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# Literary Works of Harry Levin's Youth: The Making of a Major-Minor Modernist

*Stephanie Spong and David King Dunaway*

HARRY TUCHMAN LEVIN (1912–1994) WAS AN AUTHOR, CRITIC, AND formative literary influence in the twentieth century. Throughout his career, Levin was admired by other writers and critics.<sup>1</sup> In 1947 Richard Watts called Levin simply “one of our wisest and most interesting authorities on Joyce.”<sup>2</sup> More recently, in 2000, Morton Levitt considered Levin “a critic who knows too much and sees too broadly to specialize and who has too much respect for literary history to simply forget the past.”<sup>3</sup>

Levin spent most of his academic career at Harvard: AB, MA, PhD; assistant, associate, and professor, as well as chair of the Departments of English and Comparative Literature. This capacious mind grew out of an earlier history of late-night reading sessions, fledgling literary journals, and an early dedication to the life of a poet-critic. The collection of over one hundred of Levin's letters, poems, libretti, and ephemera recently acquired by Houghton Library<sup>4</sup> represents an extraordinary correspondence at the height of literary modernism and documents Levin's early embrace of that movement.<sup>5</sup> Throughout his career, Levin ignored the shrinking boundaries of specialization. Renaissance scholar Alvin Kernan commends him for “a range of

1 For a complete list of Levin's many publications and professional accomplishments, see the useful appendix in Jonathan Hart, *The Implications of Literary Criticism* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2011).

2 Richard Watts, “An Irish Dante's Pilgrimage,” *New York Times*, March 2, 1947, sec. Books. <<http://www.nytimes.com/books/00/01/09/specials/joyce-portable.html>> (accessed August 15, 2015).

3 Morton Levitt, “Harry Levin's *James Joyce* and the Modernist Age: A Personal Reading,” in *James Joyce and Modernism: Beyond Dublin* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 2000), 134.

4 The collection of Levin's correspondence with Philip Dunaway was purchased in January 2013 with funds from the Frank Brewer Bemis Bequest, and was added as box 30 to the larger Levin collection (MS Am 2461), primarily the gift of Elena Levin in 1995 and 1997. For a full finding aid for the Harry Levin Papers (30 boxes; 37 linear feet), see <<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL.Hough:h001917>> (accessed August 15, 2015). The student mentioned in the note to item 260 in the finding aid is Ms. Spong, coauthor of this article.

5 James Joyce recognized Levin's potential in 1939 and suggested his name to publisher James Laughlin for the Joyce volume in the series *The Makers of Modern Literature*, a suggestion that would later

knowledge vast and sure,” and Joycean Zach Bowen attributes to Levin’s scholarship the impetus for encouraging “nearly all major Joyce critics” to say “something about epiphanies and their use.”<sup>6</sup> Gerald Gillespie, former president of the International Comparative Literature Association, describes Levin as a “mind of exceptional capacity” and “a broad-gauged practitioner,” as well as “one of the fabled post-World-War-II ‘re-starters’ of Comparative Literature in America and worldwide.”<sup>7</sup>

This article traces the roots of such an exceptional career through the biography of Levin and his mentor/literary correspondent Philip Howard Dunaway (father of coauthor, David King Dunaway) from their first meeting in 1926, when Levin was fourteen, to September 1929, when Levin left for Harvard, and their correspondence attenuated (see figure 3.1). The epistolary collection is analyzed here in the context of Levin’s creative work as a young man, before formal training at Harvard. His literary output suggests the virtue of critics writing in the genres they critique.

This, then, is an account of two teenagers in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in the late 1920s, who are fascinated by the new literary modernist movement and who start writing it, in parody and in earnest. Levin went on to become the author of a shelfful of monographs on American and European literature. His friend Dunaway became a congressional staffer, professional editor, and anthologist.<sup>8</sup> Levin’s early letters and writings provide a revealing first glance at a thoroughly engaged, if youthful, enthusiast of literary modernism.

## HARRY TUCHMAN LEVIN

Harry Levin came from German-Jewish immigrant families. His father, Isadore Henry Levin, was born in East Prussia and migrated to Minneapolis, starting a furniture factory with two brothers. His mother, Beatrice Tuchman, was raised in a Reform-Judaic tradition but converted to Christian Science while a music student in New York. “As a result, her son Harry, born on July 18th, 1912, was sent to Christian Science and

result in *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction* (1941). See Harry Levin, *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction*, rev. and augm. ed. (New York: New Directions, 1960), xi-xii.

6 Alvin Kernan, “Recent Studies in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 11, no. 2 (1971): 398; Zach Bowen, “Joyce and the Epiphany Concept: A New Approach,” *Journal of Modern Literature* 9, no. 1 (1981–1982): 103.

7 Gerald Gillespie, “The Implications of Literary Criticism,” *Comparative Literature* 65, no. 2 (2013): 242.

8 Philip Dunaway, ed., *A Treasury of the World’s Great Diaries* (New York: Doubleday, 1957); Philip Dunaway, ed., *Turning Point: Fateful Moments that Revealed Men and Made History* (New York: Random House, 1958).

Jewish Reform Sunday school and thus saw, as he put it, “The two religions at their thinnest.”<sup>9</sup>

The Levins’ other children were Jane, three years younger than Harry, and Jack, eight years younger. Apparently the combination of his father’s financial success and his mother’s Christian Science membership allowed the Levins to move into a gentile, upper-middle class neighborhood, at 2631 Lake of Isles Boulevard, Minneapolis, a spacious house with gardens behind. Pictures show the family clustered under a rose-trimmed archway, smiling and comfortable.<sup>10</sup> Levin appears open-faced, neatly dressed in a suit, with high cheekbones and wistful, penetrating eyes. At the time, he described himself wryly: “I have the ethics of an Houyhnhnms, the taciturnity of a Flaubert, and the general moral code of an Oscar Wilde so frightened mothers say.”<sup>11</sup> Those adoring parents did not know quite what to make of him. Levin later reflected, “My parents wanted the best for their son but could never fathom his fascination for literature.”<sup>12</sup> Eleven years old, he took a volume of Shakespeare’s plays to camp; at fourteen, he was an avid reader of *The Dial*.

The family held a significant social position in the fast-growing Midwestern city that many still associated with Minnesotan Sinclair Lewis and *Babbitt*. Isadore Levin was the only Jewish member of the city’s Chamber of Commerce, a Republican, a director of Northwestern National Bank, and a member of the Athletic Club (which nominally denied access to Jews). He achieved a kind of Jewish aristocracy, which “often produced little bits of social snobbery on the part of socially climbing neighbors,” according to Levin.<sup>13</sup>

Social prejudice against Jews in the early 1920s was common in the Midwest, as Harry’s father’s friend, Maurice Lefkovits, wrote in a Minneapolis Jewish weekly: “There is not, to my knowledge, a single Jewish member in any of the numerous city and country clubs nor are Jews solicited in the boat club or automobile club . . .”<sup>14</sup> This comment appeared in 1922, the year of the publication of *Babbitt* and of *Ulysses*, a work Levin would introduce to the American reading public via lectures, classes, and critical

9 Susanne Klingenstein, “Portrait of a Scholar as a Young Man: Harry Levin,” in *Enlarging America: The Cultural Work of Jewish Literary Scholars, 1930–1990* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 37.

