptions. Starting from memoirs such as Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms (1929),* Siegfried Sassoon's *Memories of an Infantry Officer* (1931) and Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth* (1933), world war texts had already formed an important and characteristic literary genre before the start of the Second World War. An indicative memoir of the specific genre written after the end of the WWII is Primo Levi's *If This Is a Man* (1947), which describes his arrest in Italy for being a Jew and his confinement in Auschwitz, showcasing a different fate than Stein's. The wounded bodies of the soldiers, the

mutilated or prosthetic parts of the wounded, tortured bodies or killed bodies of civilians are a real part of war life that are present in the works mentioned above. Especially in the case of WWII, the body is an important symbol and reality as seen in the confined bodies inside the trains, either of soldiers heading to war fields or of captives heading to concentration camps, or the tortured and dead bodies in the streets or in death camps. Especially as a Jew, it would have been extremely painful for her to write about this theme and the body image in her text is limited in brief descriptions as the "not armored and seated…naked" bodies of soldiers seen in a train station. (Wars 47) The fact that Stein does not devote major parts in the description of bodies but she rather makes short references, which are followed by trivial issues, can be explained again as her effort to reverse reality.

Although the body of war imagery is nowhere to be found in *Wars I Have Seen,* there is an innumerable use of the indefinite pronouns everybody, anybody, nobody and somebody. In this way the body image is present in almost every page of *Wars I Have Seen* and it is repeated in each page of the work in multiple ways. Therefore, I suggest that Stein is hiding the war symbol of the body in the excessive use of -body pronouns as a way to adjust its loaded meaning in the baffling real/unreal context of the work. This means that everybody's or anybody's body can be seen in Stein's use of pronouns as for instance in the following lines:

> Yes everybody has had enough of it everybody's wife and everybody's husband and everybody's mother and everybody's father and everybody's daughter and everybody's son, they all have had enough of it. (78)

The bodies of mothers, fathers, daughters and sons who have experienced the cruelties of war, are all exhausted. It is every-body that suffers from this war and it is for every-body that Stein writes about in *Wars I Have Seen.* The heroes and the victims of Stein's story are nameless, they are just bodies that either were killed, tortured or have survived from war, bodies found or bodies missing, whose identity is a trivial matter. In various instances Stein emphasizes calling people by their family characteristic or by their profession rather than by their name: the neighbour, the father, the widow, the soldier, the husband, the farmer, the workmen ("one of our neighbours whose son was finally killed in trying to run away" 149).

Wars I Have Seen is an instance of Stein's linguistic experimentation and if the body as suffix stands for everybody's body, then the prefixes any-, no-, every- and some- can be considered as prosthetic parts to it. The repetitive pattern of pronoun

wordplay is an integral part to the story's development and Stein as a "linguistic surgeon" transfigures the organic human body into a suffix that is accompanied by prosthetic parts or prefixes, such as, no-, any- and every- objectifying, thereby, the image of the body. There is an emphasis on the absent body or on the body that does not exist, that is the missing body, a term that I use to explain Stein's denial to make clear references to its existence in her detailed descriptions of everyday life. An example of this can be seen in the following instance, where Stein's repetition of the word no- and its negative connotations exist in her description regarding the amount of food that people consumed:

> So nobody does, nobody does except funnily enough some timid grocery storekeepers, who are afraid. […]
>
> Nobody else is, nobody else is thin and nobody else continues to get thinner, nobody not unless they are awfully poor and because of their situation in life unable to work. Nobody. (106)

The thin body or a body that gets extremely thin is an image that directly alludes to the starving bodies of concentration camps and Stein's repetition of no-body invites many interpretations. Stein's prosthesis of 'no' to the body can be understood as death to the body and its association with food or with its shortage is again another way to confuse her readers with her ambiguous writing. Stein's metaphorical use of the body as a suffix turns *Wars I Have Seen* into a characteristic example of prosthetic modernism.

Tim Armstrong in "Prosthetic Modernism" explains how technology offered more corporeality to the human body and how technological developments were targeted at extending human potentiality. He reviews the people's need to extend their abilities in modernity and argues that inventions such as the telephone, the typewriter and film enhanced human senses. By this, he speculates on modernist ideas that reflected technological achievements as tools and integral parts of the human body. Armstrong draws on Gerald Stanley Lee's essays on the modern technological world in order to illustrate the modernist view on technology:[21]

> Machines 'have become the subconscious body, the abysmal, semi-infinite body of the man'. The genius extends himself through machinery, living in a 'transfigured or lighted-up body'. 'The poet', he continues, 'transmutes his subconscious or machine body into words; and the artist, into colour or into sound or into carved stone. (83)

Through the use of the typewriter and the printing presses, the words that come from the writer's subconscious become 'mechanised' through the technological devices that add a mechanomorphic element to the final result of the work. The writing and printing devices are used as tools that not only facilitate the writing process but also extend human potential. In Stein's work, mechanomorphism can be traced in the body of the text itself as I explained in the chapter on *Dr. Faustus* and in the words as prosthetic parts as I suggest in *Wars I Have Seen.* Armstrong traces mechanomorphism in literary modernism and he makes reference to Pound's fascination with prosthetic thought.[22] Armstrong fleshes out Pound's view on the role of the writer as it is explained in "The Serious Artist", where Pound points out that "literature is a science seeking 'precision', and the writer a scientist, physician, or surgeon" (89). In "Prosthetic Modernism" Armstrong also makes reference to the influence of de Gourmont on Pound regarding the process of creating poetry. He thus explains that de Gourmont taught Pound "that a poem was a bodily event and style a physiological as well as a poetic construct" (90). Pound's fascination for prosthetic thought applies perfectly to Stein's writing practice of prosthetic words. Stein uses the words as prosthetic parts, as seen in the case of the pronouns anybody / everybody / nobody and with surgical 'precision' she creates a prosthetic modernist text; that is *Wars I Have Seen.* In the latter text*,* the words as prosthetic parts acquire a negative dynamic due to their association with war, a fact that Armstrong analyses. In *Wars I Have Seen,* prosthesis in Stein's writing incorporates the negative connotations of war and of fragmented body as its repercussions.

Tim Armstrong in *Modernism, Technology and the Body* addresses the tendency in modernism to produce texts that have a writing style that he describes as "cinematic" and "telegraphic" (87). He also notes that this tendency started from the machine age "[i]t is in a technology of *writing,* in performative criteria, that the machine age best expresses itself (Lewis's late work was to achieve a close textual alignment with radio)" (87). Like Wyndham Lewis, Stein "achieves a close textual alignment" with war by using artificial word-body parts to express her interpretation of the relationship between man and machine. The body as a suffix in the work forms different war zones within the text bringing human existence in the foreground. Tim Armstrong also stresses how, "[m]odernist movements celebrated the mechanized body or the body attached to the machine: the fast cars and aeroplanes of the futurists or the man-machine complex" (86). The body and the intrusion of technology are a

favourite theme for Futurists who "saw the body as constantly extending" adding to it a mechanical aspect that would enhance human abilities (90).

As those tendencies were developing in art, before WWII, Stein met Bob Carlton Brown, an American writer, editor and publisher who settled in France from 1929-1933.[23] Bob Brown is named by Craig Saper the "Marcel Duchamp of reading" since he claims that his work *The Readies* did "for reading what Pablo Picasso did for painting, or what Joyce, Stein, and Cummings had done for writing" (158). *The Readies* (1930) were texts created by modernist writers and poets, which would be used in Brown's reading machine. As Jessica Pressman puts it, *The Readies* "display modernist writers imagining how literary technologies transform literature" (781). A speed-reading machine would transform the experience of reading a book and would challenge the readers' perception at the time of cinema's emergence. Brown in his *Readies* explains the source of inspiration for his reading machine; that is "The Wall Street ticker," which is "a reading machine" (166). Brown explains the reading experience of Wall Street's signs:

> We read the tape. Is passed before our eyes jerkily, but in a continuous line. Endlessly, at and speed jerk, jerk, jerk, when the Market's pulse was fast; click, click, click when it was slow. (166)

The Wall Street's signs and their impact on Brown's perception, brings to mind Stein's reaction towards Broadway lights and signs indicating that she had arrived in the USA, as she describes in *Everybody's Autobiography.* Brown approached Stein and asked her to write for his collection *The Readies,* which included works of many more writers like Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams and Filippo Marinetti. Stein was impressed by Brown's project: she called it "a study in movement" and she expressed her support to his ambitious plans.[24] Brown offered to modernist writers the chance to innovate and to extend the potential of their writing practices by incorporating technology in literary stylistics. Pressman refers to Brown's "Readies" as "experiments in techno-poetics," (780) which explains the general tendency in modernist literature regarding technology. The terms "techno-poetics" and "prosthetic writing" illustrate the modernists' need to transcend their work and adjust it in the new technological era, where watching films was more and more attracting the people's interest as opposed to reading books. Michael North explains that Brown was not the first to address the writers' need to follow the speed and movement of technology. This can be reflected in the works published in the journal *Transition*,

especially during the years 1927-1933, when as North points out, it became "a kind of logocinema" and "a hybrid object" (207). Man Ray and Eugene Jolas work incorporated this aesthetic in their work and embraced "this tendency for ink to become cinema, for "machine words" to become moving images" (208).

Wars I Have Seen and Stein's prosthetic word-parts share the same aesthetic as Jolas's "machine words" that are formed with the intervention of technology in the writing practice. Brown's meeting with Stein at a time when her interest in history and technology was intense made it impossible for her not to cooperate in a revolutionary literary project. Brown had already expressed his admiration towards Stein's work, which he recognized as a major influence on his moving-word project. As Brown mentions in his *Readies*, in order to make his project possible he got inspiration through reading "Gertrude Stein and tape tickers on Wall Street" (160). Stein's acceptance and support facilitated his recognition among the avant-garde circles that believed in the convergence of technology with writing. She actually wrote the essay "Absolutely Bob Brown, or Bobbed Brown" to accept his invitation to write a piece for *The Readies.* Stein's participated in the collection with her "readie" entitled as "We came. A History." In *Gertrude Stein: The Language That Rises: 1923-1943*, Ulla E. Dydo mentions that Stein was "already thinking about history and movement when she was asked for this contribution" (433) and that she had probably already written the first part, before she was asked from Brown for her participation. The title of her work explains her preoccupation with the theme of history, which was more than present in her writing during the war years. Stein adjusted her work to the telegraphic style that Brown suggested and excluded words that were not necessary to the general understanding of the text. She used short sentences that were abruptly cut by the excessive use of periods and equal signs:

> How do you like what you have heard.= History must be distinguished = From mistakes.= History must not be what is = Happening.= History must not be about = Dogs and balls in all = The meaning of those = Words history must be = Something unusual and = Nevertheless famous and = Successful. (Readies 100)

The visual signs are important elements of the text's structure, and add a telegraphic aesthetic: Stein uses them in order to adjust the words to the speed of a reading machine. The speed of the machine intervenes to the text's form and mechanizes the

words by separating them with signs. By reading "We Came. A History," one visualizes the final effect of these signs to its projection to Brown's machine.

In parallel with the creation of *The Readies* texts Brown opted to create the device, the reading machine that would project texts that people would be able to read in a microfilm by controlling the speed of the moving text. Brown's vision was to modernise literature and compete with the emergence of cinema by offering to the readers a modern experience with the help of technology. This project, although very innovative and promising, was never completed and Brown's vision was actualized many decades later with the creation of e-books and e-readers.[25] A year after *The Readies,* Bob Brown published *Words* (1931)*,* an avant-garde work that combined visual with conceptual writing. As Armstrong explains, Brown in *Words* portrays himself as a linguistic surgeon, recalling the original link between prosthesis and grammar:"

> Operating on words – gilding and gelding them
> In a rather special laboratory equipped with
> Micro and with scope – I anaesthetize. (88)

Exemplifying how prosthetics percolated into the stylistics of the avant-garde, Brown's writing stressed the writer's operation on the text's body by the addition and removal of parts. The writer's intervention on the words with the help of technology mechanized them and offered new interpretations. Stein's writing is very close to what Brown refers to as "operation" on words, a technique that Stein never stopped using as it is seen in her known word plays.

> Stein breaks sentences into pieces, often not grammatical phrases, such as she had begun to explore in 1930-1931, the "readies." Isolated, they slow down the movement, shift stresses, multiply syntactical patterns, and do away with linear continuity, until they turn the meaning of every group of words to doubt. **(**Dydo and Rice 458)

Using ambiguous meaning in the words or using compound words with loaded meaning is typical of Stein and this explains her interest on the "readies" project. Stein's repetition of the indefinite pronouns in *Wars I Have Seen* can be associated with Brown's linguistic experiments, which constitute an interesting precedent to the idea of linguistic prosthesis in Stein's text. David M. Earle analyses Brown's interest in experimentation with words since for him words "become objectified, commodified," (120) and making them controllable by the author who will play with

their different meanings. As Earle adds, "[t]he economics of writing not only gave Brown an appreciation of the physicality of words, but an ability to separate them from their aura, to see them as type and object" (120). Earle here, refers to Brown's insistence to get rid of words that he thought were of no importance in a text, such as prepositions, a technique that was practiced thoroughly in his "readies." Although his project was never completed, undoubtedly Brown's work made a great impact of modernist thought and paved the way for the creation of a new literary genre. As far as Stein's work is concerned, prosthesis in writing offered new perspectives to her work that proposed a new technology of writing. Like Brown, Stein objectified the words and offered two-fold meanings that applied to both autobiographical and historical events. When looking for war motifs in Stein's account on her daily life in France, it becomes apparent that there should be a decoding of the words' hidden meanings. Apart from the reasons that were already explained in this chapter, it seems that Stein developed this second level of interpretation of her work in order to protect it and hence her life during war. In this sense, Stein's operation on the words of the war memoir was carefully made so that the second level of meaning could be incorporated in the text. In order to realize this word-experiment, Stein embodied the prosthetic war body in the imagery of the missing body or the body of anyone and implicitly presented the body prosthesis in the word-prosthesis. By doing so, Stein managed to create her own radical literary project and *Wars I Have Seen* can be considered as a representative work of prosthetic modernism.

Notes

[1] *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* was published in 1933 and *Everybody's Autobiography* in 1937.

[2] Malcolm cites a comment that was sent to *The New Yorker* accusing Stein's attitude in *Wars I Have Seen*: "In July, 2003, a few weeks after this magazine published an article about Stein and Toklas's experiences in wartime France, an accusatory letter appeared in its letters column. The letter cited the infamous Gestapo raid on an orphanage in the village of Izieu in which forty-four Jewish children between the ages of four and seventeen and their seven supervisors were seized and ultimately shipped to death camps." (online source, no page provided)

[3] See Janet Malcolm, "Strangers in Paradise" *The New Yorker*, n. pag.

