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CHAPTER 15

Modernism

Philip McGowan

“I’ve never studied ‘Imagism’ or ‘Transcendentalism’ or any isms consciously. I just read all the poetry that came my way, old and new” (*PPL* 858). Resisting the idea that her reading occurred in tandem with formal categorizations of a writer’s work, Bishop neatly sidesteps classifications, including the modish movements that defined modernism. “The three qualities I admire in the poetry I like best are: *Accuracy, Spontaneity, Mystery*” (*PPL* 703) she writes in “Writing Poetry is an unnatural act...” before listing Herbert, Hopkins and Baudelaire as her three “favorite” poets.

Regarding modernism, for Bishop it existed as both an aesthetic inheritance and a personal reality, marked as much by her relationships with particular figures such as Marianne Moore, T.S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound as it was by her own carefully charted course between the contours of modernist, and later, aesthetic movements. Add to this the heteronormative gender politics central to Pound and Eliot’s ideas about modernist aesthetics in particular and modernism becomes a considerably more complicated legacy, if that is the right term, for a poet such as Bishop to inherit.

Indeed, to identify this writer who was born in 1911 in Worcester, Massachusetts¹ with one or other aspect of modern or postmodern poetry is not immediately straightforward for two related if parallel sets of facts: Bishop’s own transitive life, and modernism’s refusal to be an easily defined, monolithic entity that had precise start and end dates. According to Marjorie Perloff “modernism remains unfinished, a project aborted first by World War I and the two great Totalitarianisms

of the 1930s, and then by World War II and the ensuing Cold War.”² Elsewhere, she rejects the “tired dichotomy that has governed our discussion of twentieth-century poetry for much too long”:³ the split between modernism and postmodernism. It’s particularly clear that such a dichotomy neither appealed to nor instructed Bishop’s personal or professional interests. Reading the various strains of twentieth-century American poetry as a modulating continuum, Bishop navigates the spaces between each poetic offshoot as they rose, then fell. That said, Bishop’s engagement with modernism, particularly some of its main exponents, was at times forensic even if she held their more theoretical aspects at arm’s length.

The correspondence with Stevenson (January 1963–November 1965) outlines Bishop’s thoughts on individual writers and the broader fields of twentieth-century literature. She name-checks a series of modernist authors, whether poets or fiction writers, navigating for herself a route that would set her just apart from “Miss Moore’s generation from about 1928 on” (*PPL* 845) but, equally, from considerable swathes of her own generation. Assembling the map of Bishop’s favoured writers while also including space for the acknowledged literary titans and primary aesthetic influences of the period produces an archipelagic miscellany reminiscent of the variegated terrains mapped in “Crusoe in England” (1971). In his invaluable *Modern Poetry After Modernism*, James Longenbach highlights Bishop’s “complicated relationship to the political and intellectual climate of the thirties” as a contributing factor to her “formal idiosyncrasy (her desire to bend traditional poetic forms without breaking them).” Having entered Vassar as a student in 1930, Bishop would interview Eliot in May 1933 for the *Vassar Miscellany* with the result that, for Longenbach, “her sense of her own relationship to modernism was consequently not so clearly or

comfortably antagonistic.”⁴ What is clear from reading Bishop on other authors and artists is that she retained an admiration for, even a sense of loyalty to, individual writers and practitioners from across different time periods irrespective of any association they might have with a specific aesthetic movement. Whatever inheritance Bishop recognized, it was as much inflected by Romantics (Wordsworth) or Victorians (Hopkins) or the mid-nineteenth-century Transcendentalists⁵ as it was by advocates for different strains of modernist experimentation.

Bishop’s wish not to be identified with particular groups or individuals comes through in the Stevenson letters, whether as exasperation or as strategically placed commentary. “I am rather weary of always being compared to, or coupled with, Marianne” (*PPL* 842) she tells Stevenson on 18 March 1963, “proof that reviewers really very rarely pay much attention to what they’re reading & just repeat each other” (*PPL* 843). Her next letter, begun two days later, goes into considerably more detail about the writers she admires and from whom she “undoubtedly learned enormously”: “I think of Marianne, Cummings (we shared the same maid in N.Y. for several years), Dr Williams, Crane, Frost, as Heroes” (*PPL* 845). Remarking on those writers considered to be her peers—“my ‘contemporary’ poets,” she writes, pointedly including quotation marks around “contemporary” to question quite how contemporaneous they might actually be with her, or she with them—Bishop questions her inclusion in any sequential ordering of the poetic generations: “it is odd how I often feel myself to be a late-late Post World War I generation-member, rather than a member of the Post World War II generation” (*PPL* 846). The difference she indicates is intriguing: not part of a postmodern generation, but also not firmly identified with high modernism either, Bishop carves out a space for herself between

categories, moving fluently from one to another but never defined wholly within the critical parameters or formal constraints of any single group.