10 Little is published on Levin’s early years. Family photos and other resources, including notes from Dr. Klingenstein of MIT, are available at the Harry Tuchman Levin page at <<http://www.ancestry.com>> (accessed August 15, 2015).

11 Houghton Library, Harvard University, Harry Levin Papers, 1920–1995 (MS Am 2461 [260]); hereafter documents from this collection will be cited as MS Am 2461.

12 John Roe, “Obituary: Professor Harry Levin,” *The Independent*, July 9, 1994, <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-professor-harry-levin-1412747.html>> (accessed August 15, 2015).

13 Klingenstein, “Portrait of a Scholar as a Young Man: Harry Levin,” 37.

14 *Ibid.*, 38.

studies. Though their resources would have allowed them to send Harry to a private school, the Levins opted instead to enroll him at West High School, where he became editor of the weekly newspaper and president of two clubs.<sup>15</sup> At West High School in the late 1920s, he joined the Minneapolis Poetry Society, a forerunner to the League of Minnesota Poets (established in 1934).<sup>16</sup> The Poetry Society's members were part of the intellectual-literary crowd at West High and at the University of Minnesota. Every two weeks, the Poetry Society met in an unused classroom in the late afternoon. Members took turns reading their original poetry and offering critiques; at the core of Levin's circle of friends were Harold Lefkovits, Edward Brecher, Roy Pepinsky, and Louis Sarbach. This group "clustered around Philip Dunaway, who was pretty close to the top—and served as the group critique leader." "He would dispense firm advice shyly," remembered the last surviving member of the group. "We would sit around the room until it grew dark, women in dresses and the men in ties and jackets."<sup>17</sup> The group seized on modernism passionately. There were sessions devoted to reading *Ulysses* aloud by candlelight. There were endless discussions on T. S. Eliot and Pound's relationship with him. Levin proposed to translate Rabelais. He and Dunaway struggled studying the intricacies of Japanese kanji.

Levin and Dunaway's weekly letters were most numerous in 1927, as the country sloughed off its post-World War I depression and industry and transportation boomed. A few hundred miles to the south, Illinois was paving Route 66, its pathway to the Pacific. The Federal Radio Commission began to regulate broadcasting; downstream from Minneapolis, the Mississippi was flooding. The country was parading Charles Lindbergh after his flight; and Sacco and Vanzetti were executed, a moment that Philip Dunaway memorialized in a poem sent to Levin.<sup>18</sup>

### PHILIP HOWARD DUNAWAY

Philip Howard Dunaway (1910–1957) came from British and French stock (see figure 3.2). His grandparents Howard and Mary Dunaway came from Ohio. His father, Lewis Dunaway, was born in southern Wisconsin; his mother, Blanche Harrison, was born and raised in Nova Scotia. Philip Dunaway was born in Duluth, moving with his family first to St. Paul when he was seven, and then to 2700 Bryant Avenue South in Minneapolis, a former rooming house from the 1890s (see figure 3.3). There, in the attic, Lewis had

15 Klingenstein, "Portrait of a Scholar as a Young Man: Harry Levin," 37–39.

16 James K. Hosmer Special Collections Library, Hennepin County Library, Minneapolis, Minn., "Minneapolis Poetry Society and the League of Minnesota Poets," 1.

17 Lillian Zaret Dunaway, interview with her son, David King Dunaway, February 26, 2013. Document in possession of the authors.

18 Philip Dunaway, "Sacco and Vanzetti," MS Am 2461 (259).

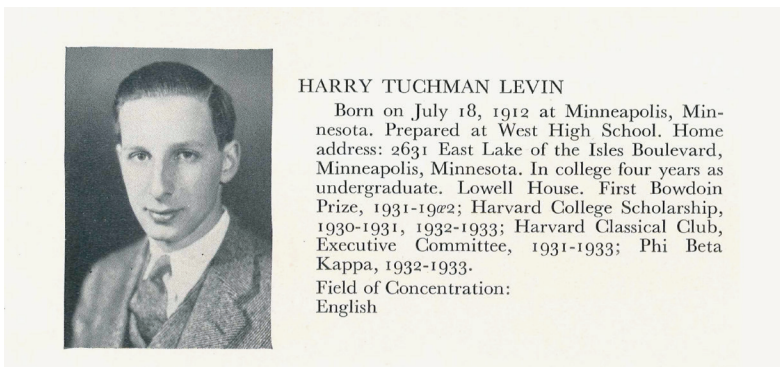


Figure 3.1. Entry for Harry Tuchman Levin in 1933 *Harvard Class Album*, vol. 44 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1933), 259. Detail, reproduced actual size. HUD 333.04, Harvard University Archives.



Figure 3.2. Philip Dunaway, ca. 1927. Detail of a photograph in the possession of the authors.



Figure 3.3. 2700 Byron Avenue South, Minneapolis. ca.1931. Photograph in possession of the authors.

his den; below, the three children, Philip, Rosemary, and Fred (three and six years younger than Philip, respectively), each had small rooms. Lewis Dunaway managed a piano dealership, but his heart was in fishing and camping in his kitted-out wooden camper, which he had built by hand on the frame of a small truck. Blanche Harrison Dunaway took a commercial course after high school and worked as a secretary. Theirs was a working-class family, with Fred Dunaway employed at a local factory after school and Rosemary a clerk in a local department store. So the Levins' and the Dunaways' friendship went across the tracks: Levin with his tutors and elegantly furnished home; Dunaway with his part-time jobs and ramshackle house.