[4] Djuna Barnes, "Matron's Primer" Rev. of *Wars I Have Seen*, by Gertrude Stein, *Contemporary Jewish Record* (June 1945). Rpt. in *the Critical Response to Gertrude Stein.* Ed. Kirk Curnutt (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2000) 136-38.

[5] Barnes had left France before the Second World War broke out. Before going back to New York, she spent a few years in London with the financial support of Peggy Guggenheim. In 1939, due to her personal and family troubles she attempted to commit suicide.

[6] It is quoted in Andrew Field, *Djuna: The Formidable Miss Barnes.*

[7] As Emily Greenhouse writes in "Gertrude Stein and Vichy: The Overlooked History" published in *The New Yorker* "Stein was never prosecuted for her collaboration with the Vichy government, and her pro-Fascist ideology is often forgotten by those who hail her as a daring cultural progressive" (May, 2012).

[8] As noted in M. Lynn Weiss book "Gertrude Stein and Richard Wright: The Poetics and Politics of Modernism," William Rogers was a "GI Gertrude and Alice adopted during World War I who later became instrumental in their decision to make the trip back to the States" (65). A photograph of him was taken by Carl Van Vechten and was included among others in *Everybody's Autobiography.*

[9] It is quoted in Hobhouse, Janet. *Everybody Who Was Anybody:* A Biography of Gertrude Stein.

[10] Margaret Wise Brown, author of the well-known book "Good Night Moon" sent letters to many writers like Stein, John Steinbeck and Ernest Hemingway in 1938 in order to do a children's book. Stein replied immediately "Yes, I would love to write a children's book – in fact I've almost finished it already."

[11] Stein also published two more children's books, *The Gertrude Stein First Reader* (1941) and *Three Plays* (1943).

[12] This quote is from Neil Schmitz's book *Of Huck and Alice: Humorous Writing in American Literature.*

[13] See for more information "The Letters of Gertrude Stein & Thornton Wilder" (309) note 2 of the correspondence from Stein to Wilder on 21 September 1942.

[14] The *New York Herald Tribune* published the article on 2 September 1944. More articles followed commemorating this event, such as "The Liberation of Gertrude Stein" in *Life* (1 October 1944).

[15] For more information regarding the mission to "liberate" Stein, see The Letters of Gertrude Stein & Thornton Wilder" (314) note 1 of the letter sent by Isabel Wilder (8 September 1944).

[16] "I Came and Here I Am," the article was published in *Cosmopolitan* February 1936. n. pag.

[17] According to Tim Armstrong Dix's "The Skat Players" is an "extreme version…which led him to have bodies and entrails brought to him from a hospital" (96).

[18] Trauma of war is a major topic in Weimar Germany artists like Brockmann and Grosz and of course Otto Dix.

[19] Brenda Wineapple in "The Politics of Politics; or, How the Atomic Bomb Didn't Interest Gertrude Stein and Emily Dickinson" explains that Stein expresses her opinion towards politics in this text, which was the same with many other modernists.

[20] This pattern is also seen in her *Tender Buttons,* which consists of poems emphasising the mundane.

[21] Armstrong refers to Gerald Stanley Lee's essays "The Voice of the Machine (1906) and Crowds (1913).

[22] On Pound and prosthesis, see Armstrong 89-90.

[23] Brown was part of the expatriate literary community in Paris and published many works of poetry.

[24] See *Gertrude Stein: The Language That Rises: 1923-1934*, eds. Ulla E. Dydo and William Rice.

[25] Source from http://socialarchive.iath.virginia.edu/xtf/view?docId=brown-bob-1886-1959-cr.xml.

4. A BODY WITHIN A BODY: *THE ANTIPHON* AS DJUNA BARNES'S BODY

4.1 Reconfigurations of an Abused Body

"May God protect us! I wonder what you'll write / When I am dead and gone" (182) Augusta says to Miranda in *The Antiphon* (1958), Barnes's last major work.[1] The mother's words reflect Barnes's turbulent relationship with her family, which is thoroughly depicted in *The Antiphon*, a verse play full of autobiographical elements and recurrent themes from Barnes's earlier works. It took almost twenty years for Djuna Barnes to complete her verse tragedy *The Antiphon,* a work that she started writing in 1937 and was published in 1958, three years after her mother's death making Augusta's prophetic words true. Isolated from everyone in her last residence in Greenwich Village since her return from Paris in 1939, Barnes experienced many personal struggles.[2] In the 1950s, the pre-war image of Barnes as a journalist and observer of New York was turned into that of a fragile and anti-social being, forgotten by most of her friends. As it is mentioned in Herring's biography, when Barnes started writing *The Antiphon,* she was so engrossed in writing her revenge drama in isolation that she was not aware of the general fear of the upcoming war. Her surprise is understood in her letter to Emily Coleman (4 October 1938): "I'm such a fool never to read a paper, either Peggy or Marian Bouché, I forget which, told me there was a war scare! I had no notion of it until then!" (*The Life and Work* 243). In the following years, Barnes devoted her everyday life to the drafting and redrafting of *The Antiphon* until its publication in 1958. This chapter aims at exploring the interconnection of Barnes's violated body with her autobiographical textual body of *The Antiphon*. This correlation is accomplished through Barnes's metatheatrical devices that create a second play within a play. The tragedy's final curtain symbolizes the end of Miranda's life and Barnes's writing career, since *The Antiphon* is her swan song.

Although *The Antiphon* evidences a rather outdated writing style, it entails characteristics, which were common in many modern theatrical works. The unfolding of the story's plot in a single day brings to mind Eugene O' Neill's *A Long Day's Journey into Night* (1956), the family theme reminds of T. S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion* (1939) and the tragicomic events are similar to Samuel Beckett's writing.

Barnes was associated with all the above-mentioned writers in different ways; first of all, she met with O' Neill in the beginning of her writing career, in Greenwich Village, when they both were writers of the Provincetown players. Barnes did not produce as many theatrical pieces as O' Neill did, however in terms of experimental writing style, Herring points out that "Barnes's work – rife with allusions to rape, incest, and child abuse – makes O'Neill's devastating drama seem like a comedy by contrast" (308).[3] In the case of *The Antiphon,* Barnes's childhood struggles are explicitly unfolding before the eyes of the readers/viewers through the characters of the Hobbs family: the mother Augusta, the daughter Miranda, the sons Jack (Jeremy), Elisha and Dudley. *The Antiphon* stands for the ultimate confrontation of Miranda (Barnes) with her mother Augusta, anticipated from the beginning and concluded with their death in the final scene of the play. Throughout her writing oeuvre, Barnes like Stein remained faithful in repeating favourite motifs and themes such as the body, the gaze, and its interconnection with personal experience. It can be said that her first poem collection, *The Book of Repulsive Women*, shares many common characteristics with *The Antiphon.* The theme of the observer and the observed returns in Barnes's verse play, since the audience witnesses the death of the two women onstage. In the same way that the elevated train, as explained in chapter one, intrudes in the close by apartments of New York and captures images of women in various instances, in *The Antiphon* Barnes allows the observers to get inside the private space of the protagonists. That is, the ancestral home of the Hobbs family, Burley Hall in the town of Beewick, England.[4] A second common theme of the two works is the notion of "repulsiveness" as Barnes addresses and interprets it through the biased perspective of society. This 'disgraceful' existence of the female figures in *The Book of Repulsive Women* living outside the norm could be associated with Miranda Hobbs. The only daughter of the family is accused by her mother and brothers of her choices in life beginning with the fact that she became an actor and culminating with her distancing herself from her family (Dudley "Gosling, on the loose" 66). In both works, Barnes prepares her readers for a grand finale, which in *The Book of Repulsive Women* is achieved through the decaying imagery and, in *The Antiphon*, through the protagonists' words from the beginning of the play. For instance, in Act One Jack mentions, "It smells of hunting, like a widow's death" (9) and in Act Two Augusta wonders "Or could it be there's funeral in air?" (55). The tragic end in both cases includes the death of two women, whose bodies are tortured and violated. In the first

work, the dead bodies are "bruised" (23) and "shock abbreviated" (24) and in the latter Augusta hits Miranda with the curfew bell and they fall together dead "pulling down the curtains" (201). Having her poem collection in mind, for which Barnes drew inspiration from her journalism, it can be said that Barnes as Miranda becomes a "repulsive" body in a sarcastic sense.[5] Again, here the "repulsiveness" refers to how others view the bodies and specifically in *The Antiphon,* how the family treated Barnes. In both texts, the deaths are orchestrated by external factors; in *The Book of Repulsive Women* the meaning of the poem's title "Suicide" is questioned, while in *The Antiphon* the mother-daughter confrontation is clearly prepared by Miranda's brothers, who disappear just before the women's death.

A number of points of contact can be established between Stein's personal memoir *Wars I Have Seen* and Barnes's revengeful family drama. The plot of *The Antiphon* takes place in 1939 in an English town and war is suggested in the depiction of the setting. In the beginning of the play, the description of the scene before the actors appear on stage in Act One refer to the view seen from the Burley Hall: "through the tumbled wall, country can be seen, and part of a ruined colonnade" (7). The setting adds a decadent tone from the start and predisposes the readers to what follows next. In another instance, Miranda's uncle, Burley explains to Jack how the town has changed and that strangers wander around the house, as he exclaims "Since the war, this has been a refuge / For every person out of keys" (25). Although Stein manages to disguise the presence of war in *Wars I Have Seen* through her descriptions of the quotidian, Barnes intentionally uses the loaded meaning of war in the play so as to increase the tension in the plot. The Hobbs' family war coincides with WWII and Barnes even dares to use the word "holocaust" in the dialogue between Augusta and Miranda in Act 3: "Fie! I say, upon the whole of love's debris; / That horrid holocaust that is the price / Of passion's seizure" (179). Augusta describes as "holocaust" the struggles of the family, referring to "love's debris" and "passion's seizure" alluding to the disturbing sexual past of Barnes's family. Similarly, Louise DeSalvo compares Titus with Hitler and she explains: "the wall around Hobbs Ark is nothing more, nothing less than the picket fence or the privet hedge that delineates the boundary of the household in which the father as fascist reigns supreme" (To Make Her Mutton 311). DeSalvo also characterises Augusta as a "Hitlerian mother" who enjoys watching her daughter suffer, "who wants her to die, who kills her" (248). DeSalvo's interpretation of the characters from a WWII perspective supports the idea that *The*

Antiphon embodies the theme of war but in a non-direct way. It is not through everyday life as Stein did in *Wars I Have Seen,* but through Barnes's personal struggles, which she compares them to the monstrosities that happened during WWII. Another instance regarding war is when Augusta, while talking to her brother, ironically wonders: "Jonathan, how do you understand it/No son of mine has been so favored/That he died in war?" (82). The irony here lies on the fact that by the end of the day, her daughter will be the victim of their family war and of course Augusta. Barnes's revengeful intention to expose the family's secrets is more than obvious and she achieves this by doing what she knows best. It is through writing that Barnes expresses her thoughts in an unstoppable manner as if a catharsis would then follow. This point is a common characteristic that Barnes shared with Stein, since the latter used her writing in anticipation of the war's end, as I explained in the previous chapter. However, Barnes's aggressive and confessional tone comes in sharp contrast with what Stein does in *Wars I have Seen*, where she creates a parallel world to escape from the nightmare of war, while Barnes intends to re-live the painful moments. In this sense, DeSalvo suggests that Barnes "had written the unspeakable. Her work made her readers uncomfortable. They would rather pretend these events could not exist" (Conceived with Malice 265). Moving DeSalvo's points a bit further, I would suggest that Barnes's revelation of her rape -her personal 'holocaust'- set in counterpoint to Stein's avoiding to talk about the 'unspeakable' events of war. The element of pretending that DeSalvo addresses is reversed in Stein's case, since it is the writer who pretends that the events never happened, to the readers' surprise.[6]

As it is the case with Stein's writing, the autobiographical issue in Barnes's work is a main point of reference in most of her works. Stein and Barnes share the same artistic need to incorporate their own experiences in their texts. However, it is unclear whether they turn to their personal issues for inspiration or in order to externalize their private life. Barnes's writing can be described as confessional due to her intense use of acerbic expressions and words in order to expose people and private moments. When reviewing Barnes work, it becomes apparent that her stories are always closely connected with certain autobiographical facts. In the case of *The Book of Repulsive Women* (1915)*,* Barnes is inspired by her journalist's wanderings around New York, and her active involvement in the stunts make her writing determinedly though covertly personal. In the same sense, Barnes wrote two of her best-known works, *Ladies Almanack* (1928) and *Nightwood* (1936) in order to portray her personal

affairs. Nonetheless, it is first in *Ryder* (1928) and then in *The Antiphon* (1958) that her readers became aware of her complex childhood and family conflicts. Barnes's life, actually, shapes the themes of her stories and her confessional tone justifies her efforts to destroy some of her works (for instance she tried to burn all the copies of *The Book of Repulsive Women*) or her disapproval of reprinting new editions.

Ryder, Barnes's first novel narrates the story of the Ryder family and their engagement with polygamy, sexuality and personal relationships. Barnes's novel was a first effort to speak openly about her troubled family past and possibly prepare her readers for a future more explicit work. In *Ryder* there is a first reference to a rape scene that was excluded from *The Antiphon's* last revision, which describes the act. Barnes's family drama follows the structure of a typical Greek tragedy and it can be said that that the concepts of *mimesis* and *catharsis* serve Barnes's personal need for confession and cleansing. It is in 1937 that Barnes confessed to her friend Emily Coleman that she had been a victim of family abuse and *The Antiphon* was the text that would bring this secret to the surface. More specifically, in the fourth version of the story, Barnes through Dudley's words reveals details of how her father tried to rape her; when in the name of his religious beliefs, Titus tried but did not manage to rape his daughter due to her resisting, he hanged her instead from a hay-hook in the barn and sold her to a man many years older than her:

> DUDLEY. She's knocked into the stubborn ever since
> The hour she drove between our father and the gate,
> Where he tried to make her mutton at sixteen –
> Initiated vestal to his "cause"!
> Self-anointed Titus, Little Corporal,
> Horn mad after false gods; madder still
> For her wild teeth and even wilder kicking.
> And having failed that, what he did then?
> Hauled her in an hay-hook to the barn;
> Left her dangling; while in the field below
> He offered to exchange her for a goat
> With that old farm-hand, Jacobsen.[7]

The detailed hay-hook scene is absent from the fifth and final draft of *The Antiphon*, as part of the general cuttings that T. S. Eliot suggested to Barnes, a fact that raised mixed feelings to critics who supported its importance for the coherence of the scene.