Alongside Moore, Wallace Stevens was the significant figure in Bishop's early development, and his poetry and essays feature as regular discussion topics in her correspondence with Moore.⁶ He was "more of an influence" than William Carlos Williams she readily acknowledges to Stevenson – "[a]t college I knew 'Harmonium' almost by heart. ('Wading at Wellfleet' I believe is the only poem that shows this influence much.) But I got tired of him and now find him romantic and thin" (*PPL* 862)—though Barbara Page for example reads Bishop's "The Monument" (1939) as her version of Stevens' *Owl's Clover* (1936).⁷ Moore had more direct opportunities to be an influence, encouraging Bishop to be more experimental with her first collection *North & South* (1946) by including prose sections⁸: it would take Bishop almost two decades to do this with her story "In The Village" bisecting the "Brazil" and "Elsewhere" poems in the first edition of *Questions of Travel* (1965). The Moore-Bishop relationship was "playful and provocative, as well as careful and reticent"⁹ as Linda Anderson notes but it adapted as Bishop's writing career retained an independent course between the multiple nodes of modernist writing. In Moore, Bishop recognised aspects of Hopkins' prose rhythms but would afford herself freer methods of structure and organisation: Longenbach astutely characterizes Bishop's modulation of Moore's poems, which "transform description into a structural principle," into Bishop's own works which "turn the process of describing into a structural principle."¹⁰

Bishop adopted a more circumspect position when it came to Williams. Like Pound's work, she was uncomfortable with Williams' "diffuseness" believing that

“both he & Pound, and their followers, would be vastly improved if one could lean on a sense of ‘system’ in their work somewhere” (*PPL* 862). From Bishop’s comments on other writers in her essays, letters and reviews, she was not a fan of poetic experiment just for poetic experiment’s sake. In 1970 she noted that “[a]s for concrete poetry, I like only Cummings – a brilliant and good humoured poet, one who really had something to say. Concrete poetry that other poets make, I find uninteresting.”¹¹ Even so, despite this late praise for Cummings, her review of his collection *Xaipe* (1950) two decades previously is mixed to say the least: while acknowledging “he is still playing his game and winning it” she laments several of the more forced moments of Cummings’ “obscene and epigrammatic” (*PPL* 688) humour in the volume. To Bishop, Cummings’ circumscribed and self-regulated domain demonstrates the confines of adhering to one mode of writing which, while demarcating the realm of his success, simultaneously highlights its limits.

In terms of her own work, and with *North & South* appearing in August 1946, one might assume that Bishop, along with her “contemporary” peers, would by dint of timing be direct inheritors of modernism or be the ones tasked to write “the sort of poetry that replaces modernism” as Randall Jarrell formulated it.¹² However, whether it is in the 1930s or the 1970s, Bishop pulls toward earlier exemplars of writers that interest her: “read a lot of poetry—all the time—and *not* 20th-century poetry” she advises a Miss Pierson in May 1975; “read *Campion*, *Herbert*, *Pope*, *Tennyson*, *Coleridge*—anything at all almost that’s any good, from the past [...]. Then the great poets of our own century—*Marianne Moore*, *Auden*, *Wallace Stevens*” (*OA* 596). With advice that mentions poets from different time periods and that makes no mention of defined schools or styles of writing, Bishop embodies Thomas Travisano’s

argument that she, Jarrell, Robert Lowell and John Berryman (Travisano's mid-century quartet) were "particularly reluctant to make master statements of aesthetic doctrine" and held an "abiding suspicion of and resistance to 'totalizing' ideologies of every stripe." The "shared determination" of this loosely aligned quartet "to bypass or unmake modernism's impersonal aesthetic" developed out of "acutely felt differences with their galaxy of modernist mentors, whose often avowedly 'reactionary' critical and political dictums"¹³ proved a barrier to their own articulations of independent and new poetic positions. For Bishop, the pervasive sense is of a writer preferring not to be part of any school or to be identified with any one poet, remaining apart in her own perfectly useful seclusion. Accepting the Neustadt International Prize for Literature in 1976, she invokes the figure of the sandpiper from her 1962 poem of that name to articulate this very sense: "all my life I have lived and behaved very much like that sandpiper—just running along the edges of different countries and continents, 'looking for something'" (*PPL* 731-2).