At age twelve, Philip Dunaway sent a volume of poems by Wallace Stevens to the author, asking him to autograph it. At thirteen, he produced his first literary magazine, "Secession," with works by E. E. Cummings and Tristen Tzara, as well as an essay on Antonin Artaud.<sup>19</sup> His high school years were intense, spent studying Latin, Japanese (with Levin, on their own), and French. Fascinated by antiquity, he studied traditional forms, and his poetry of this period explored sonnets and villanelles. Both he and Levin valued literary correspondence. Even when they were to see each other the next week, they would write. Dunaway's letters to Levin are thick with allusions to classics

19 Philip Dunaway, "Deux Morceaux" (unpublished literary journal, July 1922). Document in possession of the authors. See appendix A.

hardly imaginable as part of today's U.S. high school curriculum. "Dunaway was tall and husky with dark hair and eyes. He wore horn-rimmed glasses and spoke rapidly. There was a trace of early stammer in his speech," a family member later wrote.<sup>20</sup>

The core group of poets remained in touch. "They would get together amongst themselves and talk late in to the evening about politics, morality, and the endless discussions of precocious teenage intellectuals. Philip, severe but kindly, chaired The Poetry Society meetings, doling out guarded praise to us aspiring poets."<sup>21</sup>

Dunaway initially met Levin in late in October 1926, though their correspondence dates from 1927. Looking back on their meeting, either at the Poetry Society or at a local public library when each was amazed at the other's reading taste, Harry Levin wrote, "May the Jehovah in whom you once took all the zeal of a proselyte reward you [for writing]."<sup>22</sup> Afterwards, every two weeks, they would meet at the society's meetings; but mainly they would walk around Minneapolis's Lake of Isles, on which Harry's family lived, discussing poetry and contemporary literature. Their families rarely met, not moving in the same circles. Harry would come over for dinner at the Dunaway's home. When not holed up in Philip's room, he was often up with Lewis Dunaway in the attic. At West High School Dunaway preferred poetry to journalism, but Levin was content to write both. Theirs was a literary relationship first, yet one surprisingly intimate, as the correspondence portrays. Dunaway writes a sonnet to Levin, and Levin writes an ode to Philip Dunaway. (Levin also wrote Dunaway's obituary, some thirty years prematurely.)<sup>23</sup>

#### LITERARY CORRESPONDENTS

"He had, when I knew him," Levin wrote of Dunaway, "a very pretty talent at imitating Wallace Stephens [*sic*], and a vexing habit of imitating Ezra Pound's imitation of Robert Browning's imitations of Ronsard, Vacqueiras, and de Borns. He was highly impressionable (the purest sense of the word 'aesthetic') and sought the motjoute, each new literary delight, and—very casually—beauty." Levin, almost sixteen, was already a critic.<sup>24</sup>

20 Lilian Zaret Dunaway, manuscript family history (unpublished, 2004). Document in possession of the authors.

21 *Ibid.*

22 MS Am 2461 (260).

23 Philip Dunaway, "Lines to Levin." Mock statement of limitation: "Consists of two numbered and signed copies type-written on pastel linen in the last month of 1928. This is copy number two."; MS Am 2461 (260-64); MS Am 2461 (260-19).

24 MS Am 2461 (260-64).

In high school, Levin had written an April Fool's letter: "My Dear Sir: Because of his numerous literary activities, Mr. Levin can not undertake to criticize the work of amateurs. Sincerely, Fredrick Klopstock, Secretary to Mr. Levin."<sup>25</sup> The follow-up letter was jocose:

mr philip dunaway wishes to apologize for giving mr levin spurious information regarding a la recherché de temps perdu completed two years ago, in the face of mr levin's new translation. mr 'vin's translation will be the best thing since baudelaire's poe and will do more than lindbergh to cement international relations. it will be entitled the research for things gone by? and the first volume, the way of all swans? will be published next year. Sodom and gommorrahe to be translated sodom: today and tomorrow (and tomorrow and tomorrow. . . ?) will appear in 1935."<sup>26</sup>

The light tone of their correspondence shifts in the late 1920s from amusing parodies and fabrications to something slightly graver, reflecting competitive tensions as high school ends. Gradually, the mentee begins to criticize the mentor and reveals a working aesthetic as he critiques Dunaway's drafts:

last time it [the influence] was stevens and eliot, this time it is pound and eliot—some slight improvement i grant you. last time, and for very good reasons, there was a little more of philip, and this time, for no reason at all, there is a little more of harry. perhaps i am prejudiced, but i like philip better. . . . you write wonderfully well; it is but your critical faculty that is at fault. or, very likely, mine. learn the difference between a conceit and a poem. read the road to xanadu, man. surely your admiration for that stately study will show you that a pretty thought itself is not a poem. surely you will see that a poem must be fashioned from a collation of reminiscences, a garland of fancies, a bouquet of conceits, matured and ripened and made splendid in the crucible of the creative mind. perhaps you are not interested in my poems; you never seemed to be. It would not interest you to know that my pathetic little verses, so few and so poor, nascent in actual birth throes, have caused me some pain and no little trouble. but one must first master technique. let us, you and i, aim then at perfection; there will be those who come after to measure how far we fall short<sup>27</sup>

25 MS Am 2461 (259).

26 MS Am 2461 (259).

27 MS Am 2461 (260–64).

From 1927 on, the correspondence between Levin and Dunaway occurs more or less weekly, filled with their latest translations, poems, and criticism. Their epistles, though at times hilarious, are focused. In October 1927, six months before the exchange above, Levin writes “my dear dunaway: please send the poyhem back with a bit of honest criticism. It is my only copy. It is my only chance to become criticized honestly.” Such correspondence inevitably reveals teenage tensions, aesthetic and otherwise. In the letter quoted above, Levin compares his work ironically to Dunaway’s “sweet, sentimental garden of lovely flowers of poesy.”<sup>28</sup>

Much of what is known about the relationship between these two is from the retrospective poetry Dunaway wrote in the 1940s and 1950s, such as “Concerning Lake of the Isles.” The significant differences of their cultural and economic backgrounds surface here. Dunaway names the millionaires’ houses along Lake of the Isles Boulevard where Levin lived. At the end, he softly drops in his own residence: “Bryant remotest, and I knew with shame / its paint was faded and its walls were frame.”<sup>29</sup>

That summer of 1927, Levin and Dunaway continued to be close and productive. Looking back from 1955, Dunaway wrote, “After the lazy summer, I would plan things that I must do: study Latin and Greek, perfect my bowing [on the cello], scan old verses, live and die hard, have a friend like you.”<sup>30</sup>

In the fall of 1927, the Dunaways moved to Indianapolis, for Lewis’s job selling Baldwin pianos. Philip Dunaway studied at Broad Ripple High School, where his average of 92 (and a reported IQ of 182) put him on the honor roll and prepared him for later study at the University of Chicago.<sup>31</sup> But at the end of the school year in 1928, as Dunaway returned with his family to Minneapolis, Levin went off with his parents to Europe before returning to West High for his last year there. And then in the fall of 1929 he left Minneapolis for Cambridge and corresponded with Dunaway during his freshman and sophomore years at Harvard.

Fortunately, such absences encouraged correspondence. “You say you have forgotten me, my friend?” Levin writes in the spring before his departure for Europe, with Dunaway still in Indiana:

Alas, then I no longer exist. There is that stammering dolt introduced  
and reintroduced to my mother’s friends; there is the armoured cynic

28 MS Am 2461 (260–38).

29 Philip Dunaway, “Concerning Lake of the Isles,” (unpublished poem, ca. 1953). Document in possession of the authors. See appendix B.

30 Philip Dunaway, “Fragment From a Thirteenth Summer,” (unpublished poem, April 5, 1955). Document in possession of the authors.