In the fifth draft, Barnes focuses on the mother's submissive reaction towards the fact that her daughter was sacrificed to her husband's perverse atrocities. In this draft, Barnes uses the character of Jack to describe the scene, who is actually Jeremy, the brother that was possibly present when this incident took place. Jack explains:

> JACK. You made yourself a *madam* by submission;
> With, no doubt, your apron over-head,
> And strewing salt all up and down the stairs
> To catch whose feet? Hers alone, or his,
> Walked that last mile? Miranda not yet seventeen.
> Thrown to a travelling Cockney thrice her age. (151)

In this instance, through Jack's words, Barnes directly attacks her mother's indifference towards her abuse, which in the play gains more attention rather than the father's act. In the case of *Ryder,* in chapter 5 "Rape and Repining!" Barnes starts by writing "Lock windows, bolt doors! / Fie! Whores" and moves on saying "Tis Rape, yea, Rape it is, and the Hay-shock left a-leaning!" (21). It is in *Ryder* that Barnes has also put the theme of her sexual abuse forward, but it is not until the publication of *The Antiphon* that the whole story is explained. It can be said that taking revenge was a work-in-progress that Barnes started in the beginning of her writing career and managed to complete in 1958 with the publication of *The Antiphon*.

The Antiphon is a work that Barnes wrote "with clenched teeth" as she had mentioned, since it was a revengeful act towards her family and especially her mother.[8] The whole play prepares the audience for the moment the mother and the daughter will encounter each other in a dramatic finale. Herring's and Field's biographies of Barnes's life have extensively explained the general environment of her childhood and her following years as a writer both in Greenwich Village and in Paris. The catastrophic mother-daughter relationship can be summarized in two lines performed by both; the first is Miranda's closing words of Act I "No, no, no, no, no no!," (53) when she realizes that Augusta also came to Burley Hall. The second instance are Augusta's final lines before she attacks Miranda with the curfew bell crying out "You are to blame, to blame, you are to blame" (201). Miranda did not wish to have a face-to-face meeting with her mother because she knew that Augusta would again blame her for whatever happened to their lives. It is the incest victim's need to "maintain her silence, to maintain her dignity," (To Make Her Mutton 301) as De Salvo explains, the reason why Miranda dreads her confrontation with the mother

because she did not protect her as a child, let alone now. To add to this, Miranda's fear of merchants, referring to the brothers, makes the audience suspect that also the brothers apparently molested her, a suspicion that becomes certainty when reading the second act. Although it becomes understood by the audience that the male characters of the story are to blame for violating the bodies of both mother and daughter, however, the women accuse each other.

The first theme that this chapter will elaborate on is the recurrent theme of the body's violation in *The Antiphon* to the extent that it becomes a repetitive motif; it brings in constant dialogue the story's plot with the autobiographical events and the fictional characters with the actual ones. What we understand form the play's plot is that the father and other family members, including the brothers, abused the body of the daughter in the past. Similarly, as the story unfolds, the fatal attack of the mother at the end of the play concludes the circle of the family's corporeal violence. It is impossible not to agree with Alex Goody, who notes that when the play ends the audience feels that justice was not done, since "the play does not offer a cathartic witnessing" (High and Aloof 359). It is also important to mention that Barnes does not discuss much the specific instances of the father violating the bodies of the mother and the brothers at least at the final draft of the work. She prefers to use the bodies of the characters as a medium to emphasize the theatricality of their actions, juxtaposing them with the setting of the play, which remains the same throughout the three acts. This point brings us to the second theme of this analysis, which is Barnes's use of metatheatrical devices. By doing this, she encourages the audience's participation by eliciting their reaction to what they witness as they watch the progression of the story. To this end, Barnes presents her characters as if they were aware that there is an audience watching and criticizing them. Augusta's request to Miranda "Listen to your brothers" (138) can be explained as her wish to put an end to the family's meeting by submitting to their inappropriate behavior, a fact that leads to the daughter's attack in the final act. De Salvo writes, "when a girl cries out for a mother's aid, the only response she can expect, the only antiphon she will ever receive, is betrayal" (Conceived with Malice 315). In Barnes's case, her bitter 'antiphon' to her mother's betrayal was made through writing her revengeful play, after her mother's death, which guaranteed her the final word, but not a closure. Both themes of violation and metadrama are correlated; the violated body of the female character merges with the violated body of text and Barnes employs metatheatrical techniques to showcase their

interconnection. The connection of violated bodies with metadrama is the theme of exploration in this chapter, which aims at proposing that the fragmented textual body of *The Antiphon* stands for Barnes's own abused body.

4.2 The Violation of *The Antiphon's* Textual Body

Starting with the theme of textual body and its violation, the completion of *The Antiphon* was a painful procedure for Barnes since her confessional writing had to be rewritten and cut after Eliot's corrections. A letter to him after she completed her fourth draft illustrates her distress and eagerness: "And Tom, do take mercy on the author who has been twenty months in a fairly gruesome state of tension" (286).[9] However, "Eliot did not take mercy" as Lynda Curry explains in her intriguing investigation of all five drafts of the work (286). As Curry remarks the major cuttings were done to the second act, in which the most important issues of rape, incest and the appearance of the dollhouse take shape. Curry belongs to *The Antiphon's* critics that are against Eliot's suggestions and disapproves of the three-hundred-line removal, because it cost the play's coherence. As she exclaims if Barnes had rejected Eliot's corrections, "the original *Antiphon* would emerge as the beautifully coherent and poignant tragedy that its author had envisioned" (298). Curry's research focuses on Act Two and more specifically on the hay-hook scene and its associations with the father's assaulting the daughter. In the fifth draft of the text, there is no clear reference to the act, in the same way as the brothers' reaction to it is not shown. She also explains that by erasing these lines, Augusta's reaction does not show any remorse or guilt due to her indifference (which was not the case in the earlier versions). In general, when reading the fifth version of *The Antiphon,* the reader gets limited information as far as the family's past is concerned, and it is through the reading of the previous drafts that those questions are answered. Barnes, however, trusted Eliot dearly and followed his instructions to the last. He believed that the readership and critics would not wish to read a long play with descriptive violent scenes, but rather that Barnes had to keep her "best poetry" (Curry 297). The play eventually consists of three acts; the first one is focused on the gathering of the Hobbs family at the family house in Beewick. Act Two is the longest one; the brothers' provocative behavior, Miranda's confrontation with the past and the mother's indifference pave the way for

the third and last act. At this stage of the story an escalating attack of the daughter on the mother unfolds, leading to the death of both and the revelation of Jack Blow.

Barnes's relationship with Eliot has attracted the interest of many critics, especially as far as his editing of *The Antiphon* is considered. Barnes admired Eliot's work and *The Antiphon* seems to have a style similar with Eliot's *The Wasteland,* sharing literary elements such as use of Latin phrases, allusions to Shakespearean writing and highly experimental poetic language. Like Eliot, Peggy Guggenheim believed in Barnes's work and the latter was the link for Barnes to meeting with Beckett, who respected her as a writer and honoured her by sending her part of his royalties for *Waiting for Godot*.[10] Barnes's isolation did not keep her away from the modernist circles mostly because of her well-connected friends like Guggenheim and Eliot, who never stopped supporting her both financially and psychologically. Barnes like Stein dreaded the fact that her work would be categorized under a certain label and by the end of her life she deterred many critics, editors, researchers and directors from looking at her work. There was only one staging of *The Antiphon* by Stockholm's Royal Dramatic Theatre, which was translated into Swedish by her friend Dag Hammarskjöld, and Barnes did not make it to the premiere. Her eccentric manner also discouraged few producers that tried to persuade her into turning her verse play into a film. Her peculiar character and her effort to remain private although she has overexposed her past life is a conscious choice. Barnes used writing as a medium for self-expression and she did not feel comfortable with her work being overexposed to others' criticism. Caselli's interpretation of Barnes's work as "anti-modern modernism" reflects, up to the point, her idiosyncrasy as a person and it is representative of her overall oeuvre starting from her pessimistic poems in *The Book of Repulsive Women* to the dark tragedy of *The Antiphon* (Improper Modernism 197).

It is ironic how violated the body of *The Antiphon's* text is, abused by the endless corrections made by T. S. Eliot in a series of years that Barnes faced a lot of difficulties both in her health and finances. Adding to this, Barnes's struggle to overcome and implement his cuttings on the original work can be described as a revival of her own abusive past. It must have been extremely hard for her to re-read and edit the most intense scenes of the play that reflected her personal experiences. T. S. Eliot's insistence on the second act and especially on the hay-hook scene forced Barnes to revise a scene that addresses the most painful experience of her childhood life; that is the father's attempt to rape her. Keeping in mind *The Antiphon*'s

confessional tone and the fact that Barnes planned its publication for years, the repeated drafting of the text invites a 'corporeal' interpretation. In other words, the body of *The Antiphon's* text and its violation is a literary embodiment of Barnes's own physical violations. In this way, Barnes's verse tragedy is not just an autobiographical text disguised in her dexterous writing style. *The Antiphon* is a text that gives voice to her thoughts and experiences her bodily abuse. The textual violation is made in two ways; the first refers to the repeated draftings of the text that took almost twenty years and the second to the appalling descriptions of the family's story of abuse. The autobiographical undertone of the work, the characters representing Barnes's family, the violent scenes in the play and the constant re-drafting lead to the conclusion that *The Antiphon* works as an extension of Barnes's body and mind. It is the body of Barnes that is exposed to the readers of the book and the audience of the play, via her voice, in other words, her response, her confession, her antiphon.

Even though Barnes's voice is loud and clear, nevertheless, she makes sure that her story is elaborated with her decadent and dark writing style. It should be mentioned that the first draft of *The Antiphon* had both comic and tragic scenes, similar to the wit seen in *Ladies Almanack*. It is only in the fourth draft, as Curry mentions that Barnes names her work "a tragedy in verse" (297). This resulted from Eliot's cuttings, which emphasized the lyrical parts of the play and due to its length the comic scenes were the first to be removed. It is no wonder why Barnes has been characterized as a "Neo-Elizabethan" writer, mostly because her writing style can be compared to texts of the English Renaissance. The revenge theme of *The Antiphon* is similar to the one found in Jacobean tragedies, such as *The Spanish Tragedy* (1587), where the protagonists' vengeance takes place in a play-within-a-play. Similarly, the literary techniques of the metatheatre, also traced in Shakespeare's texts, are included in the theme of *The Antiphon.* These techniques include the combination of comedy and tragedy, role-playing within a role and the use of the stage as a microcosm.[11] *The Antiphon's* intertextuality and resemblance to Jacobean tragedies is explained by Daniela Caselli in terms of the "revenger's motives" which in both cases are "obscure and misguided from the very beginning" (Improper Modernism 197). To add to these common traits with the English Renaissance, Barnes's choice of names for the characters of her verse play are of great importance. Titus Higby Hobbs of Salem, Augusta Burley Hobbs, Miranda, Dudley, Elisha and Jack Blow are names chosen carefully and bring

forward many interpretations. The violent and oppressive father Titus can be associated with Shakespeare's tragedy Titus Andronicus and the character of Jack Blow who calls himself a juggler alludes to the character Jack Juggler of La Commedia dell' Arte. Phillip Herring has traced the Shakespearean influence in *The Antiphon,* as seen through the characters of Miranda and Jack Blow. As he mentions, Miranda is also a character in *The Tempest,* while Jack resembles Edgar from *King Lear* "a Tom O' Bedlam type" as he calls him (265). In Andrew Field's account "the writers who gave her greatest pleasure at this time were Chaucer, followed by Proust, Brontë, Donne, Blake, and Dante referring to the years before Barnes started writing *The Antiphon* adds to the point of the works' intertextual influences (Djuna, the Life and Times 243). In the complex narrative of the work, the theme of anachronism can be traced in Barnes's writing and it can be said that *The Antiphon* is a prime example of anachronistic texts, since it combines older writing genres and styles. Jacobean tragedy, Shakespearean verse, experimental modernist play are some of the few categorisations of Barnes's text, and indeed has distinctive characteristics of the above genres, which combined with autobiographical elements contribute to the creation of a very complex work that "a misreading of [it] is not impossible" (5).[12] A misinterpretation is much possible because of the constant oscillation between a personal and an impersonal tone in the play. The autobiographical voice of the author is intermingled with the literary voicing of the personas and it is occasionally challenging to distinguish how the latter is associated with the first.

The Antiphon's story is developed in a single day of 1939, a memorable time for Barnes, since it was the year that she was sent back to New York to be hospitalized and never returned to Europe again.[13] Barnes was experiencing a time of distress, misery and poverty at that time; however, her stay in England gave her the opportunity to explore her ancestral town (her mother was from Beewick) that would become the setting of *The Antiphon.* She managed to leave England before the bombing of London, but in her verse play she makes reference to the background ruins that could be associated with the destruction that war left behind. Adding to this, the decaying surrounding of the family's house in the play also symbolizes the damaged family ties of both the Hobbs and the Barnes family. For the sake of intertextuality, when reading the play, it is quickly understood that the language and the appearance of the characters do not follow the trends of the time. The dialogues of the characters have archaic characteristics and the protagonists are dressed in

costumes of a different era. The language of Barnes's tragedy combines many different writing genres and is full of symbolisms, for instance, there are Latin words scattered throughout the play such as "Missae pro Defunctis (Mass for the Dead)," "lento lento (slow slow)," "vox humana (human voice)," and "non nobis (not to us)." The specific phrases are associated with psalms and music, alluding to the meaning of the word *antiphon*, which is "a psalm, anthem, or verse sung responsively" (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/antiphon). As quoted in *Djuna Barnes and Affective Modernism,* when Peggy Guggenheim asked Barnes for the meaning of the play's title, Barnes replied sarcastically: "You ask what the word ANTIPHON means. The Oxford Dictionary: Antiphon, n. Versicle, sentence, sung by one choir in response to another; prose or verse composition consisting of such passages" (37). As suggested by critics of *The Antiphon,* the confessional tone of the play and the autobiographical associations support the idea that the title's actual meaning is "the answer," what Barnes has to say about her past, expressing her mind through writing. The fact that she uses an archaic language to narrate a story, which takes place in 1939, can be seen as Barnes's choice not to write a direct autobiography, but a text that had common characteristics with her work so far. Susan F. Clark points out that "[b]y using formal (and sometimes archaic) language, sets redolent with symbolism and muted physical action, Barnes was able to express her deepest conflicts and fears while remaining safely within the boundaries of acceptability" (Misalliance 114). The reason why Barnes does not write a straightforward personal memoir, but rather prefers to elaborate her story with the literary techniques of a verse tragedy can be interpreted in various ways. One reason is that she has not deeply accepted her abuse as a fact and by re-telling her story she intends to accept it as a reality at the age of sixty. The most striking interpretation is related to the time when she began writing *The Antiphon;* suffering from health issues and addictions, having lost contact with most of her friends and feeling oppressed by her family, again. All these factors contributed to the fact that Barnes probably believed that her story would have more impact and time duration if it was written as a modern Jacobean tragedy that would stress on the issues of injustice and revenge.