Rather than searching among the various modernist grains offered by others, it would be to her own theories that Bishop would return. Longenbach notes that her career "demonstrates not so much a linear development as a continual unfolding of the possibilities inherent in positions she articulated early on"¹⁴ in the essays she wrote while at Vassar, each one as crafted and engaging as her poetry. Of particular interest here are "Time's Andromedas" (1933), "Gerard Manley Hopkins: Notes on Timing in His Poetry" (1934), and "Dimensions for a Novel" (1934), the last of which highlights how Bishop's first theoretical consideration of modernism focussed on prose, not poetry.¹⁵ Return and revision define Bishop's writing, as "North Haven" (1978) notably summarizes: "Nature repeats herself, or almost does: / *repeat, repeat,*

repeat; revise, revise, revise" (P 210). Nature almost repeats itself, daily: each successive day brings new phenomena for the sandpiper poet to discover within a wider cycle of repeated order. Stevens similarly concludes his 1941 Princeton lecture "The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words": "a wave is a force and not of the water of which it is composed, which is never the same."¹⁶ For Bishop, the creative process mirrors this: like modernism, it is the latest instantiation of what it means to produce poetry in the world today.

Taking its title from Hopkins' "Andromeda" (1879)—a poem that, according to Paul Mariani, Hopkins used to resist the "new moral anarchy"¹⁷ of Whitman, Swinburne and the New Aestheticism of the 1870s—Bishop's essay "Time's Andromedas" comprehensively analyzes the use of time in modernist writers such as Woolf, Joyce and Proust, though her main critical focus falls on Gertrude Stein and Dorothy Richardson, "two women novelists, widely different yet both 'modern,' 'experimenters,' [who are] both excessively time-conscious" (PPL 645). Bishop's essays are a mine of astutely positioned and persuasively argued observations on literature, and "Time's Andromedas" develops important ideas on modernist techniques, particularly in relation to time. Yet, even before the essay's critical work proper begins, Bishop describes the evening migrations of birds in a simply stunning passage, first through the auditory experience of their flight and then in a detailed description of their regular, if arbitrary, formation. Their "multitude of small sounds" provides "a faintly rhythmic irregularity [...] resembling the retreat of innumerable small waves, lake-waves, rustling on sand" (PPL 642), and she detects in their flight an analogy for her discussion of time and modernist literary techniques:

by watching one bird, then another, I saw that some flew a little slower than others, some were trying to get ahead and some flew at an individual rubato; each seemed a variation, and yet altogether my eyes were deceived into thinking them perfectly precise and regular. I watched closely the spaces between the birds. It was as if there was an invisible thread joining all the outside birds and within this fragile net-work they possessed the sky [...]. It came to me that the flying birds were setting up, far over my head, a sort of time-pattern, or rather patterns, all closely related, all minutely varied, and yet all together forming the *migration*[.] (*PPL* 642; emphasis in original)

The flight and formations of the migrating birds both arrest *and* create time, variously and collectively within the one overall movement: as analogy for the modulations within literary movements, and within modernism in particular, this perfectly introduces an essay that measures Stein and Richardson against predecessors like Dickens, Turgenev and Andersen. Flying birds, time and motion become recurring emblems in Bishop's work: they are notably connected to Moore in Bishop's 1948 poem "For M. M." (later retitled "Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore" when published in *A Cold Spring* in 1955): the request to the most direct modernist influence on her early work to migrate, however briefly, from Brooklyn to Manhattan, while humorous, contains within its structure the motif of birds flying, most notably Bishop's description of Moore's "grammar that suddenly turns and shines / like flocks of sandpipers flying" (*P* 81). Mention of sandpipers sparks simultaneous forward and backward associations across Bishop's corpus: back to a 1933 poem "The Flood" in which the footprints of "two sand-pipers" (*P* 217) signal the poem's only specified life form; and forward to "Sandpiper" in which the titular bird experiences a

combination of Stevens' wave of water "which is never the same" and John Ashbery's "recurring wave / Of Arrival"¹⁸ breaking on a shoreline, the bird identified as "a student of Blake" (*P* 129) attuning its romantic sensibilities to the ever-changing yet ever-constant task of sifting meaning and beauty from rhythmic chaos.