31 K.V. Ammerman, principal of Broad Ripple High School, to Mr. and Mrs. Lewis A. Dunaway, December 13, 1927. Document in possession of the authors.

casting his painful barbs from his [West High] Weekly room citadel; there is a casual sophist admired by the small-beer aesthetes; and there is the eager youth to be seen staring at exhibitions and listening to recitals. But where is Harry? Harry found ruins in footprints and gleaned wisdom from semaphores. Harry sprouted an unaccountable pair of wings and was deemed highly precocious for a person of his antiquity. Harry curled up inside a book and became an illustration. He tried so hard to be a Beardsley, but at best he was only a Tenggren. Harry became an Homunculus and reduced himself to an idealized essence so that you may carry him with you in your vest pocket to Indiana

Dear and inevitable romantic, I know not how much of that aureole epistolary halo with which you surround yourself is of your own fabrication, nor how many of those charming beings with which you battle loyally for whatever Cause you may have in mind are of the same unfortunate material as ourselves, nor yet—if they be human—what traits did God give them and what traits did Dunaway.<sup>32</sup>

In the meantime, awaiting Dunaway's return, he announces on January 3, 1928, that he has that day completed the works of James Joyce, after a marathon reading of *Ulysses* with friends:

Chamber Music is invested with the most complete genius. Exiles is diluted Ibsen. Dubliners is strong, rising technique and style. Portrait is one of the finest novels you and I, Dunaway, will live to see.

He announces the founding of an organization, "Some Friends to Ulysses, the Society for the Diffusion of James Joyce Among the Provincials."<sup>33</sup> Was Levin's use of "Provincials" ironic? Minneapolis by this time had grown to a half-million people, with major automotive and milling factories. Ships steamed across the Great Lakes and Mississippi, and the Great Northern Line tied the city to international destinations. Perhaps Levin intended an emergent pride of region, in the time of Sinclair Lewis's best-selling novels, in this word "Provincials." After a while, the intensity of the correspondence became reflexive. In the summer of 1928, as Levin left for a tour of Europe with his family, their correspondence abated, as Dunaway worked full-time.

32 MS Am 2461 (259).

33 MS Am 2461 (260–30).

Levin jokes that the “Dunaway-Levin correspondence will be edited by H. L. Mencken,” a figure for Levin notable for his anti-Semitism.<sup>34</sup>

Decades later he would write to Dunaway, “Hovering as I do, and have forming years [*sic*], in a sort of half-world of identification with the ethos of Judaism while drowsing about in various kinds and conditions of social life, I have had many opportunities to observe and reflect upon the evil that I hate . . . in a generation we might just possibly be able to leave our children a legacy [of tolerance].”<sup>35</sup>

The summer before graduation, the sixteen-year-old had held vivid notions of the importance of their correspondence. “I believe my dear Philip that our correspondence, which is mainly yours, has carried the process of letter-writing to such a high degree of virtuosity that the composition of a single note becomes a task as arduous as it is vain . . . we strove to put heaven in a note.”<sup>36</sup>

In the fall of 1929, with Dunaway at Chicago and Levin starting Harvard (at seventeen), he writes:

Harvard has abated and Cambridge is deserted, and the same good or ill fortune that left me stranded on this desert island has accommodated me with the appropriate and requisite cargo of books for a pair of recalcitrant theses. So I read Longinus, I read Dionysius of Halicarnassus, I read austere Aristotle. I decipher the archives of the Commonwealth, and the letters of its Latin Secretary, one John Milton. I read Meredith on the Comic Spirit, Bergson on Laughter, and Fielding on the Ridiculous. But just now I have been rereading certain of your communications, and rediscovering a fine actuality that these graver works threaten to bury.

He lays out his ambitions for his time at Harvard: “I shall have three years hence a thorough knowledge of English literature and a general knowledge of the French, Latin, and Greek literature and an acquaintance with the principal ideas and movements of history, philosophy, and the sciences.” He then proceeds to list “the year’s brief bibliography,” a list of essays on topics ranging from Livy to a study of seventeenth-century English prose. Something appears here of the pain of the seventeen-year-old leaving home and his high school friends. Following his list of papers and essays, he closes in a melancholy vein with “Philip, stay with me, and keep reminding me that I once set out to be a poet.”<sup>37</sup>

34 MS Am 2461 (260–25).

35 MS Am 2461 (260–105).

36 MS Am 2461 (260–80).

37 MS Am 2461 (260–85).

By his sophomore year, 1930, Levin reflected, “I fear we have passed the day when we were wont to entertain each other with lengthy lucubrations, laboriously penned and eagerly coined.”<sup>38</sup> And by 1938, their high school intimacy faded by time and half a continent’s distance, he writes, “for the convenience of your biographers, I’m glad you have begun to recognize that the hiatus in my reply of your letters was getting rather too long.”<sup>39</sup>

At Harvard, Harry Levin was part of the first cohort of Jews accepted as faculty in Ivy League English departments, alongside Lionel Trilling at Columbia (who won tenure there the same year as Levin at Harvard, 1944), Daniel Aaron, and M. H. Abrams—the latter two educated with Levin at Harvard.<sup>40</sup> The seventeen-year-old Levin had arrived at Harvard College only seven years after the attempt to establish a Jewish quota there.<sup>41</sup> “In 1929, Harvard’s Jewish student body was still trying to keep a low profile. Levin did not mind such invisibility. He came from Minneapolis, a city rabid with anti-Semitism during the twenties, where his father had managed to occupy a respectable position against all odds.”<sup>42</sup>

After Levin won the Bowdoin Prize, in 1931 Harvard published his undergraduate essay, “The Broken Column: A Study in Romantic Hellenism.”<sup>43</sup> T. S. Eliot was then visiting Cambridge as the Norton Professor of Poetry. To Levin, Eliot had long been a hero: “a legend become reality before our very eyes.” Perhaps as compelling as Eliot’s poetry was his success, expressed by Levin as a life paralleling his own: “The legendary reality of a middlewestern boy who, by way of New England, had somehow managed to enter the mainstream of English literature.”<sup>44</sup>

The same year Levin came up for tenure, Harvard’s Committee of Eight was informed “that certain members of the faculty object to the appointment of Jews to the tutorial staff in the belief that they are unacceptable to undergraduates.”<sup>45</sup> But, Klingenstein points out, “Harvard’s English department could not afford to turn down a man of such independence and ability without being openly anti-semitic. . . . [Levin was an] American Jewish success story.”<sup>46</sup>

38 MS Am 2461 (260–97).

39 MS Am 2461 (260–100).

40 Klingenstein, *Jews in the American Academy, 1900–1940: The Dynamics of Intellectual Assimilation* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 200–202.

41 *Ibid.*, 201.

42 *Ibid.*, 202.

43 *Ibid.*, 201.