4.3 A Drama Within A Drama: Barnes's Metatheatrical Devices

Barnes in an effort to masquerade both her personal drama (which she intentionally does in an unsuccessful manner) and the characters' past, she makes use of various metatheatrical devices. These devices serve the purpose of letting the audience know that a play-within-a-play is unfolding in front of their eyes. Throughout the play, Barnes's family story is hidden underneath the basic plot and the characters are presented as if they acted different roles within the play's story, creating parallel levels of action. The story's theatricality is enhanced by the character of Jack Blow, described as the coachman, who by the end of the play is understood to be Jeremy, Miranda's third brother. The family reunion of the Hobbs family is a set meeting by Jeremy, whose motives were the confrontation of the family's past and possibly the death of the two women. The element of disguise is very important and can be connected with the family's indifference for the incidents of incest and rape in the family that are exposed in their reunion. Miranda makes her appearance in Act One rather impressively:

> [W]earing an elegant but rusty costume, obviously of the theatre, a long cloak, buckled shoes and a dashing tricorne blowing with heron feathers. She favors her left side on a heavy heaved cane. (7)

Her dressing style shows that she chose to return to her family house in disguise, wishing not to be associated or even recognized, ironically exposing the hypocrisy of her childhood years. The hyperbolic outfit comes in sharp contrast with the ruined background and the setting of the prewar period. The mother, Augusta, also makes an impressive entrance to the scene in the Second Act:

> [D]ressed in the legal severity of long black; collared and cuffed in spotless linen, comes on from the colonnade, tapping the waving with the ferule of her umbrella, more for emphasis than caution. (54)

Miranda's and Augusta's appearance in the scene cannot go unnoticed, either due to the impressive costumes or the noise of the tapping cane and umbrella. Both of the women are not aware of each other's presence in the house and are intimidated by their forthcoming meeting. It seems that Jack Blow has directed carefully the family reunion, building a gradual eagerness regarding the final confrontation of the women with the rest family members. Jack Blow has also an outstanding appearance mostly because he is described at the characters' list as the "coachman," and because the rest of the family does not recognize him as Jeremy up to the moment Augusta and Miranda fall dead at the end of the play. He is a "bearded fellow, […], wearing a

patch, [...] high boots and a long coachman's coat" (8). When Miranda asks him who he really is, he does not give a clear answer: "[a]t the moment I haven't the faintest notion./As I was saying –" (21). Later, Jonathan Burley, Augusta's brother appears at the house and tries thoroughly to 'unmask' Jack, who seems to know everyone very well. However, he replies to Burley's constant questioning of his relationship with the family "call me Tom-o-Bedlam, Lantern Jack" (36) and when it's Augusta's turn to ask him, he replies "Plain Jack – juggler" (59). Also, when Burley tells him that he should be an actor, Jack replies, "I was, I am," (42) providing one more clue for his self in disguise. Since he is a coachman, he is presented to hold a whip and creel, which he occasionally swings it in several moments, an element that is connected with Elisha's words, Miranda's brother. When he accuses Augusta for her submission to the father's atrocities on the children and specifically Elisha himself, he claims: "Uh, held me, an infant, in your arms/While he lashed me with his carriage whip" (93). The theatricality of the characters within the play is also seen in Jack's phrase to Augusta, "stand-in for a final curtain," (75) which shows how well the encounter of the family members is orchestrated. The final curtain is the verbal fight of the women that ends in Augusta throwing the ringing bell on Miranda and together "fall across the gryphon, pulling down the curtains, gilt crown and all" (201). After having remembered and gone through the traumatic memories of their past, the mother will cause their death with their falling bodies on the setting of the scene, ironically taking down the curtains, symbolizing the end of their acting.

The final curtain has fallen and Miranda, as Jack claims, had already understood that this meeting had been set by her brothers in order to kill the women. Miranda, then, saw this encounter with the mother as her final chance to speak out and tell her everything she could not when she was younger. She accused her mother of not protecting her and of being negligent towards the children. Augusta not being able to handle the truth that she was avoiding all the previous years lost her temper and attacked the daughter, giving an end to their tragedy.

As opposed to the hyperbolic entrance of the other characters, Dudley and Elisha, Miranda's brothers appear and disappear in a mysterious way. In Act One, the two men appear "DUDLEY at the window, ELISHA on the gallery, unseen, but sensed by JACK" (23). Their ghostly presence in the play sets the mood for the re-enactment of the past, since the brothers are associated with Miranda's painful memories. The fact that Jack senses his brothers, although he does not see them, shows that he knew they

would arrive at any time since he had organized the event. Dudley and Elisha disappear when Burley appears and return after their uncle and brother leave the scene; this time "DUDLEY steps in through the window, ELISHA through the door" (29). They will disappear again and will show up in front of everyone just before Augusta comes to the scene, whose appearance will mark the beginning of the family's confrontation. Just before the end of the second act, and after Burley and Jack have left the scene, the two brothers wear animal masks "DUDLEY donning a pig's mask, ELISHA an ass's" and start humiliating both the mother and their sister, "as if the playthings would make them anonymous" (136). The two men play a game that will force the women to remember the painful past with the father of the family, the violent and dominant Titus Hobbs. Elisha violently pushes Miranda towards their mother, Dudley swings Jack's whip in front of them asking them to jump and dance fast. The violent acts towards the women have sexual implications and will gradually lead to Miranda's outburst towards the mother, who even at this point did not react against her sons' behavior.

"Then I'll tell you, this luggage that you mention, / Could it be, good sir, or could it not, / A beast-box, say, a doll's house, or an Ark?" (28). The existence of the ark of the Hobbs family is foreshadowed in Jack's words early in Act One, however, Jack himself will bring it onstage by the end of Act Two. Barnes calls it a beast-box, because it encloses the family's bestial past, a doll's house due to its size and the puppets that are placed within and an Ark as a reference to the father's to keep the family confined inside the walls of the house, in order to practice his religious rituals. In the miniature of the family's house Titus Hobbs appears as "a doll, a toy, a pawn" causing Augusta's rage calling him "A nothing" (145). Since, the dollhouse is a technique that Barnes chooses to insert in the play, thus creating a parallel level of action that also connects the past with the present, it works as a memory box, whose presence will force the family to confront their deepest fear, the father, in front of the audience's witnessing eyes. Julie Taylor stresses on the "antiphonic witnessing" that Barnes offers to the audience as a way of allowing for "an affective engagement with her play" (72). Barnes uses the dollhouse not only to force the mother into watching what was done to her, but also to make it public for the audience in a way that exposes Augusta's indifference about the daughter's sufferings. Augusta feeling the pressure of being accused by a stranger that Jack appears to be, being witnessed by "stray travellers," but most importantly being exposed to the play's audience, she

"throws herself over the doll's house, beating at it with both hands" and cries out "Get then off! Enough! Stop it! Away" (151-152). The intense dollhouse scene is the climax of the play, which concludes the second act and prepares the audience for the last duel of the mother with the daughter. Taylor points out "[t]he doll's house scene, where abuse is re-staged with puppets, is a classic piece of meta-theatre in the vein of early modern revenge tragedy" (52). Using the same terms, I will add to this statement that Barnes uses poetic verse as a mechanic meta-theatrical device in order to combine the autobiographical, the fictional and the meta-fictional elements of the play. The dollhouse placed on-stage creates a different spatial level, which projects the past and more specifically it reproduces past incidents. It can be said that this projection can be compared to a modern video projection that would be used in a play so to add a parallel narration of the past within the story's plot. Moreover, I would add that since Barnes wished to develop the story's plot in a day, this metatheatrical device extends the play's temporality. Because of its ability to extend the potentiality of the story's body, I would add that this device has mechanical, thus technological qualities. It works as a time machine that Barnes uses so the characters can travel back in time in order to provide the readers or the audience with the more details. In this aspect, it should be added that the hay-hook scene works as Barnes's testimony and *The Antiphon* as a jury trial of which verdict depends on the audience's decision.

Barnes's theatrical device of placing a miniature of a house that takes the characters back to the past within the house they are at present is a meta-theatrical practice that invites further research. When in Act II Jack re-enters the stage, after the sexual games of the two brothers towards the two women, he holds a covered object and leaves it on the table. He, then, removes the cover and the dollhouse is revealed before the characters of the play and the audience. "I give you Hobb's Ark, beast-box, doll's house," (144) Jack announces and the family's confrontation of the past becomes imminent. Elisha lifts Augusta and places her on the table, she opens the top of the miniature house and she starts picking up the dolls that hung inside it. Jack asks from Augusta to look through the windowpanes of the attic and tell them what she can see. "A bedroom, no bigger than my hand" replies Augusta, (148) which is possibly the one in which Miranda was raped. After Jack insists on her looking and describing, Augusta at first reacts but then she explains that she can see "The fighting shadow of the Devil and the Daughter" (150). The specific instance refers to Miranda's fighting off her father, who then grabbed her and hung her on the hay-hook and then her rape

is understood through Jack's lines. The role of Jack is completed with a verbal attack against Augusta calling her "a madam by submission" putting on her the blame for Miranda's misfortunes, by turning this dollhouse into "a babe's *bordel*" (151). According to Field's and Herring's biographies, it becomes apparent that Wald Barnes had incest relationships with all his children and he even forced them to witness participation in various sexual encounters that took place in their house in the name of his 'religion.' The symbol of the house not as a shelter but rather as a place of confinement and torture can be traced as a recurrent motif in Barnes work and life, too. As far as her work is concerned, in *The Book of Repulsive Women,* the apartments where the violated bodies of the women are seen are presented in a decaying state and seem to imprison the women inside. As a real person, Barnes never stopped changing houses until the very end of her life. Both when staying in New York but also during the Paris years, Barnes kept on changing residences. For instance, after her return from Europe she had various addresses including houses, asylums and the streets. She was first hospitalised in an asylum and after she came out she stayed at East Fifty-fourth Street with her mother. This led to her second stay at the asylum and then to her return again to the mother's apartment. Due to numerous quarrels, her mother threw her out of the house and as a result Djuna lived in the streets for five days. As DeSalvo notes Barnes "was transformed into one of the desperate street creatures she had written about many years ago in *The Book of Repulsive Women*" (Conceived with Malice 248). Then, with the financial help of her friends she moved to 5 Patchin Place in Greenwich Village where she lived until her death in 1982. Her family conflicts after she returned to New York enraged Barnes and she was determined to move on with the completion of her revenge play. An interesting point is that although she was in New York, she chooses to place her story back in England and at the same time the characters in the play look through the windowpanes at the family house in New York. Barnes with the help of the dollhouse attempts to create an onstage window to another time and place, which today could be done by a simple projection of a video on the background of stage. Barnes goes beyond her time and combines theatrical and cinematic perspectives in order to create a parallel act within the one that unfolds before the audience's eyes. Within the dollhouse, stringed puppets are hung representing the violated bodies of the characters, like Miranda's raped body "[d]ragging rape-blood behind her" (150). Since it is part of the past, in the miniature house, Titus and Augusta are blamed for orchestrating their children's lives, however,

this is not the case at Burley Hall's mansion. At the actual time of the play, the children control the strings of the mother's puppet as a way of bringing their parents' actions to justice. Barnes chooses to illustrate the rape of the daughter through the body of the puppet and not through the organic body of Miranda's character, a fact that Tyrus Miller addresses too. Miller, referring to Barnes early journalism, explains that Barnes like Beckett and Lewis uses the puppet, a "traditional image of automatism," in her work in order to maintain her satirical undertone in her writing "by enacting scenes of cruelty on bodies that can experience no pain" (127). Indeed, it can be said that causing pain to a lifeless body is Barnes's trick in order to lessen the sensation that such an act would stir in the readers' or the audience's reaction. On the other hand, it can be interpreted as Barnes's silent suffering, a torture where the victim does not respond or react, which comes in sharp contrast with the work itself that stands for Barnes's antiphonical response. However, using Miller's words, the puppets are typical images of "automatism," and this corporeal embodiment of the play's characters attracts further interpretation of the text and Barnes's choice of placing a dollhouse onstage.

The dollhouse as a technological device adds mechanical qualities to the puppets that embody the pain and corporal abuse of the actual characters they represent. This point together with the circus imagery especially in the characters' appearance and behavior can be associated to the mechanical circus of Alexander Calder. The American artist travelled from New York to Europe carrying his mechanical puppets in his luggage.[14] Being a close friend of Peggy Guggenheim and a member of her artistic circle makes it impossible that Barnes did not meet with him in one of their artistic salon gatherings. As a matter of fact, *The Antiphon* has many associations with his circus performance; adding to this, as seen from her early journalism, Barnes was intriguing by the burlesque and freak culture and aesthetics. Images and the aesthetics of circus performance can be traced in *The Antiphon* from the beginning of play. Meryl Altman notes, "Miranda and Jack enter almost in the manner of circus performers entering a ring," and especially Jack's eye-patch and whip add a burlesque tone (276). As the story develops, Jack presents himself as the "whipper-in," a kind of ringleader with the whip of a performance that can be compared to a circus show. Jack is the one who set the family meeting, controls the action and brings the tension between the rest characters. The constant reference to animals is also connected to his circus performance, in a way, taming the bestial-looking personas of Barnes and her

mother. In Act One, Jack prepares the arrival of Dudley and Elisha, in a way that can be described as an introduction of circus acts:

> JACK. Hurry! Hurry! This way for the toymen:
> This way, strutters, for the bearded lady;
> The human skeleton, the fussy dwarf,
> The fat girl with a planet in her lap;
> The swallower of swords whose hidden lunge
> Has not brought up his adversary yet! (24)

Jack paves the way for the entrance of the rest of the characters onstage and in a way sets the scene for the upcoming exposing of the Hobbs family in front of the 'ring's' eyes. A rather comic aspect in Barnes's tragic play, Jack's references to circus invite an approval or disapproval from the audience of what follows next. Barnes seeks the audience's active participation and she achieves that by the direct addressing of the characters to the viewers, as seen in Jack's case. With reference to Jack's appearance again, he brings his luggage with him and as the play proceeds, we learn that he carries inside the dollhouse. Jack carrying a portable circus that is set up on-stage before the audience is connecting point with Calder's performance. The burlesque aesthetic of the circus in *The Antiphon* goes back to Barnes's fascination with Coney Island and the freakish performances she witnessed there. Jack Blow is the ringmaster of the show, who orchestrates the procession of the characters in front of the eyes of the audience. In the same sense, the characters of the two women and the two brothers have animal and bestial characteristics and being controlled as string puppets, they perform various acts until the grand finale of the two women's deaths.