For a gay female poet, with a transnational upbringing, who would live in Brazil for sixteen years of her life, the multiplicities of modernism's incarnations would, potentially, have offered numerous avenues of investigation and possibility, be that the gendered modernisms of Stein or H. D., the more form-based literary innovations of James Joyce, Eliot and Pound, or the prevalent examples in Surrealism, Expressionism, Cubism or Dadaism across the art world. Bishop regularly references Paul Klee, whom she admired, or Pablo Neruda, for whom she demonstrated a more selective regard, in her letters to Moore and Stevenson, though she is careful to note that she was "interested in surrealism long before I met [Neruda]" (*PPL* 857). Indeed, a postscript on the subject of the "surrealism of everyday life" being "always more successful,—or more amazing—than any they can think up" (*PPL* 864) completes the Darwin letter as Bishop recounts seeing Orson Welles' "absolutely *dreadful*" *O Processo* (*The Trial*, 1962).

Whichever variant is under discussion, modernism offers itself as a home for certain aspects of Bishop's work but not for others. Steven Gould Axelrod is not alone in characterizing her as disruptive, both in terms of her poetic subjects and her sexuality. Axelrod's Bishop is a writer who epitomizes his Cold War era poets, sharing with Lowell and Allen Ginsberg a particular space of "ruptures and resistances."¹⁹ His classification of Cold War poetry as part of, yet apart from, the wider currents of modernist and postmodernist debates of poetic practice rethinks the

very categories that it both reinforces and revises, disrupting standard distillations of the twentieth century into a linear progression from modernism into postmodernism. Axelrod carefully plots this distinct category, but whether it helpfully accommodates Elizabeth Bishop is another question entirely. As the schools and groups proliferated in the twentieth-century, the Venn diagram of allegiances and associations between poets and their forms of poetry became an increasingly convoluted map of cross-currents and poetic narratives and counter narratives. Following Perloff's argument that modernism is better understood as a returning cycle of change within an overall drive toward order aligns its movement with that of the oceans and the tides, constantly repeating themselves in new, individual waves that make their mark upon the waiting shore. Bishop, the sandpiper/student on the shoreline, focuses intently on "the spaces [...] between them" (*P* 129), navigating a path for herself between and through each new wave.

In 1950, the trajectories of American poetry (whether in the wake of modernism or as a continuation of its strategies of innovation—it was the year, after all, that Olson's "Projective Verse" essay was published) are written in to Bishop's own comments on the contemporary poetry scene and on theories circulating within critical circles. In the short commentary "It All Depends" she offers both latitude for the airing of her own opinions and also perspective on the necessity of applying theoretical models to poetry. "To all but two of the questions raised here my answer is *it all depends*": so begins her response to the questionnaire in *Mid-Century American Poets* (1950), edited by John Ciardi, a volume that featured the work of thirteen poets including, among others, Lowell, Muriel Rukeyser, Delmore Schwartz, John Holmes, Karl Shapiro, and Bishop herself. Typically provisional, and astutely contingent,

Bishop queries the relevance of theories in the interpretation of any poem—“no matter what theories one may have, I doubt very much that they are in one’s mind at the moment of writing a poem or that there is even a physical possibility that they could be”—and she resists the “pretentious and deadly” “highbrow” debates about poetry that are “reminiscent of those places along the coast where warnings are posted telling one not to walk too near the edge of the cliffs because they have been undermined by the sea and may collapse at any minute.”²⁰ Such interpretative drives produce a continual categorizing of poetry that destabilizes the original, independent, creative endeavor of any individual poem. The cliff edge warning signs prove more deterrent than incentive, and Bishop’s analogy is both instructive and well-chosen: we walk the cliff edges *because* of the view provided of the sea even though, over time, the sea’s eroding force will alter the solid ground on which we believed we stood.

Ciardi’s volume is a curious document: the prefatory note to Bishop’s contribution for example claims she was “born and brought up in Maine”²¹ while modernism as a term is almost wholly absented from the book. Schwartz cuts through Ciardi’s forced editorial positioning by noting that “any modern poet exists in an inescapable relationship to all modern *and* modernist poetry written since Baudelaire.”²² In “Two Problems in Writing of Poetry” Schwartz warns that the poet who ignores the “complicated” legacy of modernism “is depriving himself of what is an important part of his inheritance as a poet, and also a powerful presence in the minds of everyone who is capable of reading poetry.”²³ He is surely correct. Whether for better or worse, modernism is a fact of the twentieth-century poetry landscape: to argue otherwise is fallacy. When considering Bishop in relation to modernism, what her aesthetic or critical allegiances may or may not have been, how her own poetry