44 Levin, “A Personal Retrospect,” in *Grounds for Comparison* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 7.

45 Klingenstein, *Jews in the American Academy, 1900–1940*, 202.

46 *Ibid.*, 202.

The Dunaway-Levin correspondence trails off in the mid-1950s, as Dunaway became ill but remembered Levin's birthday in odes and sonnets. A telling exchange took place in 1946. Levin describes being granted "permanent tenure" at Harvard, with mixed emotions, somewhat dreading eating at the same table with his colleagues for the rest of his professional life. Then he looks back again on their friendship, for Dunaway had recently written of a post-war visit to Minneapolis, where, in the attic of the family house, he had reread their correspondence.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE COLLECTION

Prior to this new acquisition, the Levin papers at Harvard were largely limited to departmental correspondence, beginning in the 1940s, handled by Levin's then-secretary, Betty Anne Farmer. Thus, this acquisition represents the earliest material available at the institution where he made his career. (One side of this correspondence, Dunaway's, was already archived at Houghton Library.)

The Levin-Dunaway correspondence was discovered by accident, in 2008, in the flooded basement of the widow of Philip Dunaway. Having moved to Florida, Lillian Dunaway left behind four boxes of manuscripts from her graduate study at Columbia and early years, including a well-organized set of files of Mr. Dunaway's correspondence. And then the boiler leaked.

One-hundred-eighty-eight pages of Levin's letters and works in Dunaway's files were found wet but intact in their folders on a gray, wet day in Southampton, N.Y. Leaf by leaf, the materials were separated. Fortunately, speedy action meant virtually no pages were substantially damaged and unreadable, despite the moisture. A number of the originals were on onionskin, which proved surprisingly resilient.

After drying the pages out and reassembling them in chronological order, Dunaway's son contacted Houghton Library in 2009. Since these are the earliest poems and criticism of Harry Levin, curator Leslie Morris expressed an interest in acquiring them. Once the correspondence and papers were organized, a doctoral candidate in Literary Modernism at the University of New Mexico, Stephanie Spong, created an index for 107 separate items. These materials and a few additional items, such as Dunaway's poems to Levin, made up the collection that the library acquired in January 2013.

Harry Levin's letters to "Mon Cher Phillippe" are as gossipy as they are intellectual; they demonstrate a finely developed appreciation for classical and contemporary literature. The earlier letters show the most playfulness in testing out diverse literary styles and forms. Levin clearly learned by doing, and his "Dubity: A Tale of the

Supernatural, by Gertrude Strom”<sup>47</sup> or “Tzara in the Pump Room”<sup>48</sup> illustrate his ability to process various styles and movements through his own creative method. The jointly edited literary magazine “Sea-Change: An Epistle in Aesthetics”<sup>49</sup> included a submission from “guest artist” William Shakespear [*sic*], a manifesto, and an epigram by H. L. Mencken. These humble literary offerings compiled and shared with friends and fellow bibliophiles were, in many ways, Levin’s first study in literary modernism.

The collection presents an epistolary-literary intimacy, rich with prose poems, satires, commentaries on current European literature, and, above all, their respective ambitions as poets. Like the moderns who interested them, such as Eliot and Pound, both Dunaway and Levin were fascinated by genealogies of poetic form regardless of national origin: the collection includes attempts at Chinese characters, letters in French, lines in Latin and Sanskrit, as well as haikus, sonnets, and prose poems. The young men collaborated on drafts of three literary magazines, which are included in the collection (“Logosphagos or the Soul of the Poet under Sturm and Drang,” “Marlowe Head,” and “Sea-Change”), they continued to hone their critical skills by reflecting on a variety of artists and styles. After arriving at Harvard, Levin writes to Dunaway, “Longfellow, Lowell, and Agassiz have evaded me, and the semi-legendary Sophocles Apostolides Evangelianus had become . . . a wan ghost.”<sup>50</sup> This listing offers a glimpse into Levin’s Harvard college days, and more broadly, the excitement of two young men of letters, in one of the most exciting eras of recent literary history.

#### LEVIN ON MODERNISM

In some sense, Levin’s modernism anticipates his future professors’ orientation: T. S. Eliot’s and Irving Babbitt’s belief in the primacy and lasting value of the classics. Kit Marlowe and Shakespeare frequently show up in Levin’s letters and magazines. In one letter, however, Levin proffers a “Suggested Conversation Between a Modernistic Youth and His Classical Tutor,” wherein “Filip” tells his tutor, “Your threats amuse me mildly; your opinions interest me little” in response to the tutor’s dismissal of modern novels.<sup>51</sup> And in another letter, Levin pairs praise for the incomparable skill of Marlowe’s line with a parody of T. S. Eliot in light verse.<sup>52</sup> This back and forth between waggish jabs and serious criticism and poetry reveals a deeper, lasting interest in formal experimentation and prioritizes a modernism unbounded by time or geography. Later in his career he

47 MS Am 2461 (260–4).

48 MS Am 2461 (260–16).

49 MS Am 2461 (260–43).

50 MS Am 2461 (260–83).

51 MS Am 2461 (260–31).

52 MS Am 2461 (260–36).

maintained this sense of balance between new and old, concluding one essay with these observations:

Higher education, across the centuries, has constituted a continuous dialogue between the minds of ancestors and of contemporaries. If we, the latter, know any more than the former, it is because we have learned so much from them. As T. S. Eliot remarked, “they are that which we know.” Naturally we may react against them, and the reactions would not prove unproductive if they point towards a dialectical synthesis.<sup>53</sup>

This is the same synthesis that marks seminal modernist works like Eliot’s “The Waste Land,” which begins with epigrams in Latin, Greek, and Italian, while dedicating the poem to Eliot’s contemporary Ezra Pound. The famous opening line “April is the cruelest month” is vague, but resides in the present moment, while the closing Sanskrit chant hearkens to a history older than Western Europe’s imagination.

An expansive erudition presents itself through the correspondence and mirrors Levin’s later remarks upon in his scholarly work on modernism. It is not difficult to see the tracings of a youth fascinated by his literary forebears in the scholar still passionate about the age in which he came to maturity. He asserts:

Moderns . . . were preoccupied with the minds of their characters, and—what is worse—that they make serious demands upon the minds of their readers. . . . But popularity was excluded, by definition, from the aim of the writers I have been discussing; their names did not figure upon the best-seller lists of their day; many others did, which are now forgotten. The aura of obscurity or unintelligibility which may still occasionally tinge these intellectuals, in some degree, emanates from their refusal to advertise themselves or to talk down to their audience in the hope of enlarging it. . . . Their ultimate quality, which pervades their work to the very marrow, is its uncompromising intellectuality.<sup>54</sup>

“What Was Modernism?” Levin’s essay quoted above, remains very much in line with the interests and efforts of his correspondence with Dunaway.