4.4 Barnes's Final Curtain: Putting an End to the Drama

The body of the text and Barnes's own body tie in with the help of two distinct characteristics of *The Antiphon.* The first is the spatiotemporal elements in the work and the second the plot's metatheatricality. These two themes are integral to the story and are the linking points that bring the textual violation in dialogue with the physical violation. The spatial interchange of the story between the USA and England is connected with Barnes's physical presence in these two places and temporality in the work is integrated as counting-down device to the last act. The motifs that Barnes

chooses to focus on motifs that are interconnected with the major axes of a play, which shape the body of the text: these are time, plot and the characters. A close reading of the text reveals the repetition of the three thematic motifs, first, time/clocks, second, games/play and third, masks/animals. The first repetitive motif shapes the time of the play, works as a time machine that travels to the past of the characters' life and countdowns their final confrontation and death. How plot is framed by time can be seen in the first lines of Act One, when Jack remarks, "It smells of hunting, like a widow's breath" (9). In this instance, temporality is hinted in the upcoming end that this hunting, or rather haunting, will bring. The character of Jack who has settled this family meeting explains from the beginning the reason of the family's reunion and thus the reason of writing this play; that is the attack towards the mother. Barnes through Jack's words describes the play as a "hunting," a term that she repeats in other instances. For example, again in Act One, Jack answers Miranda's question, "Where are we, indeed, that we are only here?" by saying, "Let us say that presently we haunt" (22). The irony here is that Jack representing Augusta's favourite son, Jeremy, is plotting against her, conducting a vicious hunting. The theme of time and temporality is present from the beginning of the play, constantly reminding the passing of time leading to the dramatic end; a countdown to the final confrontation, a time bomb. The motif of time has strong connotations with the two brothers Elisha and Dudley and their sister Miranda. More specifically, Augusta's sons presenting themselves as "manufacturers of clocks" (60) and as Dudley explains by holding up a "tell-tale watch" what they do is "timing" (34). The brothers control time, in other words, they control the outcome of this reunion by "timing" and counting down the orchestrated deaths of their mother and sister. In Act One and when talking to Jack, Miranda declares that she is afraid of merchants, because her brothers are such, a point that can be explained in terms of the time motif. If Miranda is afraid of her brothers who are manufacturers of clocks (seen as men who control time) her fear of time passing can also be suggested, probably because she senses what will happen by the end of the day. When mentioning time, in this instance, it means that Miranda dreads the past that her brothers may force her to encounter in their meeting and what this reunion will bring to them in the future. Her stating "I fear merchants" (16) suggests that Miranda was probably aware of the purpose of the family's meeting, a point that also Jack refers to when in the end of Act Three, he exclaims "Ah then Miranda knew" (201). The control that the brothers

have over the time of the play can be also understood by their departure from the house a few minutes before the mother-daughter "clocked encounter" (155). A final point regarding time's important agency in the play is the presence of the curfew bell.[15] Augusta refers to it in the beginning of Act Two, "Ah, the curfew bell of cousin Pegamont!" (57) marking her appearance to the play. She notices its presence again in Act Three "There's the curfew-bell, and it's o'clock, and bedlam" (157) just before everyone leaves off-stage and she is left alone with the daughter. Miranda explains to her mother that "there's no more time" (169) and in the last scene of the play "Augusta brings the ringing bell down on Miranda" (201). The curfew-bell at this instance marks their death and the end of the play, sending back to the brothers' time-controlling role.

Moving on to the second motif of the play that is associated with the plot of *The Antiphon*, Barnes combines dark and vaudeville aesthetics to create a tragicomic effect. In this respect, themes like repulsiveness, bestiality, circus performance and theatricality frame the dialogues of the characters. These elements can be traced in the characters' mood for playing games that are closely connected to the experiencing moments of the past. The games are divided into two types: sexual games practiced by the brothers and fooling games that the mother tries to convince Miranda into playing in order to escape death. As far as the sexual games that the brothers force the two women to participate in, they have strong sexual and abusive characteristics and aim at the women's humiliation and submission through sodomy. By the end of the Second Act, Dudley with the help of Elisha prepare the two women for their perverse games by saying:

> DUDLEY. Want to play with baby? Going to play with baby?
> Who's afraid? (137)

The brothers start with Miranda and maul her by imitating sexual acts and using inappropriate language in order to make her remember her abuse by the father and degrade her. This game reveals the brothers' intention to provoke Miranda's distress towards her mother's indifference to her abusive past. Dudley dictates to Elisha:

> DUDLEY. Slap her ears down. Stand her on four feet!
> That'll set her up! I'd say that's one position
> Of which she hasn't made the most in twenty years. (138)

After watching her sons abusing their sister, Augusta tries to defend and protect her, but she is again acting in a passive way. Her sons, then, attack her as a way of

punishing for her behavior. In the following scene, the cruel words of Dudley ignite a tension that will be followed by the appearance of the doll's house and the innuendo regarding Miranda's rape.

> DUDLEY. *[Swinging* JACK'S *whip before him]*
> The sun being in the lower ward, you plead her?
> *[He turns the whip, handle down, making imaginary*
> *squares on the ground, as children do in street games]*
> Why then, jump, old woman, jump! jump off the world!
> Be dead, be done, be modest dead, be quick!
> A snipe can smell his meat ten inches underground;
> On scent, old crow, downward to the feast!
> *[He attempts to make her dance,* AUGUSTA *tries to*
> *obey, her mouth open as one who screams]*
> Dance! Dance! Dance! (143)

The mother is turned into a puppet, whose strings are controlled by the sons, a change of role-play as is suggested in Elisha's words a few pages earlier: "Still you swept the strings, and she cried / "My mother, oh my mother!" (127). The specific scene appears to be a revengeful act towards the mother for the sake of their sister. This is rather paradoxical if we consider how they treated Miranda, but this can be interpreted as an incoherency caused by the major cuts of the scene.

On the other hand, the games suggested by the mother are addressed only to Miranda and offer a way of avoiding the painful past and the even worse end. It is Augusta's last effort to persuade Miranda to pretend as if nothing happened and move on by forgetting what was done. It is a final plea of the mother, which it is not made out of guilt or regret, but as a game of pretension. Barnes does not present her mother or the brothers as apologetic or remorseful for their deeds in the past. On the contrary, they appear as hasty and eager for the play to come to an end.

> AUGUSTA. So, let us play. The epilogue is over,
> The boys are asleep, and we are girls again
> Nor need not think of them this part of night. (159)

Another explanation for Augusta's idea of playing is that she tries to place Miranda in her shoes so she can apprehend her mother's attitude. In this sense, Augusta invites her daughter to an exchange of roles: "Come, play me daughter," (160) she insists, "Let's play at being Miranda and Augusta" (165) and she repeats, "Do let's pretend

we're girls again; let's play" (183). Augusta tries to bring back the lost innocence to their relationship in effort to prevent them from dying, a challenge that Miranda does not accept.

The third recurring motif of the verse play is closely connected to the second one since it refers to the characters acting within the play's plot by wearing masks and referring to animals. This is part of the general theme of pretension but most of all the masking of the characters is Barnes's irony to the pleading of her family not to reveal their secrets. By this I mean that Barnes, by disguising the Hobbs' family with animal masks, she mocks her family's fear of exposure and this 'camouflage' of their characteristics, not only uncovers them but also openly and sarcastically exposes them. Miranda is compared in many ways to an animal, acquiring a bestial entity and similar to Barnes's *repulsive women.* Miranda is presented by Dudley as a "beloved vixen, in flesh" (31) and as a "[g]osling, on the loose" (66). Moreover, Dudley explains that "we all loved the lamb – / Till she turned mutton," (99) referring to the hay-hook incident and fleshing out the turning point in Barnes's life. In another instance, Elisha, pushes Miranda towards Augusta saying: "She's your hound; do as you like with her" and Augusta replies, "Even dogs are not abandoned in a ruin, Elisha," while Miranda endures silently (142). However, the most striking animal simile of the play is when Jack downplays Miranda's rape in his words: "The girl, damned, with her instep up-side-down, / Dragging rape-blood behind her, like the snail" (150). Jack introduces the theme of the rape in the play, which will lead to his further verbal attack to the mother. Jack describes in an over-explicit way the image of Miranda's violated body, going down the stairs of the house's bedroom and compares her to a snail stressing on her fragility and vulnerability. Miranda's comparison to animals and to a piece of meat reflects Barnes's tendency to create animal-like figures of women that were abused. This animalistic influence in her female characters is a common feature in her work, not only in *The Book of Repulsive Women,* but also in *Ladies Almanack* and *Nightwood.* This influence is again closely connected to her friend and Dadaist icon, Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven as previously described in *The Book of Repulsive Women.* Baroness Elsa used her own body as the medium of performing her art, in many cases disguised as an animal. Similarly, Barnes uses her own body to perform her art, which in this case is the textual body of *The Antiphon*, and exposes it in front of the witnessing eyes of the audience as Elsa did when parading her body to the streets of New York.[16]

The last pages of *The Antiphon* were left unharmed as long as the redrafting was in progress, due to their importance to the general structure and plot of the play. Their importance, firstly, lies on the answers the audience finds to many questions raised while reading or watching the drama, secondly explains their connection with *The Book of Repulsive Women* and thirdly symbolize a merge of Barnes's persona with her actual self as a writer. In terms of the play's plot and its answers the last part of the play provides, there is a confirmation of what the readers were supposing until that point; that is the plan of this set-up family meeting. It is only then that Miranda's uncle, Burley, refers to Jack as Jeremy although in all previous instances he did not. This is a moment of revelation, which proves that the gathering of the family and everything that proceeded was a well-orchestrated plan. This is explained in the dialogue between the two men before the end of Act Three:

> BURLEY. What's done, Jeremy?
>
> JACK. Ah, then Miranda knew. What's done?
>
> Why, everything's done, uncle. (201)

When Jeremy states, "everything's done," he means that the purpose of the meeting has been achieved and that is the death of the family's women. The anticipated 'clocked encounter' of the two women puts an end to the performance of the male protagonists. Jack's phrase "Ah, then Miranda knew" is foreshadowed in Miranda's lines in the beginning of the third Act, when addressing to her mother she says: "Mother's there's no more time. All's done" (169). This final scene is also a moment of revelation for the audience, too, since in this particular instance the playing-within-a-play of the characters is understood.

The Antiphon is a work that not only closes the circle of violence in Barnes's life but also wraps up the themes that she started working in *The Book of Repulsive Women.* The dark imagery, which is framed by the death motif looming as the story unfolds, is embodied in the final parts of both works. In the case of *The Book of Repulsive Women* the death of the two women is described under the title "Suicide." Their deaths are characterized as suicides possibly because they were 'forced' into a 'suicide' as a punishment for their 'repulsiveness.' In a similar way, in the last act of *The Antiphon,* the death of Miranda and Augusta is presented as the result of their preceding fight, but in fact, it is the outcome of an arranged family gathering that aimed at their extermination. In this sense, *The Antiphon* is a variant of *The Book of*

Repulsive Women with the difference that it is about Barnes's own so-called repulsiveness that was forced on her body by her family.

In addition, Barnes's verse tragedy is her final text that not only signifies her death as a persona but also her final work as an autobiographical writer. However, after the completion of *The Antiphon*, Barnes started writing poems and posthumously some of them were published in *Creatures in an Alphabet* (1982). Described by many critics as a book for children and having no connection with her previous autobiographical works, *Creatures in an Alphabet* is Barnes's actual last work. It is a poem collection that includes rhyming poems and has been described as a bestiary due to its animal-themed writing. It was an unsuccessful ending for Barnes to many critics and Andrew Field's words explain the reason why:

> It is a slight work. The familiar Barnes themes are all there, but only a few of the rhymes draw upon the particular Barnes power. The cycle was a sad end, really, to a career in which she had disappeared for long periods but always returned like a distant comet. (Djuna: The Formidable Miss Barnes 244)

What is missing from this collection is the autobiographical element that added to her characters a certain tension that is typical of Barnes's work. It is no wonder why most critics did not accept it as a work of equal importance to the rest. The fact that Barnes produced a work that is associated with children's literature after completing her own personal war drama invites a parallel with Stein's children books during World War II. Even though *Creatures in an Alphabet* was not intentionally written as a book for children, it does invite a similar interpretation as with Stein's writing effort.

As the final curtain falls in the last part of *The Antiphon,* the circle of violence in Barnes's life both as a writer and as a persona is brought to an end. Barnes's famous line "life is painful, nasty, and short…in my case it has only been painful and nasty" can also be used to describe her verse tragedy. A long play full of tragic and distressing incidents that refer to actual life events is one more confirmation of the fact that *The Antiphon* stands for Barnes's own body. Time seemed to have stopped in Barnes's life after the publication of *The Antiphon;* she spent the last twenty years of her life suffering from various health problems living in a house that reflected her turbulent life. In 1962, in a correspondence with Willa Muir, Barnes confesses to her quitting from writing and from living:

> I can't (I think) write anymore of my writing…frankly I'm afraid of it, physically, I mean, it's like facing old age and death…I don't think I have

> the power now, to do both. The inspiration is one metamorphosis, the writing is the second, preparation for death the third…how many bodies can one fight through?

Notes

[1] Louise DeSalvo explains that Barnes's family was afraid of her writing about her childhood past and remarks that they tried in the past to destroy her work. She notes: "Now that Barnes's mother was dead and Barnes lived in her own private space, she believed she could work without fearing that her efforts would be destroyed, as they had been when she had been incarcerated in 1939 and 1940 and the family had gone through all her papers and had burned her manuscript." (252) Louise DeSalvo in "Justice, Not Revenge" in Conceived with Malice.

[2] In 1940, Barnes had serious financial problems that forced her to stay in the streets almost for a week. Barnes became "one of the desperate street creatures she had written about many years ago in *A Book of Repulsive Women,* a street-dweller she had feared she might become" as DeSalvo notes (247-248). It is a life-changing experience that enforced Barnes so to keep on with her work.

[3] This point is explained in Judith E. Barlow's collection *Women Writers of the Provincetown Players: A Collection of Short Works.*

[4] Elizabeth Barnes, Djuna's mother, was raised in Oakham, England in the Flore House, as it is mentioned in Phillip Herring's *Djuna: The Life and Work of Djuna Barnes.*

[5] Louise DeSalvo traces the end of Barnes's journalist career with her personal experiences: "Barnes gave up journalism because of an ethical dispute with a newspaper. She was asked to cover "a rape case in which a girl in her teens had been raped six times." Her editor at the *Journal American* wanted the victim interviewed. Barnes concocted a story to gain entry to the girl's hospital room. She interviewed the girl, but "felt guilty" about exploiting her, about turning someone else's tragedy into copy. "When she told her editor she would never cover another rape case and would not write a story about this one or give the information to anyone else, he fired her on the spot." (241) In "Justice, Not Revenge" in *Conceived with Malice*.