was either influenced by, or exhibited the influence of, so-called modernist poets, she herself pinpoints a central truth: it really does all depend on which Bishop one is discussing. Whether it is the young Bishop who attended Vassar and interviewed Eliot or the Bishop who, in the same period, would acknowledge Stevens as the major influence on her earliest writing; whether it is the Bishop who, while the Poetry Consultant at the Library of Congress between September 1949 and the summer of 1950, arranged recordings of Frost and also visited the incarcerated Pound at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington D.C., or the Bishop who would live in Brazil between 1951 and 1967 immersing herself in the aesthetic and literary currents of a radically different cultural environment. Just as there are multiple modernisms, there are multiple Bishops, “contradictory, complex, incompatible, but gloriously so”²⁴ as Jonathan Ellis reminds us.

In her 1966 interview with Ashley Brown, while discussing the influence living in Brazil might have upon her work and her engagement with an intellectual milieu away from New York in particular, Bishop notes how English poetry and the Portuguese poetry of Brazil are divergent entities and she roots this division—“our poetry went off in a different direction much earlier”—in specifically American experiments with modernism:

what happened with Eliot and Pound as early as 1910—modernism. The Brazilians’ poetry is still much more formal than ours—it’s farther from the demotic. It is true, of course, that they had a *modernismo* movement in 1922, led by Mario de Andrade and others. But they still don’t write how they speak. And I suppose they have still never quite escaped from romanticism.²⁵

Bishop pinpoints modernism, and particularly the variants espoused by Eliot and Pound, as the catalyst for a new poetic methodology and a possible fracturing of the previous orthodoxies in poetry in English. Her introduction to *An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Brazilian Poetry* (1972), co-written with Emanuel Brasil, highlights some of the moves made toward a modernist poetry in Brazil from the 1920s forward, shifting from the more formal and old-fashioned attitudes of the nineteenth century toward a more colloquial poetic that attempted “a complete honesty, bringing the anguish and conflicts of the period into poetry for the first time” (*PPL* 726). Bishop’s immersion in the literary scenes of Latin America expands the transnational perspectives of her wider literary portfolio. In terms of the geopolitics of the period, it disrupts Axelrod’s category of Cold War poetry, and further layers of complexity are added when her translations of modernist poets such as Octavio Paz, Manuel Bandeira, Carlos Drummond de Andrade, and Joaquim Cardozo are brought into the discussion of Bishop’s relationship with modernism. Whichever Bishop is under discussion, what is crystal clear is Bishop’s own detailed understanding of the nuances and variations across multiple national, poetic environments.

Bishop’s well-established engagement with contemporary visual cultures is brought to the fore in her translation of Paz’s “Objects & Apparitions” (1974), a poem positioned at the intersection of modern artistic theories and praxis, including artist and filmmaker Joseph Cornell’s avant-garde assemblage techniques, Paz’s Mexican distillation of the currents of Anglo-American forms of modernism (the early influence of Eliot on his work was key here), and Bishop’s own engagement with each of these components in a poem that assembles “Monuments to every moment”

(*P* 201). When Bishop notes that “out of your ruins you have made creations,” echoes of Eliot’s “fragments I have shored against my ruins”²⁶ sound briefly in an aesthetic environment that ensures, for Paz and also for Bishop, that “inside your boxes / my words became visible for a moment.” The correspondences with Bishop’s “The Monument” amplify that poem’s crosscutting of poetry, sculpture, and modernist conceptualizations of meaning and the impersonality of the artist in relation to the artwork. The monument’s instability within Bishop’s poem, continually in the act of becoming itself while keeping what “cannot have been intended to be seen” (*P* 27) within its interior, is a performance of form and simultaneously of meaning, neither of which remain constant, either within the poem or the monument itself. Centrally, both poem and monument engage the motions of time within their dual acts of becoming and their paralleled modes of interpretation.

Bishop’s awareness of the shifts and divides within and between poetic generations and literary movements is a facet of much of her writing, particularly her letters; that said, there persists within her discussions of other writers either a reticence to be identified, or a clear determination not to be associated, with any particular brand of ‘modern’ poetry. For Bishop, the questions of allegiance to a specific or rigidly conformist idea of poetry were not the first ones that concerned her, whether she was in New York, Brazil, or elsewhere. Like her sandpiper, “The roaring alongside” that characterized the debates about modernism she took for granted; instead it was “the spaces [...] between them” (*P* 129) that drew her attention in precisely the same way that the Bishop of “Time’s Andromeda’s” “watched closely the spaces between the birds” (*PPL* 642) to chart the modulations inherent within each successive wave of timely arrivals.