Far removed from the New York and European literary scene, the Dunaway-Levin correspondence discusses Gertrude Stein, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Langston Hughes, Marianne Moore, Edna St. Vincent Millay, E. E. Cummings, Ernest Hemingway, Carl

53 Levin, “Core, Canon, Curriculum,” *College English* 43, no. 4 (April 1981): 362.

54 Levin, “What Was Modernism?” in *Varieties of Literary Experience: Eighteen Essays in World Literature* (New York: New York University Press, 1962), 326.

Van Vechten, and, of course, James Joyce. Levin's search for the best and most moving among all these authors is perhaps best summed up in his 1928 letter to Dunaway concerning James Joyce's *Ulysses*, which he compares to *Beowulf*, *Tamburlaine*, *Childe Harold*, and *Jude the Obscure* in "marking . . . a new epoch in English letters."<sup>55</sup> Levin would continue to study many of these moderns in his scholarly career, publishing *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction* (1941), *The Portable James Joyce* (1947), and *Symbolism and Fiction* (1957), along with numerous articles and lectures. But just as Pound studied the troubadours and Eliot studied Indian philosophy, Levin's publishing record spreads wider than the historical period of modernism. He also published on Stendhal, Balzac, Proust, Cervantes, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Hawthorne, Poe, Melville, and Nabokov, among others. The early evidence of Levin the polyglot in his correspondence with the equally accomplished Dunaway does not necessarily predict such a broad critical reach, but it certainly makes such a career less surprising.

Levin's early enthusiasm was sharpened and tempered by Irving Babbitt, and in 1960 Levin would be named the Irving Babbitt Chair of Comparative Literature at Harvard. In many ways, his descriptions of Babbitt echo the descriptions of the moderns he so much admired: capacious study and fierce dedication to intellectual rigor. In his 1960 Irving Babbitt Inaugural Lecture, he shares a telling anecdote about his professor:

Nor could I claim a laying-on of hands without recalling a publication I have long tried to forget, a paper written originally for his course in Romanticism. When he heard that it would be published in a series of undergraduate essays—well, I will not do his memory the injustice of trying to quote him verbatim. His approval was qualified, of course, though he was generally encouraging and specifically helpful. I particularly remember the pensive statement that he himself had not published a book until well into his forties, along with the sobering query whether I was really old enough to practice as a critic. Babbitt's preference for maturity was not a matter of calendar age or primarily of relative experience; it was a question of gaining a critic's license by getting to know one's business, so to speak, by mastering a complex and voluminous body of material.<sup>56</sup>

Although Levin did not himself heed such advice in publishing, his books and articles reveal a concerted effort to master the "complex and voluminous body of material"

55 MS Am 2461 (260–51).

56 Levin, *Irving Babbitt and the Teaching of Literature*, The Irving Babbitt Inaugural Lecture (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), 8.

presented to his profession. Babbitt also offers Levin the chance to champion the autodidact:

Notwithstanding . . . institutional associations, [Babbitt] had inherited from his self-taught father the autodidactic temperament. Avoiding the sanctioned routines by which *homo academicus* is moulded and rounded and polished, he lived the maxim that true education is self-education; and his educational goals were too far-reaching to fit within a departmental program.<sup>57</sup>

Dunaway was most likely the first autodidact Levin worked with closely, but certainly not the last. Their letters do not reveal any sense that Levin and Dunaway thought themselves special or unique among their peers, but Levin's later publications continuously highlight and praise the possibilities of the self-motivated intellect, from the moderns to Babbitt himself.

Babbitt, Professor of French at Harvard (1894–1933), is often remembered as a zealot for the classics and resistant to change within the university. Levin, however, presents him as a perceptive and judicious voice among shifting times:

It was a central path that brought Irving Babbitt to Harvard University. The elders he encountered there—Eliot and James, Goodwin and Kittredge—were models of sounder learning; yet he found them immersed in a *Zeitgeist* which had fostered the feckless tinkering he knew so well; they were specialized investigators rather than universal doctors; they were rather sleuths than sages. He liked to point out that the term “scholar” meant, etymologically speaking, a man of leisure; and the use of that leisure, he insisted, was not for revery but for reflection. The crown of meditation was mediation; scholarly contemplation should lead to action, which ought not to be confused with the hustling of committees.<sup>58</sup>

Babbitt's action-oriented scholarship was an “endeavor” to “make [the past] live in the present, to learn and teach the lessons of history;”<sup>59</sup> much like Levin's moderns' “endeavor” was “to have created a conscience for a scientific age.”<sup>60</sup> In both instances Levin eagerly reflects the need to make literature and literary study a subject that moves beyond the stacks of dusty tomes. It is no surprise, then, that a reviewer described

57 Levin, *Irving Babbitt and the Teaching of Literature*, 14.

58 *Ibid.*, 16.

59 *Ibid.*, 17.

60 Levin, “What Was Modernism?,” 329.

Levin's first comprehensive book, *Contexts of Criticism*, as "remarkable for its erudition and objectivity," and went on to praise the work as a whole: "Combining scholarship and critical insight, Levin provides an example of the amalgam needed to offset the undue emphasis placed on either in our time."<sup>61</sup> Another reviewer groups this volume with scholarly publications from major American critics of the day: William Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks, Northrop Frye, Kenneth Burke, and Yvor Winters. Taking the group of texts as a whole, including Levin's, the reviewer proposes, "For students of both the practical arts and the fine arts the books listed above represent a varied and, in the main, an extremely useful addition to the critical lore."<sup>62</sup> On Levin's work, in particular, the author continues her commendation:

With charm and grace he ranges widely over a variety of topics of interest to students of the humanities: new frontiers in the humanities, the meaning of classicism, realism, tradition, the style of Hemingway, the revival of rhetoric in contemporary criticism. The author has made "no effort to erase the marks of oral presentation." Free from the self-consciousness that marks much contemporary criticism, Levin manages casually to weave into his essays a remarkable number of critical observations pertaining to definition, formulation, and method on one hand, and on the other, analysis of style, structure, and technique.<sup>63</sup>

For a single scholar to publish on such a considerable range of topics is unusual, but for that scholar's work to be also described as full of "charm and grace" and "casually" free from "self-consciousness" is a singular feat. Considering the present state of literary criticism, Levin's ambitious project is almost unimaginable. It appears that Levin, like his teacher Babbitt, was fortunate to find the middle path between breadth and depth.

#### "THE POET LEVIN STRIVES WITH THE PHILOSOPHER LEVIN"<sup>64</sup>

Although it may not seem fair to critique a poet's very earliest works, written from ages fourteen to nineteen, an analysis of poems included in the collection reveals

61 Irving Deer, review of *Contexts of Criticism*, by Levin, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 44, no. 4 (1958): 449.

62 Marie Hochmuth, review of *Contexts of Criticism*, by Levin, *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 43, no. 3 (1957): 312.

63 *Ibid.*, 314.