[6] Louise DeSalvo also notes "In time, she incorporated in her work her knowledge that victims of family violence, of crimes against children, suffered the same agonies as victims of Nazi concentration camps. They became the same people. They became the "living dead,"

unless they could tell their stories, unless other bore witness to their pain, unless they could mourn their suffering" (256).

[7] For more information regarding how the rape scene was adjusted through the cuttings of T. S. Eliot the can be read in Lynda Curry's "Tom, Take Mercy" in Mary Lynn Broe's *Silence and Power: A Reevaluation of Djuna Barnes.* There is no page reference.

[8] In her correspondence with Willa Muir, Barnes wrote: "I wrote the Antiphon with clenched teeth, and I noted that my handwriting was as savage as a dagger." (July 23, 1961)

[9] Barnes to Eliot, 21 February 1956, quoted in *Silence and Power: A Reevaluation of Djuna Barnes.*

[10] See O'Neal, Hank. *Life is Painful, Nasty and Short…In My Case It Has Only Been Painful and Nasty: Djuna Barnes, 1978-1981,* 140.

[11] It is explained in Lionel Abel's *Tragedy and Metatheatre: Essays on Dramatic Form*.

[12] See cautionary note made by Barnes in *The Antiphon.*

[13] The same year that the story takes place Barnes attempted suicide, while she was in London, as it is mentioned in Herring's biography.

[15] Alexander Calder performed his mechanical circus more than two hundred times in front of an audience, carrying his work-of-art on his luggage. He started in 1926 and completed its creation in 1931, while Calder kept on performing his circus's acts until 1960. Calder was the ringmaster controlling the acts of the puppets, which were made from wire, cloth, wood, string and many more materials. Calder got his inspiration from real circus performances and his puppets stood for real circus performers. Calder admired Picabia's work and his work *Woman under an Umbrella* (1929) shows clear reference to Picabia's "Portrait of a Young American Young Nudity" (1915), since he replaced a woman's head with an electric bulb.

[15] In Medieval England, the curfew bell would ring so everyone would go to sleep. Ironically in *The Antiphon,* its ringing marks the death of Augusta and Miranda.

[16] Barnes's admiration for Baroness Elsa can also be seen in her attempt to write her biography, a project that she never completed. However, Baroness's influence on Barnes's work can be seen as a tribute to her performative art.

5. DJUNA BARNES AND GERTRUDE STEIN IN DIALOGUE: *A REFLECTION ON BODIES AND TECHNOLOGY.*

5.1 Autobiography in Disguise

Djuna Barnes introduced herself as a writer with a collection of poems, illustrating abused and tortured bodies in the urban setting of New York; she then resumed and ended her writing career with a fierce tragedy having two dead bodies pulling the theatre's curtains. Undoubtedly, the body is a prevalent theme in Barnes's work both as organic and as textual. On the other hand, Gertrude Stein's interest in scientific experiments remained active and she never stopped exploring the potentiality of words in her writing. The theme of the body is also featured in two ways in her work; through the existence of her own body in her works and through words or syllables as body parts. Apart from the themes of the body and its representations, or technology and its reconfigurations, a connecting point between the work of the two writers is that their works can be read as autobiographies in disguise. This final chapter will elaborate on the reasons why these two writers were brought together in this study and more specifically how these four texts are interconnected through the themes of the body and of technology.

5.1.1 *Autobiography in Barnes's Journalism and in Stein's Personal Memoirs*

As discussed in the first chapter, in the years 1913-1917, Barnes wrote more than one hundred articles, having as a recurring theme the body described in her stories as violated, burlesque, repulsive, and exposed. The real stories of people's bodies found in New York streets are transmuted into Barnes's words and set the pace for her future representations. In her stunt journalism, the motif of the body can be understood in two ways; the first refers to the participation of her own body in the event, as previously addressed to, in the case of "How It Feels To Be Forcibly Fed" and "My Adventures Being Rescued." The second refers to an external body, encountered in the streets of Manhattan, Brooklyn, or Coney Island and regarded as a point of journalistic interest. The articles "Becoming Intimate with the Bohemians" (1916) and "The Girl and the Gorilla" (1914) fall into this category. More

specifically, Barnes constantly lays emphasis on the physical characteristics of the people that attract her attention and she elaborates on them in a lyrical or rather poetical manner. For instance, in “Becoming Intimate with the Bohemians,” Barnes describes a girl she sees in a bar - that she apparently has met before – and describes her in the following way:

> She is quite reckless; she dances through an evening, she gets terribly drunk, for she can no longer stand what she used to do when, some ten summers ago, she was a girl. All that life holds she has borrowed to hold once also in those long, thin hands; only the eyes never change. They are set in her face like a child’s peering over a wall where all the refuse of life has been whirled and caught. It is a terrible and a beautiful thing. (236)

Barnes juxtaposes two different aspects of the woman she meets at the bar; on the one hand, she gives a lyrical description of this woman when she was younger, and on the other hand, she juxtaposes her present state in cynicism, turning her into a symbol of urban alienation. In the specific excerpt, Barnes illustrates the image of the woman that she will later develop in her literary texts; that is a woman that is both “a terrible and a beautiful thing.” The theme of the gaze is also present either through Barnes’s observing her or through the girl’s observing (“peering”) eyes. Although the specific article was published a year after the publication of *The Book of Repulsive Women*, the above excerpt bears resemblance to the female body that Barnes represents in the poem “From Fifth Avenue Up.” The part that refers to the girl’s facial characteristics can be also read in the poem’s lines: “You’d lip the word to madness / On your face,” where beauty is found in a so-called repulsive body of a woman “With cool pale eyes” (11). The Bohemian girl sitting in a New York’s bar that attracted Barnes’s attention is one type of Barnes’s “repulsive women.” In both cases, Barnes plays with the double symbolism of the women’s bodies, which are attractive and at the same time appalling. Overall, however, the girl’s description in the article is mild and definitely lacks the harshness that characterizes *The Book of Repulsive Women.*

Barnes’s sarcasm and irony in her “repulsive” title can be rethought in light of “Becoming Intimate with the Bohemians,” which illustrates what Barnes showcases in her poems. By saying this, I wish to stress that Barnes criticizes prejudiced perceptions towards the women described in her poems and she questions their presumed “repulsiveness.” With regard to this, Barnes’s dialogue with a heavily dressed woman walking down Sixth Avenue with her two daughters merits attention:

> "Where is Greenwich Village?" she asked, and she caught her breath.
>
> "This is it," I answered, and I thought she was going to collapse.
>
> "But," she stammered, "I have heard of old houses and odd women and men who sit on the curb quoting poetry […] I have heard of little inns where women smoke and men make love and there is dancing and laughter and not too much light." (237-238)

Barnes exposes the general perception of Greenwich Village as an area of alternative life styles with residents that could be viewed as a vaudeville spectacle. In this sense, the flamboyant woman took her daughters to Greenwich Village as if they would watch a freak show in a circus. Barnes ironically elaborates on the woman's disappointed face and her pursuit of "odd women and men." This specific instance again resonates with *The Book of Repulsive Women* and the commuters or spectators that travel on the elevated train looking at the fragmented images of the female bodies through the windowpanes. However, in the poems the traits of the observers are not defined, but are projected through the violated bodies. Thus, the "repulsiveness" that Barnes addresses in her poems is reflected in the woman's attitude, which explains the tension and the roughness in Barnes's words.

In the article "The Girl and the Gorilla," Barnes writes about Dinah, a female gorilla, kept in captivity by the New York Zoological Society, which was "neither very feminine nor very fragile, to look at" (180). By using the body of a female animal as a spectacle, Barnes satisfies her curiosity regarding female animality or bestiality also traced in *The Book of Repulsive Women.* Barnes refers to Dinah as the "gorilla woman" (180) the "newest womankind in the world" (182) and she interviews her, as it were, by posing questions such as: "Look, here, Dinah, what conclusions have you come to regarding our United States" (181)? Barnes addresses Dinah in her witty style and she notes the keeper's words: "She's so darned cussed," he remarked illuminatingly, as she tinkered with her ear. "As nice a little girl when she wants to be, and then as mean – as mean" (184). The human and the animal appear to merge in the article and the reader gets confused regarding the protagonist's nature. Similarly, Barnes in "Twilight of the Illicit" brings the representation of the female body in dialogue with the captive body of an animal. As it is already argued, in the specific poem, Barnes describes the body of a woman with bestial attributes: "With discs upon your eyes like / Husks of tears; / And great ghastly loops of gold / Snared in your eyes" ("The Book of Repulsive Women" 19). The characteristics of these

representations intermingle and create a new "womankind" as Barnes names it in "The Girl and the Gorilla," which in both instances is captive and an object of observation.

Both in *The Book of Repulsive Women* and *The Antiphon,* there is an audience observing the violated and "repulsive" bodies. In the first work, people travelling on the elevated train witness bodies in different corners and places of the city that would then fit into the articles of Barnes's stunt journalism. In the latter work, the audience witnesses the female characters' tragic end. Moreover, the play's story can be compared to articles such as "How It Feels To Be Forcibly Fed," where there is a more personal involvement with the event that is performed via her own body. In her articles, Barnes started using her own body in order to experience the stories of other people and then in her literary texts she gradually used other characters' bodies to perform her own stories. In this way, Barnes's embodiment of another's story and her own disembodiment, on the other hand, lead to an interconnection between her journalism and her writings. Having the body as the central point of reference, Barnes constantly rotates her perspective from her own self to different personas, a fact that is a common characteristic in Stein's work.

To remember Mina Loy's words, Stein is not just a writer but rather a "linguistic surgeon"[1] that implements the scientific experiments she practiced as a medical student in her writing. Stein's own body in her autobiographical works is also questioned, mostly because she confuses the readers by altering the narrative perspective. As discussed, Stein's three major autobiographical works *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, *Everybody's Autobiography* and *Wars I Have Seen* illustrate different periods in her life, however, all three have as a point of reference the presence of Stein's actual body. Nevertheless, in terms of narration, Stein chooses to write her personal stories with different points of reference and she sets this tone in the titles of the autobiographies. Barbara Mossberg describes Stein's titles as "oxymoronic, self-cancelling and for that reason compelling" creating a confusion regarding the subject and the point of view of the narrator (245). Stein's autobiographies are not only rich in providing us with abundant information about her life, but also offer historical and cultural facts about the crucial years they narrate. In her autobiographies, the theme of the body has a prevalent significance in the understanding and meaning of the work.

In *Dr. Faustus's Lights the Lights,* the body of Stein is also implicitly present in the reconceptualization of the classic text as Stein challenged perception through the

characters' confusing reactions towards electricity. The theme of the body is more than present in *Wars I Have Seen* both in the organic presence of Stein in the story's plot and in the prosthetic parts of the words. The pattern of the body's presence in words is also hinted at in Stein's final essay "Reflection on the Atom Bomb" (1946). As Stein writes:

> What is the use, if they are really as destructive as all that there is nothing left and if there is nothing there nobody to be interested and nothing to be interested about.
>
> […]
>
> but really nobody else can do anything about it so you have to just live along like always, so you see the atomic [bomb] is not at all interesting, not any more interesting than any other machine, and machines are only interesting in being invented or in what they do, so why be interested. (3-4)

In this piece, Stein's apparent indifference is reminiscent of her attitude in *Wars I Have Seen*, where Stein was characterised as impassive towards the historical facts. It is in the same manner that Stein addresses one more emblematic image of WWII that is the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Her writing in "Reflection on the Atom Bomb" is developed in a style that can be read as provocatively apathetic. Christine Hong suggests an explanation for Stein's indifference towards the loss and mutilation of thousands of bodies during the atomic bombings:

> Whether sincere or ironic, Stein's indifference to the decision to use the bomb, let alone her breezy disregard for the bomb's profound human toll and enduring material consequences, speaks to Hiroshima's non-centrality within the US imagination. (125-126)

Stein's disguised indifference is repeated in a text that not only does not show apathy, but to the contrary, can be considered as an anti-war piece of writing. Stein intentionally misleads her readers to characterise her work as impassive towards the historical events she addresses. Yet, it is her linguistic experimentation with words and texts - operating on them as if they were organic bodies and prosthetic parts - that leads us to her main intention when she was writing those bodies of work.

5.1.2 *Barnes and Stein in the Bodies of Their Personas*

Since Barnes's stunt journalism can be described as autobiographical due to her active involvement in the acts she was describing, similarly, *The Book of Repulsive Women* encloses the quality of autobiographical writing. The person who observes the "repulsive" women from the elevated train of New York may also be Barnes herself, searching for new ideas for her columns and enticing her readers with her subjective stories. Barnes does not use her name in the works that are characterized as autobiographical, but she rather appears disguised through fictional characters. It can be said that in the same way that she signed her articles in pseudonyms, Barnes used different character names and disguised her body in costumes in order not to reveal her presence in her writings. As it transpires, the stories of the characters in the majority of her work bare resemblance to her own life, starting with *The Book of Repulsive Women* and ending with *The Antiphon.* Barnes puts a certain emphasis on her life in *Ladies Almanack* and *Nightwood* by narrating her social and love life, yet it is the family secrets that she gradually gave away in her autobiographical works. It is not very clear whether Barnes was reluctant to open herself up in a direct autobiography or whether she wanted to produce work that can be seen as objective.

If we consider her interest in subjective journalism, the participation of her own body in the events was a major factor for the completion of the articles (as was most strikingly the case in "How It Feels To Be Forcibly Fed"). In the same way, Barnes in her autobiographical work uses different personas to re-live her struggles so as to go through the same pain with them, as seen in the case of the puppets and the dollhouse in *The Antiphon.* In the specific work, the autobiographical instances are seen as confessional and as a way of using words as the means of expressing inner thoughts and personal struggles. Autobiography becomes a form of confession and Barnes does this in order to punish her family, but also herself too. Pavlina Radia stresses the autobiographical aspect of Barnes's verse play:

> In *The Antiphon,* Barnes manages to transform personal history into philosophical reflection on the process of telling stories – personal, historical, political, or literary – as they shape the lives of individuals but also the fate of the collective and the state. (116)

Either through the presence of a persona or of the real writer, *The Book of Repulsive Women,* like *The Antiphon,* is a work that is engaged with the theme of the body. This is the reason why these two texts stand out from the other Barnesian autobiographical texts While Barnes writes about the "repulsive" women that she observes in New

York in 1915, forty years later, she would become herself a repulsive body that dies in her 'antiphon' towards her family. Interestingly enough, both works were written while Barnes was in New York, before and after her Paris years. During the timespan of the two works, the real Barnes changed from the outgoing young Djuna into the unsociable old Djuna who preferred to remain isolated. This detail in the life of the real Barnes can be inevitably compared with the reverse use of the theme of the body in the two texts, as already mentioned. Barnes's comic and sarcastic writing style seen in works such as *Ladies Almanack* obtains darker characteristics, since Barnes's motivation for writing contained revengeful purposes.