NOTES

¹ With numerous variations across forms, genres, cultural and social practices, modernism had multiple catalysing impulses. The influence that psychoanalysis's emergence had on the shaping of personal and public consciousness in the early 1900s falls outside this chapter's immediate remit. However, in September 1909, seventeen months before Bishop was born, Sigmund Freud delivered five lectures on "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis" and Carl Jung three on "The Association Method" (including a case of female child psychology) as part of Clark University's twentieth-anniversary celebrations as the second graduate school in the US. Clark University is located in Worcester, Massachusetts.

² Marjorie Perloff, "'Pound/Stevens: Whose Era?'" Revisited," *Wallace Stevens Journal* 26.2 (Fall 2002), 139.

³ Marjorie Perloff, *21st Century Modernism: The "New Poetic"* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 2.

⁴ James Longenbach, *Modern Poetry after Modernism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 38, 47, 9.

⁵ "I also feel that Cal (Lowell) and I in our very different ways are both descendents from the Transcendentalists – but you may not agree" (*PPL* 846) she writes to Stevenson in March 1963.

⁶ Angus Cleghorn, "Bishop's 'Wiring Fused': 'Bone Key' and 'Pleasure Seas,'" *Elizabeth Bishop in the 21st Century*, ed. Angus Cleghorn, Bethany Hicok, and Thomas Travisano (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2012), 71.

⁷ See Barbara Page, "Off-Beat Claves, Oblique Realities: The Key West Notebooks of Elizabeth Bishop," *Elizabeth Bishop: The Geography of Gender*, ed. Marilyn May Lombardi (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 196-211.

⁸ Moore makes this suggestion in a letter to Bishop on 1 March 1937, as noted by David Kalstone, *Becoming a Poet: Elizabeth Bishop with Marianne Moore and Robert Lowell* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989), 77.

⁹ Linda Anderson, *Elizabeth Bishop: Lines of Connection* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 17.

¹⁰ Longenbach, *Modern Poetry after Modernism*, 25.

¹¹ Regina Colônia, "Poetry as a Way of Life," *Conversations with Elizabeth Bishop*, ed. George Monteiro (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1996), 52.

¹² Randall Jarrell, "A Note on Poetry," in *Kipling, Auden & Co.: Essays and Reviews 1935-1964* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1980), 51.

¹³ Thomas Travisano, *Midcentury Quartet: Bishop, Lowell, Jarrell, Berryman, and the Making of a Postmodern Aesthetic* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 26, 9, 15.

¹⁴ Longenbach, *Modern Poetry after Modernism*, 27.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁶ Wallace Stevens, "The Noble Rider and The Sound of Words," in *The Necessary Angel* (New York: Vintage Books, 1951), 35. Stevens here is discussing the force of nobility, "a violence from within that protects us from a violence without. It is the imagination pressing back against reality" (36).

¹⁷ Paul L. Mariani, "Hopkins' 'Andromeda' and the New Aestheticism," *Victorian Poetry* 11.1 (1973), 39.

¹⁸ John Ashbery, "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror," in *Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror: Poems* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 68.

¹⁹ Steven Gould Axelrod, "Between Modernism and Postmodernism: The Cold War Poetics of Bishop, Lowell, and Ginsberg," *Pacific Coast Philology* 42.1 (2007), 2.

²⁰ Elizabeth Bishop, "It All Depends," *Mid-Century American Poets*, ed. John Ciardi (New York: Twayne, 1950), 267; emphasis in original. (This short commentary is also published in *PPL*, 686-7.)

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Delmore Schwartz, "Two Problems in Writing of Poetry," *Mid-Century American Poets*, 284; emphasis in original.

²³ Schwartz, "Two Problems in Writing of Poetry," 284.

²⁴ Jonathan Ellis, "Introduction: Incompatible Bishops?," *Reading Elizabeth Bishop* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), 14.

²⁵ Ashley Brown, "An Interview with Elizabeth Bishop" in George Monteiro, ed. *Conversations with Elizabeth Bishop* (Jackson, Miss.: University of Mississippi Press, 1996), 19.

²⁶ T.S. Eliot, "The Waste Land," *The Complete Poems and Plays* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 75.