64 MS Am 2461 (260-19).

Levin's talent for a poetic style both modernist and futurist. "Manifesto" appears in the November 1927 issue of "Sea-Change":

I

When, lo! the vacuum cleaner sings,

Its spacious diapason brings

To many people many things!

A. The stupendous cacophony

Of forty-seven Blue Seal records

Running simultaneously.

B. The sound of small wheels turning

Larger wheels.

C. The metallic clink of guitars [*sic*]

In a light-winking bordello

Of Romanesque red brick.

II

Who made that rat?

Not I, said Jehovah,

Nor Cristabelle Rovah.

Come, take our cat,

Said surly Ben Hecht 'n'

His friend Carl Van Vechten.

Come, think now, how is

Miss—Miss Will Cather,

Youg Hergey, or rather

Old Theo Powys?<sup>65</sup>

The poem makes a formal nod to modernist aesthetics. An attention to sound, much like the *melopoeia* Ezra Pound defines in "How to Read," shows up in the first section with the soft *r* sound building in "turning," "Larger," and "guitares" before resolving itself in the liquid consonance of the "Romanesque red brick." It hums the sound of the vacuum even as the Levin lists, with memorandum precision, descriptions of the sound.

65 MS Am 2461 (260-43).

“The sound of small wheels turning / Larger wheels” simultaneously catalogs the workings of the vacuum and anticipates William Carlos Williams’s oft quoted 1944 claim: “A poem is a small (or large) machine made out of words.”<sup>66</sup> The particularity of the formatting, the emphasis on industrial mechanism, and the title all point to similarities with Italian Futurism, while the juxtaposition of images captures the collage style popular in Cubism and many other modernist poems. The young Levin’s work is an experiment with the tools he sees being employed by the poets he read and admired. Like the work of Stein, Eliot, or Williams, it contrasts quotidian matters with the care of formal poetics, creating an environment in which readers can appreciate something unique about both. The young Levin imagined and created a literary community that expanded beyond the margins of his and Dunaway’s letters and publications—including what they read, what they saw, whom they admired or disdained.

Surrealism and Dadaism were very much a part of the pair’s conception of Modernism. “What is all bud bud Dada,” Levin wrote.<sup>67</sup> As early as 13, Dunaway had included rudimentary translations of Artaud and Tzara, two figures who rode the imaginative boundary between Surrealism and Dada. In fact, Levin and Dunaway’s usage of these texts from the teens and twenties actually gravitates closer toward Dada, in its japing, disaffected tone, than to Surrealism. Levin’s “Tzara in the Pump Room” vacillates between embracing Dada’s dogma and mocking it, as the Surrealists did.

In 1928, as Dunaway was sending his translations of Paul Eluard and Philippe Soupault to Levin, neither was pursuing the image of Surrealism which later dominated its memory in popular culture—that of anything fantastic or bizarre. The Surrealists were actually deeply political and psychoanalytical; their mission is nicely summed up in *Surrealism: The Road to the Absolute*, “[Surrealism] was not an attempt to transcend the physical world but to transmute it, not to rise above but to change at will the climate.”<sup>68</sup>

In 1928, Levin sent and dedicated his “Symphoniette Surrealiste” to Dunaway. More sophisticated in terms of poetic development, this nine-page work is the longest poem of the collection. Its tone is jocular as well as earnest. The introduction curtly but playfully informs readers “outside of a small group in southern France i am the only living practitioner of these pracepts” and defines “the true surrealist” as one who “parallels his reality and reflection . . . in a surréalité, a supereality [*sic*], as it were.”<sup>69</sup> The introduction closes with a gracious nod to Dunaway and his critical acumen: “I

66 William Carlos Williams, “Introduction to *The Wedge*,” in *Selected Essays of William Carlos Williams* (New York: New Directions, 1969), 256.

67 MS Am 2461 (260–8).

68 Anna Balakian, *Surrealism: The Road to the Absolute* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 173.

69 MS Am 2461 (260–64).

think there is no need of explaining to you (one Philip Dunaway, to whom this work, Opus 297, is dedicated), my mental processes.”

Tempo markings accompany the poems included in the “Symphoniette,” to the left of the first line, much the way a musical score might. They function both as a guide for reading and as titles for the four short free verse lyrics: “Andante,” “Allegro con Vivace,” “Tempo di Minuetto,” and “Presto.” Although the introduction and title claim to be surrealist, lines and sections invoke the early style of T. S. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” and “The Waste Land.” In the first poem of “Symphoniette,” “Andante,” Levin writes:

The soul within the soul  
contemplates its heights,  
seeking an high, far corner of chaos  
where solitude broods,  
rising and rearing,  
greeting and regreeting,  
fretfully,  
meeting after meeting

The movement of the soul into heights and corners hints at Eliot’s fog slinking around the city in “Prufrock.” And the sonic qualities of the cyclical “rising and rearing, / greeting and regreeting” echo Eliot’s anxious lines “time yet for a hundred indecisions, / And for a hundred visions and revisions.”<sup>70</sup> Both authors highlight the sense of meaningless repetition, and the listlessness felt by a post–World War I world that could no longer un-ironically consider the idea of “progress.”

The final poem in the “Symphoniette,” “Presto,” closes with “SHALOM / shantih / Auf Wiedersehen.” This is the same transliteration Eliot used for the Sanskrit term for peace in the close of “The Waste Land.” Although Eliot’s “Shantih shantih shantih” more accurately reflects the traditional meditative chant that closes Upanishad prayers, Levin’s lines make use of the great peace of “shantih” to bridge the growing gap between Hebrew and German. The connection is both wish and warning for a history that had barely begun to unfold in 1928.

Poems and poetic experiments like the “Symphoniette” pepper the correspondence from Levin to his most trusted critic. Although Levin became a lauded scholar of the

70 T. S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” in *Prufrock and Other Observations* (London: The Egoist, 1917), 11.

modernist works he revered as a youth, his earliest education was working through their experiments in his own verse and in correspondence with Dunaway. In this, perhaps more than in any official literary studies education, he learned to be a scholar of modernism. High modernists like Williams, Pound, Stein, and Eliot defined modernism not simply with their poetry but with all their concurrently published essays, interviews, and editorials about artistic goals, literary movements, and their contemporaries. Levin, later a defining scholar for the field of comparative literature, manifested a personal experience of modernism working in the poetic and autodidact style of those he admired.