Barnes's violated body is a truth the readers learn about in the years to come, in *Ryder* but mostly in *The Antiphon* where, as argued, she presents herself as a repulsive woman in her family's eyes. Therefore, it can be said that Barnes's body is transfigured in the body of the performer in "To a Cabaret Dancer," as the beastly-looking woman in "Twilight of the Illicit" and as the dead bodies in "Suicide." Barnes's embodiment in the poems of *The Book of Repulsive Women* is better understood when reading *The Antiphon,* since the play reveals many details about her past. In "To a Cabaret Dancer," the female figure of the story "looked between the lights and wine / For one fine face. / And found life only passion wide / 'Twixt mouth and wine" (21). This description of a decaying image of a cabaret dancer can be compared to Miranda Hobbs, who is presented as a wandering actress whose way brought her back to Burley Hall, where she encountered her family's criticism regarding her personal life. In the beginning of the poem, the cabaret dancer appears full of life "She came with laughter wide and calm; / And splendid grace;" (21) but by the end we see "the crimson leave her cheeks" and "the ruined crimson of her lips" (22). The same sense of ruined life we grasp in the case of Miranda Hobbs who enters the stage with confidence and in a theatrical manner, to be later on humiliated by her brothers' sexual games. In *The Antiphon,* the brothers of the Hobbs family characterize Miranda as an animal many times ("deadly beloved vixen" 31, "we all loved the lamb" 98) and they wear animal masks onstage. Adding to this, the miniature dollhouse that Jack brings forward is described as a "beast-box," referring to the 'beastly' acts that the members of the family will perform (144).

Moreover, the two poems of "Suicide" can be associated with the final scene in *The Antiphon*. The lines of the poem that address the violated bodies of the two corpses are in a way repeated in Barnes's play. More particularly, the "bruised body"

("The Book of Repulsive Women" 23) of Corpse A and the depiction of how Corpse B died –"They gave her hurried shoves this way / And that. / Her body shock-abbreviated" (24) come into dialogue with the death of the mother and the daughter in *The Antiphon.* The imagery of the "shock-abbreviated" body of Corpse B is repeated in the scene when "AUGUSTA *brings the ringing bell down on* MIRANDA," ("The Antiphon" 201) leading to their mutual death. Barnes embodied in the character of Miranda suffers again a violation of her body, but by the mother this time. The revengeful and bitter Barnes who wrote *The Antiphon* is represented by the mild, almost passive, character of Miranda that confronts the mother in instances that we may assume took place in reality. An indicative example –"May God protect us! I wonder what you'll write / When I am dead and gone" (182) – is a clear reference to her mother's disagreement with the exposure of their family secrets, while Barnes made her mother's fear real by publishing this work. While the real character of Barnes is present throughout the development of the play, the persona of Miranda attracts a special interest due to her calm reaction towards the mother, contrasting with the mother's violent attack on her.

Stein started writing *Everybody's Autobiography* after she returned to Paris and in the introduction she mentions its connection with her previous autobiography: "Alice B. Toklas did hers and now anybody will do theirs. Alice B. Toklas says and if they are all going to do theirs the way she did hers" (1). Stein's confusing titles, which prepare her readers for a different work from the one that will follow, is a repetitive motif. The title and the opening lines in *Everybody's Autobiography* suggest that Stein will move from the point of view of 'she' to 'everybody,' adding a more universal tone in her writing. Timothy W. Galow explains that Stein's choice of title "apparently negates a literal, unified self, and second, it challenges the premises of autobiographical form" (113). Galow's explanation can be understood in relation to both Stein's texts that this research has explored and what he suggests for *Everybody's Autobiography* is also assumed in the themes and characters of *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* and *Wars I Have Seen.* More particularly, the first part of Galow's statement that the book's title "negates a literal, unified self" is also the case in the presence of the multiple identities of the characters in Stein's version of Faust. It can be said that Stein's narration constantly shifts between the individual and the collective; it is in this pattern that she develops the stories of the two works that were examined in this research. As regards the second part of Galow's statement that Stein

"challenges the premises of autobiographical form," Stein not only challenges its form but also creates her own subgenre within this category.

A common characteristic in the themes of Stein's autobiographies is the repeated references to her childhood. In *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas,* Stein introduces herself and begins her narration in the first part "Before I Came to Paris" by mentioning her birth: "I was born in San Francisco, California." Similarly, she starts *Wars I Have Seen* with a reference to her childhood years:

> I do not know whether to put in the things I do not remember as well as the things I do remember. To begin with I was born that I do not remember but I was told about it often. (3)

Considering that *Wars I Have Seen* belongs to Stein's last period and that this period coincides with the most troubled historical time in Europe, the collective tone is more than present.

In *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* Stein can be identified in the personas of Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel, but also at certain times in the character of Faustus. Their association is better understood in a reading of *Faustus* alongside *Everybody's Autobiography.* In the introduction of *Everybody's Autobiography* Stein reaffirms this flattering but perplexing sense of being recognized. She writes:

> It is very nice being a celebrity a real celebrity who can decide who they want to meet and say so and they come or do not come as you want them. I never imagined that would happen to me to be a celebrity like that but it did and when it did I liked it. (2)

Stein's superfluous words, boasting for her popularity, can be placed in juxtaposition with Faustus's arrogant manner when referring to the other characters, but also to Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel after being cured by Faustus. Both characters have a disdainful attitude towards others that will be replaced by disappointment once the moment of their self-realisation is revealed by the electric lights. In the beginning of the story, Faustus is still in the limelight, while Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel is asking help from him. However, in the last scene of the story everything is dark for Faustus. As a result, once Marguerite Ida and Helena Annabel acquires the electric light, Faustus seems to lose his senses until "he sinks into the darkness" (118). In this sense, it can be said that *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* is an allegory for Stein's celebrity self, where the constant fading in and out of the lights challenges her self-perception.

As already discussed in the chapter on Stein's war memoir, Stein wrote this work as a way of keeping her mind busy while waiting for the war to end. She, thus, created a persona of herself that narrated quotidian issues putting aside the reality of war. A point of interest is the fact that Stein mentions her name at the end of the work, after the war seems to end with the arrival of the Americans: "by that time I was confident and I said I was Gertrude Stein" (245). The fact that Stein reasserts her existence as a real person only at the end of the story is not random. As she ironically repeats in *Wars I Haves Seen* her life during WWII was an unreal state of being and the appearance of the American soldiers helped her realize the reality of herself. When Stein avoids facing the reality of war, she lets herself speak through a second self that helps her escape from the actual facts. What Stein actually does in her sarcastic writing manner, is to criticize people's (and her own) 'blindness' and 'deafness' to the reality of war. It can be said that apart from the body parts that are lost during the battles, in Stein's text the senses are also allegorically lost through the traumatic experience of war. In this way, Stein's prosthetic writing addresses not only the missing body of war through the prosthetic word-parts, but also the traumatised senses that remain impaired until the end of the war.

5.2 The Senses of Organic and Textual Bodies

The theme of the senses is another important connecting point of all four works, sight and hearing in particular. Starting from the titles of Barnes's and Stein's works the two senses seem to set the tone together with the motifs and symbolisms of the texts. Sight and hearing are comprehended either through their importance to the basic themes of the works or through their intriguing absence from the narrative. Beginning with Barnes and *The Book of Repulsive Women,* the sense of sight is underscored through in the observation of these bodies by spectators on the elevated train observing or better peeping inside the private space of these lives. All the stories of the collection presuppose a close look or even an investigation of what these bodies look like, however, the speed of the train allows only for fragmented images. More particularly, in "Seen from the 'L'" the train travellers can see the naked body of a woman "stretching dully," while the female character is presented disinterested towards this intrusion: "She does not see, she does not care" (17). The curiosity of the

observers contrasts with the indifference of the observed bodies, which are confined in small spaces. The observers' gaze scrutinizes the exposed bodies that are situated in a series of *tableaux vivants.*

Barnes uses the verb "to see" in almost all the poems: specifically in "From Fifth Avenue Up," it appears in different lines of the poem and Barnes invites her readers to observe the details of the female body: "We'd see your body in the grass," "We see your arms grow humid / In the heat," "We see your damp chemise lie / Pulsing in the beat" (11). The repetition of the pronoun "we" intensifies the opposing sides of the observers and the subject of observation. Similarly, in "Twilight of the Illicit" the intruding eyes of the observers are evoked in the line that refers to the female body of the poem: "One sees you sitting in the sun" (19). Barnes in *The Book of Repulsive Women* invites the readers to see, watch or observe the bodies that are exposed in front of their eyes, ironically thereby, pointing towards a biased and prejudiced view of these "repulsive" women.

In a similar way, the sense of hearing is also implied in the poems, first and foremost, in the imagery of the train passing by the New York flats, causing noise and trembling to the buildings. At the same time, the poems are filled with sounds and noises that come from the bodies of the 'repulsive women.' In "From Fifth Avenue Up" people can "hear [her] short sharp modern / Babylonic cries" (11) that merge with the city's sounds and in "From Third Avenue On" the noise is again heard in the "high hard cries" (16) of another woman. Seeing bodies incarcerated inside small flats and listening to their piercing cries can be compared to seeing caged animals. As already mentioned, Barnes adds to her characters animal characteristics and the specific instance also puts forward the theme of spectacle, or, of how human bodies are exposed like animals in a circus act. In this sense, these bodies are seen as exhibits strewn all over the city, whose observation is inevitable by the train travellers, who in a way are forced to watch them as they travel around the city. Through the symbolisms of the two senses, Barnes invites her readers to look at the female bodies and listen to their voices. As argued in Chapter One, *The Book of Repulsive Women* embodies Barnes's curious journalistic eyes and ears that were always looking for an uncommon story to cover.

In *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* the ability to see is jeopardised, since the constant fluctuation of the lights affects the characters' perception. In the beginning of the third act, for instance, in Faustus's house, we read that "the electric lights are

right but the room is dark" (116) foreshadowing his end by sinking into this darkness. Furthermore, in a dialogue between the dog and Dr. Faustus, Stein again puts forward the issue regarding sight and hearing. More particularly, she writes:

> [T]he electric lights they make it be that there is no night if there is no night then there is no moon and if there is no moon I do not see it and if I do not see it I cannot bay at it. (111)

In these words, the dog complains about the prevailing power of the electric lights, whose brightness makes the night and moon disappear and as a result, he cannot howl since night is reversed into day. It can be said that the dog's voice is silenced because of the flashing of the electric lights and that Stein ironically replaced the dog's night howling with the ability to see at night. The element of sight is also at stake in the characters' ability to see the truth or in their being deceived by what they think truth is. An altering factor with regard to this is the presence of the lights, either electrical or natural. As already discussed, the characters' perception is challenged and their ability to see clearly is impeded. It seems that Stein criticizes how artificial lights help people see clearer in a state of darkness but also how this turning of night into day results in confusion.

As regards hearing, reading Stein's texts aloud is an interesting procedure. The repetitions and wordplays are better understood and the variations of the sentences acquire musicality and rhythm. It is no coincidence that Stein wrote many texts for operas, such as, *Four Saints in Three Acts* (1929), *Three Sisters Who Are Not Sisters* (1943), and, of course, *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* (1938). These were librettos that were supposed to be heard and not read. Both the senses of sight and hearing are important in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*, since it was a story that was intended to be performed. This may be the reason why the characters of the libretto (apart from the two protagonists) are not described in detail or even given a specific name; there is a boy, a dog, a man from overseas, a countrywoman, a viper. *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* has been characterized as part of Stein's "landscape" plays, which are supposed to form a landscape and not an actual story.[2] As Olga Taxidou notes: "all the characters in this play (*Dr. Faustus*) need to be read as forming a landscape. They do not simply animate it but blend into it" (97). Stein's Faust version combines the characteristics of both opera and landscape writing and this constant interchange between the sense of sight and hearing invites a close interaction with the audience.

The sense of sight is present in the title of *Wars I Have Seen*, which as already explained does not refer only to the wars Stein has actually seen. Although in this title, the 'I' can be read as 'eye,' it can also refer to the wars she had heard of, like the Boer or the Spanish-American war, and the word "seen" may also refer to the ones she has actually experienced, the two World Wars. This, of course, is only one way to interpret the text's title. Another way is to read it while keeping in mind Stein's recurring pattern of hearing and sight, which is associated with the theme of reality and unreality. "This is the way it seems to me from all I can hear and from all I can see," (9) Stein writes when she talks about how she experiences war. Stein, as it transpires, criticizes human 'blindness' and 'deafness' towards the reality of war: in this sense, *Wars I Have Seen* could be considered as a criticism of wars people 'haven't seen,' and haven't understood. The symbolic absence of the two senses shapes the plot. The historical overview that Stein builds up in the first part of the work, enumerating various instances of human conflict functions as an irony to the saying *history repeats itself*. Stein then criticizes the human inability to stop a war from happening.

In *Wars I Have Seen,* while sight is related to reality, the sense of hearing is associated with unreality. As discussed in Chapter Three, Stein in various occasions mentions that their only communication with the outside world was the radio. War propagandists and the use of radio broadcasts is mentioned a lot in the text and Stein describes the general discouragement in any kind of communication. As already discussed in the following abstract, Stein notes:

> Even the propagandists on the radio find it very difficult to really say let alone believe that the world will be a happy place, of love and peace and plenty, and that the lion will lie down with the lamb and everybody will believe anybody. (102)

Stein emphasizes the listeners' questioning of what they were listening to and the propagandists' inability to broadcast their messages during the war. Overall, in *Wars I Have Seen,* Stein writes about a generalised disbelief. This is also the case in the description of the following incident:

> [O]ne boy who came to-day and brought us fish said that he had seen an English soldier with his own eyes we none of us believed him naturally but it was a pleasure to hear and he did believe it. (204)

When the war was over, Stein notes that there were rumours regarding the coming of the Americans to Culoz, the event that would mark the end of war. While the radio broadcaster reported their arrival in Grenoble, however, this was not enough for Stein. She anticipated the moment that she would see them with her own eyes in order to believe:

> And now they have just announced on the radio that the Americans are at Grenoble and that is only eighty kilometers away and no opposition in between, oh if they would only come by here. We must see them. (237)

As argued, *Wars I Have Seen* starts in an impersonal tone and finishes with the arrival of the Americans in Culoz and Stein's warm celebration. As the years of the war unfold and its realities and unrealities are exposed through Stein's memoirs, a sense of relief prevails in the final part of the work. Stein's meeting with the American soldiers is not only a moment of realization for her but also symbolizes that reality is restored with the help of sight, as it were.

In *The Antiphon,* Barnes incorporates the imagery of hearing and sight in the work and empowers their presence in the themes of the verse play. The etymological analysis of the title points towards a voice that invites a connection to listening. Barnes clarifies her need to be heard from the beginning and sets the tone of a work, which can be considered as aggressive. At the same time, the importance of the sense of sight is integral to a performance: the traumatic experiences of Barnes unfold and the audience witnesses her childhood struggles through their reenactment. *The Antiphon* is a work that gives voice to the bodily sufferings of Barnes, which are embodied in the character of Miranda Hobbs.

Another characteristic example of the centrality of sight in the text is associated with the appearance of the dollhouse. In the scene when Jack brings the dollhouse onstage, Augusta is forced to watch what is showed inside it and relive the painful past of her daughter's abuse. The following part from Act Two is indicative:

> JACK
> [*Tapping on the attic window of the doll's house*]
> Put your wink against the window pane, what do you see?
> AUGUSTA
> [*Putting her eye to the small window*]
> A bedroom, no bigger than my hand.
> MIRANDA

> Do you remember what that cock-loft saw?
> For that window is become your eye.
> What do you see? (144)

Augusta is lifted to the table; she is forced to peer into the miniature house and check on the puppets that she finds in it. The reproduction of the same scene, seen through the windowpanes of the doll's house, suggests a similar experience through a *mise en abîme*. The parallel narrative that is projected through this metatheatrical device reveals an aspect of the story that helps the audience understand the reactions of the characters. Augusta's effort to avoid seeing through the windowpane can be compared to Stein's attitude in *Wars I Have Seen* and her intentional escape from reality. In the case of *The Antiphon,* Augusta's avoidance of the truth bears a similarity to Stein's eschewing of the reality of war, but also adds a theatricality that will lead to the climax of the play (that is the rape of Miranda).

Furthermore, Miranda's words "that window is become your eye" can also be associated with the window scenes in *The Book of Repulsive Women* and the simile of the window as the eye is a symbol that connects the two works. The symbolism of the window as the eye that observers / spectators watch motionless as the story unfolds in front of them is present in both works. In *The Book of Repulsive Women* Barnes urges her readers to take a closer look at the "repulsive" bodies that she describes. Although people have heard about the stories and lives of these women, as it is nicely put in her article "Becoming Intimate with the Bohemians," Barnes prompts her readers to observe how these women really are by putting the readers of the poems in the place of the train travellers so as to observe the bodies through the windowpanes of the El.

5.3 Applied Technologies

5.3.1 *Automatic Texts and Mechanical Bodies*

In *The Book of Repulsive Women* the train as a motif connects the stories of all women and places them in a trajectory that invites the readers or observes to wander through. Influenced by New York Dada, Barnes creates a series of *tableaux vivants* that reflect abrupt images of female bodies. The technological symbol of train interacts with the bodies that are permeating by a mechanical aspect that seems to

extend the potential of the features of their organic bodies. She, thus, at first transforms these bodies into animal-like, bestial, or simply disfigured creatures, which then become mechanized with the intervention of the technology. The collection, in total, can be characterized as an automatic text due to the predetermined route, selected by the writer, which starts from the image of a pregnant woman and ends with the description of two dead bodies. In parallel with the stories of each poem, there is a general narrative that unfolds as the reader moves from one poem to another. The abrupt images that the observers perceive from the windowpanes of the train can be related to photographic shots that capture the female bodies in unusual positions that make them appear repulsive lest attractive.

On a further note, when reading *The Book of Repulsive Women,* moving from one poem to another, or rather, shifting from the first scene of the *tableaux vivants* to the other, can be compared to the changing frames of films. The imagery of Barnes's collection, which presupposes commuters on the elevated train sitting motionless and looking outside the window to the different projections of bodies can be compared to the experience of the cinema. In this case, the windowpanes of the train stand for the screen that offers to the audience the ability to watch the film that is projected in front of their eyes. Furthermore, a common aspect of *tableaux vivants* with the cinema is the three-dimensional quality that is designated to a body's representation, an element that is understood in the successive projections of bodies in *The Book of Repulsive Women.* As noted in Chapter One, in his analysis of the association of films with *tableaux vivants* Steven Jacobs has highlighted that "[t]he tableau's inherent oscillation between movement and stillness is…often used as a metaphor for the tension between life and death" (96). These characteristics undoubtedly apply in the themes of Barnes's poems and structures that bring to mind the form of a tableau. What Barnes does in her collection is to expose the struggle of these bodies to balance life and death. However, the last poem reveals the outcome of this struggle, which can be compared to the 'apotheosis' of a series of *tableaux vivants* that refers to the last and tenser picture. As Jacobs further notes: "tableaux vivants can acquire a mysterious density. Because of their aesthetisation of immobility, they create blockages in the flow of a narrative film that result in a kind of enigma" (95). The dark and mysterious tone that Barnes sets in her collection is conveyed through the representation of the bodies, which despite their 'repulsiveness,' radiate a certain erotic aesthetic.

In *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* the presence of technology is manifested through electricity. It becomes apparent that the bright, electrically-lighted environment of New York engrossed Stein, only by reading the title of her Faustian version. Electricity and artificial lights as symbols or motifs are all over her libretto, shaping the plot and controlling the perception of the characters. In this respect, I suggest that Stein metaphorically 'plugs in' the story of Faustus and brings to the public a version that reflects not only her confused self, but also the general ambivalent attitude towards technology. As a result, she transforms the text into a machine that is activated by electricity and the characters of the libretto appear to be controlled by the artificial lights that deceive them. The text functions as a self-operating machine, or else as an automaton that gives the impression to operate without the characters being able to control the progression of the events. This is why the protagonists of the libretto are constantly caught by surprise with regard to the deluding functions of electricity. Accordingly, it can be said that the bodies of the characters become mechanized within the electrically-powered environment in which they are placed and they repeatedly re-live this progression of events due to the circular narrative.

The constant fluctuation of the lights throughout the libretto together with the repetitive short lines of the acts also bears comparison with cinema and the making of films. Cinema had attracted Stein's interest but what fascinated her most was the possibility to incorporate the technique of the cinema into her texts. As noted in Chapter Three, before her visit to the US, Stein made two attempts at cinematic writing: *A Movie* (1920) and *Film. Deux Soeurs Qui Ne Sont Pas Soeurs* (1929). When referring to *The Making of Americans* in *Portraits and Repetition* (1935), Stein wrote:

> In a cinema picture no two pictures are exactly alike each one is just that much different than the one before, and so in those early portraits there was…no repetition…Each time that I said somebody whose portrait I was writing was something that something was just much different from what I had just said. (177)

Stein's insistence on writing variations of sentences she has already written and not just repeating the same words can be related to her comparing her writing with cinema. In the cinema, the frames where scenes are projected on the screen incorporate parts of previous scenes. Accordingly, in Stein's writing the characters' dialogues are developed in a similar manner to the development of a film. Moreover,

in the case of *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights,* the characters act in a way that actors would, as if they were following the instructions of the director. By this I mean that Stein manipulates the fluctuation of lights that forms the plot and the reaction of the protagonists and not the other way around.

In *Wars I Have Seen* the theme of technology is again undermined (as seen in the Chapter on *The Book of Repulsive Women*) in the textual wordplays that Stein repeats throughout her war memoir. Using simple, everyday words with loaded meaning is not a new thing for Stein, yet it is interesting to rethink Stein's writing in relation to Barnes's elaborate vocabulary. No matter how different their way of expressing their ideas is, both writers structure their work on common themes. For instance, both treat the theme of war from a different point of view; although Stein lived in France, in her memoir, the tense level of narration is undermined in the quotidian scenes. On the other hand, Barnes was in New York when she wrote *The Antiphon* and her writing can be characterized as unbounded and raging with anger for the events that she describes. In the case of the war theme, Barnes uses writing as a way of confessing and seeking revenge, while Stein treats her texts as a sanctuary. An interesting point in the background of the making of these two works is that both Barnes and Stein produced them in a state of isolation. However, in Stein's case, her location made it impossible to write a similar - in explicit language- text, like Barnes. Thus, Stein's work can be characterized as defensive as compared to Barnes's aggressive writing style.

Stein's war memoir is written from a civilian's point of view and her word playing was a safe way to hide the true meanings of the words because of the unsafe environment of fear. As I have already suggested, the prosthetic bodies of soldiers are transmuted into the prosthetic body parts of the prefixes to the indefinite pronouns that are to be found in almost every page of the text. I was led to this conclusion due to the almost insignificant reference to bodies either of soldiers or civilians, setting her text thereby at a fundamental distance from the intense imagery of other war memoirs. However, their symbolism acquires an even greater importance in the intentionally hidden meaning of the linguistically operated words of Stein's sentences. It can be said that Stein hid the vulnerable and violated organic bodies under the basic ground of narration, as people would hide war fugitives in the basement of their houses. This association is not melodramatic if we consider that Stein structures her war-themed text on the basis of quotidian life in the countryside of France. No matter

how well connected she was so to survive during WWII, it is impossible that she was not aware of the horrid events that took place. For Stein, the safest place to hide her thoughts and experiences was her writing, which as already mentioned in chapter Three kept in handwritten form until the end of war.

In *The Antiphon*, Barnes approaches the question of technology (as in the case of *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*) through the use of metatheatrical devices that imparts a mechanical aspect to Barnes's autobiographical text. Barnes's final major work bears resemblance to the structure of Stein's *Faustus* due to the controlling power that the technological devices have over the story's plot. Time is a major theme in the work, as I have already explained, and the family meeting is nothing more than an arranged gathering. The repetitive motifs of time, clocks and count-downs lead to the conclusion that the confrontation of the two female protagonists is a clocked encounter. The 'weapon' that the mother uses to attack the daughter is a curfew bell that can be associated with the image of a mechanical clock or a 'bell-stricker' as it is called. This clock is actually another example of an automaton that operates on its own and strikes according to the time that it is scheduled. The scheduled death of the two women at the end of the play can be compared to the image of the scheduled striking of a mechanical clock. Also, in the context of *The Antiphon's* autobiographical level of narrative, it seems that the text is Barnes's clocked revenge: a revenge that she scheduled its striking with the publication of her family history. In both levels of narrative, I would dare to suggest that the body of *The Antiphon* is a mechanical clock, counting-down the end, which is the death of the two female protagonists. Thus, the text becomes again an automaton, which operates on its own and cannot be controlled by the characters of the play that simply follow the progression of the events.

Within the frame of the miniature house, the characters are represented through the puppets, whose bodies are used in order to display the violence that the real bodies experienced. These puppets reenact the characters' abuse and pain, while Barnes's *mise en abîme* offers different reflections of this pain; on the puppet's body, on Miranda's body, and on Barnes's body. In the form of the puppets, the protagonists' bodies are transformed into figures that have a mechanical quality because of their stringed and orchestrated reactions. This argument is also supported by the predetermined structure of the text and the children's reference to the past control of the parents over them: "Still you swept the strings, and still she cried / 'My mother,

oh my mother!'" (127). The fact that the characters cannot intervene in the progression of the events is dramatized in various instances especially in the third Act after the appearance of the doll's house and in the dialogue between the two female protagonists; first, Augusta tells to Miranda "So, let us play. The epilogue is over, / The boys asleep, and we are girls again," (159) and Miranda tells to Augusta "Mother, there's no time. All's done" (169). The image of the curfew bell in the last lines symbolizes the striking of the bell, in terms of structure, and the death of the two women signals the end of Barnes's carefully timed revenge.

5.3.2 *The Intervention of Technology*

The theme of technology, either in explicit or implicit ways, is the altering factor that intervenes in the final outcome of these four works. Starting from *The Book of Repulsive Women,* technology is represented by the train and its velocity mechanizes the bodies seen around the city, bearing resemblance to the mechanized Dadaist images. Then, in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*, the body of the text is controlled by the electric lights that shape the plot and turn the text into a self-controlled machine. The association with automatic writing is drawn on the level of the automatic structure of the text and the interactions of the characters within it. Moving on to *Wars I Have Seen,* technology is portrayed in the textual body of the work, which is turned into a mechanical body due to its prosthetic word parts. Technology is a motif hidden throughout in the loaded meaning of the indefinite pronouns of the war memoir. Finally, *The Antiphon* incorporates the metatheatrical devices that create a parallel level of reference in the work, and give a mechanical aspect to the characters of the play. The projections of these devices place the characters and the audience in interaction and establish their interconnection.

The interaction of technology with the body is integral to the ideas and the themes that these four works put forward. By saying this, I suggest that the specific works would not be the same without the presence of technology, which is incorporated in the organic and textual bodies of Barnes's and Stein's work. As Tim Armstrong notes, "[m]odernism… is characterized by the desire to *intervene* in the body" (6) and in the case of these two writers this is made through technology. The intervention of technology in the four texts that were examined in this thesis, is explored in relation to the representation of the body as a mechanical spectacle in *The Book of Repulsive*

Women; the 'electrification' of the body of a classic text in *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights*; the prosthetic quality of word-parts in *Wars I Have Seen*; and mechanized bodies in the metadramatic techniques that Barnes employed in *The Antiphon*. In Barnes and Stein, modernism's fundamental points of interest, the body and technology, are adjoined and their concurrence produces works that offer new forms of writing. As Armstrong states: "[w]riting is itself a bodily technology which, in the modern world, is increasingly considered in operational terms, producing textual technologies which directly negotiate between the body and the production of discourse" (6). In this sense, the text is a self-operating machine and the interaction of the body with technology is seen through this autonomous practice. In *The Book of Repulsive Women* the text follows a certain journey in the open space of New York City, since the train theoretically repeats the same route every day. Then, In *Dr. Faustus Lights the Lights* the structure is read as an electrical circuit that mobilizes the action of the characters. The writing of *Wars I Have Seen* embodies what Armstrong calls "textual technology" through the abundant use of words in the place of bodies. Finally, in *The Antiphon* the text as a self-controlling machine is discerned in the stringed reactions of the characters and the structured progression of events that lead to the dramatic finale of the play. In the works studied in this thesis, Barnes and Stein write about technologies of physical and textual bodies that come to embody what literary modernism was fascinated about; that is the reconfiguration and reconceptualization of the human body.

Notes

[1] This term is borrowed from Tim Armstrong's *Modernism, Technology and the Body.*

[2] Stein first refers to this term in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, as she mentions: "It was during this winter that Gertrude Stein meditated upon the use of grammar, poetical forms and what might be termed landscape plays…Her *Capital Capitals*, Virgil Thomson has put to music. *Lend a Hand or Four Religions* has been printed in Useful Language. This play has always interested her immensely, it was the first attempt that later made her Operas and Plays, the first conception of landscape as a play" (173).

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