The zeal for modernist literature that characterized two precocious adolescents of the American Midwest in the 1920s found outlet in their later works: in Dunaway's two classic anthologies of memoir and his poetry; and in Levin's dozen volumes of criticism and literary history. But such literary zealotry had become rare in the academy by the late 1960s, according to Louis Kampf's controversial survey of English studies: "The scandal of literary scholarship is its lack of philosophy, its blissful ignorance of ideas. . . . Professors of literature seem to have less sense of identity as literary intellectuals."<sup>71</sup>

The Dunaway-Levin correspondence documents an era in which literary-critical ambitions flourished. In today's everything-literary-at-once culture, it is mainly post-graduate students and authors who experience the drama and challenges of a literary life. The role of public intellectuals such as Philip Dunaway has shrunk; today's pundits discuss policy and congressional discord, rather than Eliot or Tzara. This correspondence, then, is a record of vanishing literary enthusiasms of bright teenagers, while "[h]aving woven for ourselves a bright, mystic, and many-colored demiurgy," as Levin wrote.<sup>72</sup> The correspondence documents the making of a major-minor modernist. "Those early walks," Levin wrote, "set a pure and pointed direction which I suppose I shall always follow."<sup>73</sup>

71 Louis Kampf, "The Scandal of Literary Scholarship," in *The Dissenting Academy* (New York: Pantheon, 1968), 52–54.

72 MS Am 2461 (260–102).

73 MS Am 2461 (260).

## APPENDIX A

DEUX MORCEAUX: Of the following specimens from Number Two, July 1922, of SESESSION three copies have been typewritten upon stained official paper, bound in hand-made Italian Esparto papers & numbered; this is copy number . Done November twenty-fourth, the year of our lord 1927.

FOUR POEMS of E. E. CUMMINGS

I.

on the Madam's best april the  
twenty nellie

anyway and  
it's flutters everything  
queer; does smells he smiles is  
like Out of doors he's a with  
eyes and making twice the a week  
you kind of, know (kind well of  
A sort of the way he smile but  
and her a I mean me a  
Irish, cook but well oh don't  
you makes burst want to dear somehow  
quickyes when (now, dark dear oh)  
the loeman  
how, luminously  
oh how listens and, expands  
my somewherealloverme hoart my  
the halfgleem coolish  
of The what are  
parke for wiggle yes has  
are leap, which, anyway

give rapid lapfulls of  
idiotic big hands

II.

(and i imagine  
never mind Joe agreeably cheerfully remarked  
surrounded by fat stupid animals when  
the jewess shrieked  
the messiah tumbled successfully into the world  
the animals continued eating. And i imagine she, and  
heard them slobber and  
in the darkness)  
steed sharp angels with faces like Jim  
Europe

III.

life hurl my  
yes, crumbles hand(ful released conarefetti)  
ov sryflitter,inga. where  
mil(ions of a flickf)litter ing brightmillion  
ofS hurl;edindodg; ing  
whom areEyes shy-dodge is bright crumbhandful  
, quick-hurl odinawhe  
Is flitterorumb, flutterorriabe are floatfall-  
ing; ailwhere:  
a: crinabflitteringish is arefloatsis ingfall-  
all mil,shy ailbrightens  
my (hurl flicker handful  
in) dodging are shybright is crum be(all)  
if, ey Es

IV.

workinman with hand so hairy-sturdy  
you may turn O turn that airy hurdysturdygurdy  
but when will turn backward O backward Time in  
your no thy light  
and make me a child, a pretty dribbling child,  
a little child.

In thy your ear:  
en amérique on ne belt que de Jinglyale.  
things are going rather keira  
over there, over there.  
yet we scarcely fare much better- -

what's become of (if you please)  
all the glory that or which was Greece  
all the grandja  
that was dada?

make me a child, stout hurdysturdygurdyman  
waiter, make me a child. So this is Paris.  
i will sit in the corner and drink tanks and  
think drinks

in memory of the Grand and Old days:  
of Amy Sandburg  
and Algernon Carl Swinburned.

Waiter a drink two or three drinks  
what's become of Maeterlinck  
now that April's here?  
(ask the man who owns one  
ask Dad, He knows).

MR. AA THE ANTIPHILOSOPHER by TRISTAN TEARA

The room was full of furniture drawn from very different periods. one afternoon as i went out, i was astonished at being made to wait at the door 2 or 3 minutes. Mr. Aa was sitting on a chest. She begged me, laughing, not to be disturbed. the chest was full of objects of great value. She said that she had not heard me knock. the coroner entered. Zounds! i cried, you are weeping. you are moved to the point of tears and you do not breathe a word to me of your troubles. The persons who attended the coroner guarded the doors. The thought of this also aroused me. The coroner was a young man. It was clear to me that some gener-

ous

Figure 3.4A. Philip Dunaway, "Deux Morceaux" (unpublished literary journal, July 1922, [1]). Document in possession of the authors.

ous and ardent sentiment functioned upon his face like a smouldering fire, though whether it were of love or compassion i could not say. The coroner tapped the objects in the chest and tested their stability. I sat down at the table with a right gallant air, but by the light of the candle betwixt him and me i perceived a certain sadness in the countenance ~~of~~ and in the eyes of my dear friend the coroner. He bent and looked down very often but said nothing. He marked out the place with silent powder and thus circumvented the danger. The coroner gave orders. These orders seemed as lugubrious to me as the perverse brilliance of this festive gaiety. He related to me that after having learned that i had deceived him, and that i had gone off with Mr. Aa, he had mounted a horse to pursue me, that he had arrived at St. Denis a half hour after my departure, that being certain that i would stop at Paris he had spent 6 weeks in a vain search for me, and that one day he had recognized Mr. Aa at the Comedy, and that he was so bravely dressed that he concluded the man owed this fortune to a new haul in scrap iron the returns of which had filled his money bags with palliative warata. He pulled the cord. Every other day. There i conceived a peaceful and portable summer of life. It is told that the judge was very severe. Unhappy knight, thou shalt lose all that thou hast loved in this world. Forgive me that i tell in so few words a tale which rends me. A cat forgotten by the express company leaps out of a porcelain vase and justice is solemnly rendered. Forgive me again that i encompass in so few words a tale which pierces my heart. But the pancreatic reservoir of the kidneys and the bowels makes feasible the crossing of the desert in a sailboat, which contains bottles of condensed farewells conservatories distilleries of gastric disgust strewn all along way down the Mississippi.

Figure 3.4B. Philip Dunaway, "Deux Morceaux" (unpublished literary journal, July 1922, [2]). Document in possession of the authors.

## APPENDIX B

### CONCERNING LAKE OF THE ISLES.

How close the lake was, in those years, meant more  
Than now seems credible; although it still  
Means much, I think, to live beside that shore  
Not too far south or east of Kenwood Hill  
And near the granite cube of old man Gates,  
The Walker's stone, the Crosby's tile,  
The timber millionaire who made, then built, his pile.  
The Newton house was closest of the three  
In that one sense that made its stucco right,  
And Emerson just less so in degree  
(Or Franklin's bricks upon another site?);  
Bryant remotest, and I knew with shame  
Its paint was faded and its walls were frame.

Figure 3.5. Philip Dunaway, "Concerning Lake of the Isles," (unpublished poem, ca. 1953).  
Document in possession of the authors.

# Contributors

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